



CATCH OF THE DAY: Grilled langoustines with East Neuk Market Garden leaves and, left, baked oysters with seaweed and anchovy butter. Pictures by Kenny Smith.



Top seafood? You need to be finding The Dory

By Jacob Smith
Food & Drink Writer

In hindsight, reviewing a restaurant during what might be its busiest Friday of the year is not the fairest thing a food writer can do.

And while I'd love to say that visiting The Dory Bistro & Gallery on the final evening of Pittenweem Arts Festival was part of some dastardly plot to test the mettle of this well-respected restaurant, the reality is that I was craving excellent seafood and heard this was the place to find it.

Although The Dory has a permanent gallery integrated into its dining room, it also becomes an official venue during the village's festival.

That said, it wasn't artwork I was after when I pushed open the door.

Instead, I was on the hunt for the best seafood Fife has to offer.

THE RESTAURANT

The dining room is packed when my girlfriend Georgina and I arrive. The buzz of good conversation envelops us as we close the door.

As Pittenweem Arts Festival has been on, even more art than usual lines the walls and windowsills. All of it is maritime themed and all of it is for sale.

When combined with the hubbub, this artwork makes me feel as if I've

slipped into a dinner party hosted by a particularly stylish aunt.

Despite the crowd, a waitress shows us to our table immediately. She soon returns with water and menus and we're told another staff member will be along shortly to talk us through the specials.

THE FOOD

As with any seafood restaurant worth its salt, The Dory's best dishes are found on the door-sized specials board where the team spotlight whatever the fishermen send their way.

During our visit, this board boasts three starters and five mains, all of them spotlighting seafood. By comparison, the "permanent" menu contains just two seafood-centric starters and the same number of such mains.

In an impressive feat of oratory, our waitress talks us through each of the dishes, providing insightful tidbits that see the dishes come alive.

She tells us that the mackerel was line-caught today off the coast of the Isle of May, while the lobster and langoustine are both "from across the road".

As we're in a window seat, I glance across said road. I'm met by the sight of Pittenweem's quayside fish market.

She also gives us some practical information; the lobster is clawed and the

langoustine halved. For those who don't know their crackers from their picks, this is valuable information indeed.

Despite this excellent performance, I am not any closer to choosing my food. If anything, these wonderful descriptions have made picking dishes even harder.

"I love it when a menu tests me," Georgina says as she puts down her gin. "It feels like this one is pulling me in every direction."

I know what she means – I can envisage myself happily tucking into everything on offer.

We finally settle on our orders. Georgina chooses the three baked oysters with seaweed and anchovy butter (£12.50) to start.

She follows with the whole mackerel. This fish is served with crispy potatoes and summer vegetables, and costs £25.

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