

FRIQUET LOBSTER & GRILL

The evenings may be cold and dark, but there's a warm and delicious welcome in store at the Lobster and Grill restaurant at Le Friquet Country Hotel, as **Aaron Carpenter** discovered when he took his family for dinner

Sea food and eat it...



The whole lobster thermidor.

WITH the Tennerfest season under way and the cold nights drawing in, the challenge for us as customers is to wade through the pages and pages of online restaurant menus to find somewhere we really fancy turning out for. When I was invited to the Lobster and Grill, at Le Friquet Country Hotel and

Apartments, I took it as an opportunity to spend some quality time with my family, which can be a rarity amid the day-to-day routine. Having never been to the restaurant, I was keen to find out if lived up to its promise of well-sourced ingredients whose natural flavours are allowed to shine through. My first impression was a positive one. As we were welcomed into the lounge, the

first thing I noticed was the attractive, autumnal interiors, which made the restaurant inviting and fitted in perfectly with the hotel's appearance from the outside. We were presented with menus and drinks at a table overlooking the grounds, and chose from the five starter and main options. The dining area is broken into sections – a quieter, more intimate setting by the window

and an open-plan main dining area with plenty of room between yourself and the next table. Our starters arrived swiftly, and I was even quicker to tuck in to my Guernsey crab thermidor. Eating engages all the senses and the aroma of the warm crab and the presentation of the mixed salad in a cracked crab shell was surpassed only by the rich, yet refreshing taste



Pork belly with dauphinoise potato and green beans.



Guernsey crab thermidor with mixed leaves and lemon.

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Herb and pistachio coated wedge of Brie with a cranberry and cinnamon compote.



Sticky toffee pudding with berries.



Sea bass with fondant potato and an asparagus veloute.



Lobster bisque.



Fettuccine and wild mushroom gratin with dressed mixed salad.

of the thermidor. My gran, Sheila, was equally happy with her lobster bisque, which was smooth, velvety and a lovely start to her meal. My mother, Natalie, opted for the chicken and vegetable terrine, which arrived with a sweet pickle chutney. The terrine was full of finely-diced flavour and the chutney offered a bold but successful contrast which cut through its richness nicely. The herb and pistachio coating on the wedge of Brie ordered by my sister, Melissa, was just right. Cranberry and cinnamon compote was a clever addition which was appealing visually and worked well with the cheese. Moving onto the main courses, we had some impressive seafood and meat options to choose from. Wanting to try out the latter side of the menu, I plumped for the slow-roasted pork belly, which was glazed with honey and accompanied by dauphinoise potatoes and green beans.

The pork was tender, and the taste of the honey was there without being overpowering. However, the star element of the dish for me was the dauphinoise, which was prepared and seasoned to perfection. Natalie decided to have whole lobster thermidor – the most decadent dish on the menu. Having not eaten lobster for a number of years, she said it was a lovely treat and well-worth paying a little extra for. It was simply garnished with mixed salad and new potatoes.

Sheila chose the pan-fried sea bass, a favourite of hers, which she was very happy with. The fondant potatoes, spinach leaves and asparagus veloute which accompanied it rounded off the dish. Melissa had the fettuccine and wild mushroom gratin with dressed mixed salad, the menu's vegetarian option, which was wholesome and used a lot of seasonal flavours. Melissa has a sweet tooth and was particularly looking forward to dessert, for which she ordered the chocolate

brownie with Madagascar ice cream. Often she finds brownies can be a little dry or stodgy, but this one was neither; it was surprisingly light and had clearly been made with good-quality chocolate, she said. After a substantial main course, Natalie's orange and Grand Marnier posset, served with crisp shortbread, was a refreshing way to end the meal. The orange-flavoured liqueur gave the posset a bit of extra punch. I finished my meal with a particular favourite and luxury of mine, sticky toffee pudding. It had a lovely, light texture and butterscotch sauce brought an injection of flavour to the pudding without weighing it down. All in all, it was a fine dining experience with some impressive options on the menu. I would particularly recommend the restaurant to seafood lovers, for whom it caters especially well.



Chocolate brownie with Madagascar ice cream.

'My mum Natalie decided to have the whole lobster thermidor, the most decadent dish on the menu. Having not eaten lobster for a number of years, she said it was a lovely treat'



Orange and Grand Marnier posset, served with crisp shortbread.

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