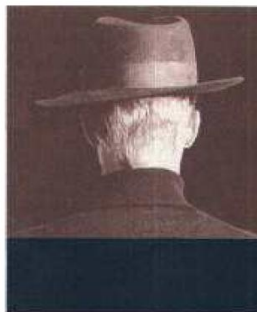


# hospitality



## Alchemy Restaurant

Chef and restaurateur Brad Jolly and wife Angelica continue to win acclaim for this Brisbane restaurant with its focus on top quality produce delivered with exceptional service. And then of course there's that view. Altogether pretty hard to beat, declares our masked diner.

## mysterydiner

THE FLOODS that crippled much of Australia earlier this year washed away sections of the Eagle Street wharf precinct in Brisbane and it's only getting back to normal in recent times. Among the many restaurants there is Alchemy, the brainchild of Brad and Angelica Jolly, and a fine place it is.

Tucked in behind an office building, I found it a little hard to locate at first, but it's beautifully positioned on the waterfront, with the curve of the Brisbane river opening up the expansive views of the Storey bridge and Kangaroo Point. Brad is experienced and well travelled, having worked with Marco Pierre White and Jamie Oliver, and cooked for the English royals. Alchemy's food style is testament to his fine technique and imagination teamed with excellent produce.

Entry here is through the very suave bar area that could have taken my dining companion and I a while to negotiate had this not been a work night. We get a warm greeting and are seated in the centre of the room. Tables are nicely spaced, clothed and well set, while floor to ceiling windows gives the magnificent vista deserved respect. The menus and wine list appear with a promise of specials, and the Beef Cheek is too difficult to be turned away by The Big Fella. I have different ideas and order a fine Dalwhinnie Pinot (\$69) to lubricate the thought process.

Bourbon Barbecued Beef Ribs (\$28) with corn bread and honey yoghurt did not appear as it sounded; it was so much more elegant and tasted brilliant. This was a dish of rectangles and dots of differing sizes. On a long rectangle plate, with a deep orange smear of marmalade jam diagonally painted, rested a boned out, slow-cooked piece of beef rib. On another spot of jam was the smaller block of corn bread. Artfully dotted on the plate were several rounds of thick yogurt. The combination of several sweet tastes and the differing element textures was truly sublime.

The tall man on my left knew a light entrée was required to balance his night and opted for the Lemon Risotto with Sautéed Bay Prawns and a Watercress Foam (\$27). The lemon permeated the rice and added great depth to the plate. The prawns were translucent and the meat yielded snappily in the mouth while the bowl was topped



Beauty on the plate and out the window at Brad Jolly's Alchemy restaurant

with a circle of watercress foam of the most virulent shade of green...no scurvy tonight.

The special Beef Cheek (\$42) arrived and my friend was very pleased. It was presented in a wide bowl with a pair of soft, sweet onions, a couple of button mushrooms and a handful of speck batons. Joining these in the bowl of loveliness was a hearty spoonful of creamy mash and a beef reduction that bound all the pieces together. The cheek meat gave little resistance to the fork and all but rendered the knife to irrelevance.

Not a regular fish consumer, I was taken by the description of the Turbot with Oxtail Tortellini (\$38) that came with a selection of mushrooms and a horseradish veloute, while the inner rim of bowl had been painted with a herb puree. This was a 'feed the man meat' type of fish. Two decent sized fillets of perfectly cooked Turbot sat over the house made tortellini and the differing textures, tastes and shapes of the mushrooms made for a visual as well as sensorial experience.

While entrees and mains had been less of an adventure (but certainly enjoyable) than perhaps expected from a restaurant called Alchemy, the desserts offered a different path. I suppose my choice again erred on the conservative with a Hot Chocolate Marbre (like a fondant, but cakier) with crunchy Honeycomb and Vanilla Bean ice cream (\$17). It was beautifully cooked and presented with a flowing dark chocolate centre and the ice cream, heavily flecked with vanilla seeds, sat over the golden nuggets of honeycomb.

My learned friend had ordered the Chocolate

Honeycomb Bar (\$17) which came with more than the menu suggested in sugared raspberries and limoncello sorbet, for while these elements were present, so was a dried raspberry shard, more honeycomb and a section of cake. The choc bar was richer than an oil tycoon, but the raspberry shard was dehydrated pure raspberry juice that was then cut into pieces. It added excellent colour, height and crispy texture to the dish. We also didn't have a go at the Liquid Nitrogen Gastronomic Nibbles on offer, but the man in the industrial gloves and apron had drawn a crowd of folk, full of oohs and aahs.

Dinner at Alchemy proved an absolute delight. The food was served in decent sized portions that allowed just enough space for more than one course and delivered in quality, flavour and interest. Special mention to the floor staff who were super efficient, well drilled and knew how to watch over a floor without hovering — a definite skill. Great views, terrific Brisbane weather and the opportunity to have dinner with a mate in a first class restaurant. Hard to beat really. Go and enjoy.

## The details

### Alchemy Restaurant & Bar

175 Eagle St, Brisbane city

P: (07) 3229 3175

W: [alchemyrestaurant.com.au](http://alchemyrestaurant.com.au)

Head chef: Brad Jolly

Owners: Brad and Angelica Jolly

Open: Lunch, Monday to Friday, 12pm-3pm; dinner, Monday to Saturday from 6pm.

### The verdict:

Brad Jolly's experience shows in the plate at his fine restaurant where his skilled technique and imagination teams with the best of produce. Delivered by a great team who really understand what top service is all about. Our dinner at Alchemy was a delight from start to finish (apart from the momentary frustration of not being able to find it!). All this and an incredible location as well.