

## A GRAND AFFAIR

'Meet me at the Champagne Bar at The Grand, St. Pancras International' does, I must say, have a ring of quality and excellence to it. Renovated and expanded for approximately £800m, this superb venue is home to Eurostar arrivals and departures. Shopping areas and the London Underground are extremely well provided for also.



Grand Restaurant



Eurostar



"The Meeting Place"



Champagne Bar

For my 'birthday surprise' Barbara had booked lunch at the Grand Restaurant. With very good price deals available, visiting the Capital doesn't have to be expensive. Regular train services from Nottingham, Derby, Loughborough and Leicester for example arrive and depart St. Pancras. The eastern side services from Grantham etc into Kings Cross are equally as frequent. Kings Cross station is 'next door' and linked to St. Pancras. The upper level at St. Pancras has the 9m high bronze statue named 'the meeting place', depicting a couple embracing, celebrating romance and travel. A Statue of Sir John Betjemen commemorates the poet's campaign to save the station from being demolished during the 1960's – Thank goodness it was successful!

Arriving at St. Pancras, The Grand Restaurant is very impressive, with the champagne bar being 96.4m long. Style, elegance and sophistication is all very evident.

Head Chef is Chris Dines, who, along with sixteen other chefs, produces the most superb cuisine. We were made very welcome – as indeed all diners are at The Grand – by Hamid, restaurant manager. Barbara and I ordered a glass of champagne (Pommery Brut Rose) from the vast range available – some 20 by the glass and 400 styles by the bottle – whilst we studied the menus. With excellent choices available and a superb wine list, this is a dining occasion to remember. From the summer vegetable salad, with goats' cheese and beetroot dressing for starters, through roast chicken with poached egg and bacon, as a choice on the mains, to burnt Cambridge cream with poached soft fruits for dessert, everything was cooked and presented perfectly. With splendid flavours and pristine tableware, plus superb service, the experience was really fantastic.

The Grand is open throughout the day. Breakfast – from a Grand English, to scrambled eggs with champagne – is all available too. The oyster bar is excellent, as is the Whisky Bar, with some 85 different whiskies available. Private parties, receptions and themed events etc are all accommodated for at this very fine restaurant. The Grand can be a destination to dine out, or to visit and enjoy on a trip to London or beyond. Whatever the occasion, you will not be disappointed.

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As always,

Enjoy!

*Trevor Langley*