

Polish low fuss

RESTAURANT REVIEW

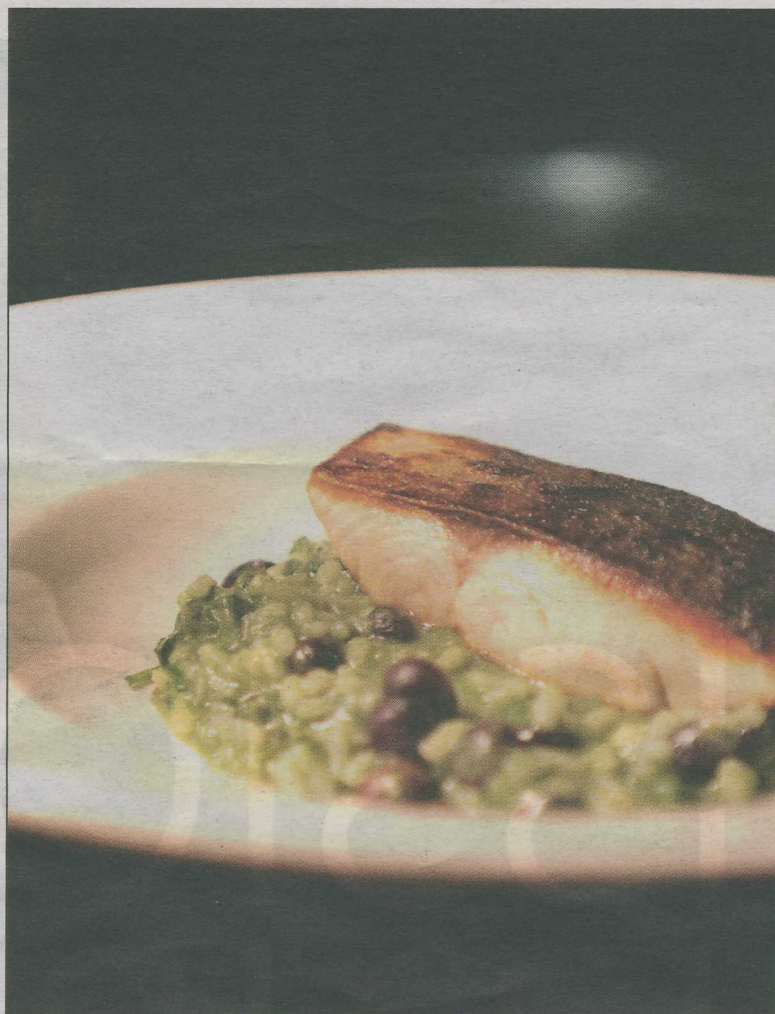
WITH CATRIONA JACKSON

choices and get the food out quickly. Polished concrete floors and very subtle lighting made for a modern, if sometimes slightly too-dark feel. Acoustics aren't great, but thankfully there's no audible music cluttering the airspace.

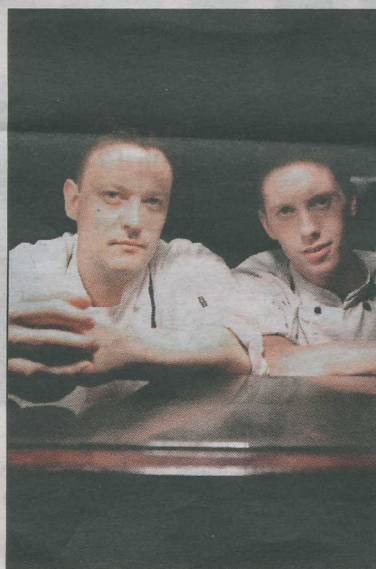
A rare beef salad (at \$15 being the smaller size) comes as a cold dish of flavoursome pink beef strips, with chunks of cooked pear, toasted walnuts and the great Italian blue cheese, gorgonzola. Tossed with a generous drizzle of rocket, it is lightly dressed, allowing the classic combination of ingredients to do the job. Forget tiny amounts of beef, with a scattering of this and that and a dab of reduced dressing. Pulp's is a gutsy salad, of decent proportions, both in terms of size and flavour.

The classic sweet and salty combination of prosciutto and melon comes served very simply, with the long, translucent slices of Italian air-dried ham draped across the plate, topped with a few pieces of sweet cantaloupe and honey-dew melon and a few shreds of mint. The prosciutto could perhaps have been a little more tender, the melon a little more plentiful, but overall this is a lovely clean dish, very well presented.

A generous bowl of warming tomato and chickpea soup (\$9) has a mild and



AINSLIE MENU: Roast kingfish with blueberry and rocket risotto at Pulp Kitchen in Ainslie, above, and owner and chef Christian Hauberg and sous chef Allan Eccles, below. Pictures: VIKKY WILKES



very pleasant flavour, and works very well with a little zingy tsatsiki at its centre. With a serve of the warmed seedy rolls (\$3/\$5) this would make a very nice lunch or light dinner.

Sirloin (\$28, one size only) is topped

with a dollop of feisty anchovy butter, and an avalanche of great shoestring fries. A lovely cut of meat, it is properly crusty on the outside and cooked exactly to order. Juices from the flavoursome steak and the melted anchovy butter make a lovely sauce for the steak and chips alike.

Baby chicken (\$16 small size) comes sticky and tangy on the outside, in a bed of creamy polenta, with a few fresh corn kernels and quickly cooked spinach. A well-balanced combination of elements, the chicken itself is juicy and full of flavour, making a lovely dish.

Warm choccy pud (\$12) is moist and full of dark luscious chocolate flavour, blanketed in very good chocolate sauce, cut with a dollop of slightly soured thick cream (creme fraiche) on top.

Pulp is a breath of fresh air on the Canberra dining scene. Informality of approach combined with terrific service, but most importantly, really good, uncluttered food makes it a place you could recommend to anyone.

PULP KITCHEN

ADDRESS Shop 1, Wakefield Gardens, Ainslie

PHONE 6257 4334

WEBSITE coming soon – www.pulp-kitchen.com.au

HOURS Brunch/lunch Saturday and Sunday, 9am-2.30pm; Lunch Tuesday-Friday, noon-2pm; Dinner Monday to Saturday, 6pm-10pm

OWNER AND CHEF Christian Hauberg

LICENSED No. BYO only, corkage \$3 a person

CHILDREN Plenty of menu options and they will cook specific food by request. The restaurant also has a highchair.

SEATING 60 inside, 40 outside

PAYMENT Amex, Diners, Visa, Mastercard, Bankcard, EFTPOS

DISABLED ACCESS Access to restaurant, but stairs to toilets

SELECTIONS Seafood bisque with soft shelled crab \$15/\$22; Braised lamb shanks \$15/\$23; Octopus salad \$14/\$18

FOOD ★★★★★

STYLE ★★★★★

VALUE ★★★★★

WINE ★★★★★

SCORE 15/20

KEY TO SCORES

- 11 – Needs work
- 12 – Average
- 13 – Above average
- 14 – Good
- 15 – Very good
- 16 – Very, very good
- 17 – Excellent
- 18-20 – Outstanding

SUMMARY

Pulp is a terrific eatery, with high-quality food and service, but with a refreshingly casual and up-to-date approach to eating.