

# REVIEW

SPLIT RESTAURANT & BAR, RATHBONE STREET, WHANGAREI

**Tougher than old mutton, Scene Magazine's famous restaurant reviews are back. Restaurateurs beware!**

Mr Ed joined a flu-infested bloke called Boss Hog and his charming wife The Therapist around 6pm for pre-dinner drinks in Split's convivial but not pretentious surroundings.

The revamped former G&T Restaurant seats about 30 near the Rathbone St entrance but has a separate, well-supported garden bar to the rear.

This Friday night saw a procession of politicians and wannabes, along with a throng of business types, all pressing the flesh and no doubt promising the world to each other. Split is certainly not our preferred venue for a secret rendezvous or intimate tryst.

The wine list is well thought out and having nearly all wines available by the glass (with several Northland wines included) is a definite plus. Boss Hog and friend had quaffed a glass or two of Kerikeri's **Marsden Estate Pinot Gris (\$9)** by the time Mr Ed wandered in. He preferred their multi award-winning **Black Rocks Chardonnay (\$9.50)**.

Perhaps it was our casual approach, or a rocking-along garden bar, but menus were not readily forthcoming without a gentle reminder.

Once the orders were placed, though, service was proficient, speedy and personable.

## CHOSEN STARTERS

We started with **The Split Antipasto (\$12.50)**, a selection of olives, charred peppers, brown bread, chorizo, feta, sun-dried tomatoes, vegetable sticks and dips. This single serving was an excellent pre-dinner snack for three.

## CHOSEN ENTRÉES:

**NZ Whitebait Fritters (\$17.50)** with roast capsicum salsa and crisp green salad was just what The Therapist expected.

**Fresh Mussels (\$15)** simmered in a chilli, tomato and basil sauce with mushrooms, onion and garlic, then served on fettuccine with grated parmesan was "adequate" according to His Edship. Five very small mussels but good fettuccine and sauce. Interesting combinations.

**Calamari and Lime Salad (\$15)** was overwhelmed by copious amounts of beetroot and chopped salad: "It tasted better on the menu than in real life," bemoaned the Hog.

## CHOSEN MAINS

**Tender Lamb Shanks (\$25)**, served over a potato mash with spinach, was both generous and melt-in-the-mouth tender; obviously the product of a long and slow cooking process.

**Tender Eye Fillet (\$30)** steak was everything it should be: tender, thick and cooked to order.

**Seafood Platter (\$30)**, marinated fish and squid kebabs, sweet Thai chilli mussels, oysters, seasoned prawns, brown bread and salad was rated a "veritable feast", but slightly overdone.



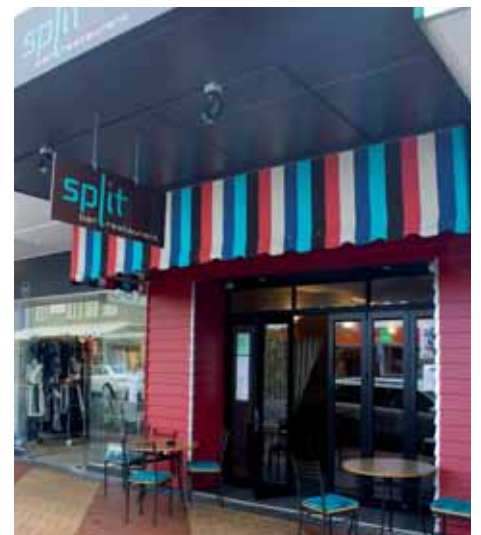
## CHOSEN DESSERTS

Whilst Boss Hog was satisfied with an espresso and drambuie, Mr Ed and The Therapist shared home-baked **Lemon Cheesecake (\$8.50)** with vanilla ice cream, chosen from an excellent blackboard selection.

This was not fine dining, but neither did it profess to be. The general service, presentation and overall ambience is certainly influenced by the flow of patrons heading for the bar. We would describe this as good contemporary cuisine in a busy environment.

Chief of Spy Finances won't be too impressed when he sees a bill of \$90 a head, but maybe he'll calm down when told that \$33 per head of that was the grog bill!

Since Boss Hog was so pleased with himself for noting the 'split' nature of the restaurant's layout and the geographical pun of the name, (Split being the largest city in Dalmatia, on the Adriatic Coast), it's a pity said Hog never thought of splitting the bill. Instead, he simply grabbed his throat lozenges, his gorgeous companion and his raincoat – and split. ■



**scene magazine rating 7 OUT OF 10**  
food quality, value, service, ambience, decor

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## OPEN LETTER

Dear Citizen

I am retiring from public life after 9 years as a Whangarei District Councillor and would like to thank the citizens of our wonderful district for all their support over these years.

Though I am not seeking re-election, I remain passionately interested in Whangarei's future progress and would like to express my opinion on the 2007 election campaign for the Mayoralty.

### THE ONLY SUITABLE MAYOR IS PAMELA PETERS.

In her civic duties, at meeting out in the community and addressing all manner of groups, Pamela presents superbly. She prepares well, can ad lib well when needed, and is charming and fun to all.

In her leadership role to Councillors - this is practising her profession - she does it with care and respect but is politically astute. Pamela is not averse to pulling us in when it is needed and giving us a no-nonsense guide to a decision when we need it. And this in public meetings! She has a strong sense of purpose and direction, matched by an equally strong sense of community.

As the community leader for developers and business people and charity organisations who are all the time coming to her office to discuss their ideas and projects and possibilities, she handles herself well, and frequently includes the Deputy Mayor and CEO, which is a good team.

Her ability to work with central government Ministers and ministries in Wellington, and local body authorities etc, she manages with a good brain and excellent verbal communication.

Remember, too, that Mayors have only one vote at decision-making time. All candidates who say "I will" and "I promise" are bluffers or bullies. Or both.

Pamela Peters is honest. It has been my pleasure and privilege to work with her, on behalf of all citizens of Whangarei District, since 1998.

She has my full support for a second term as Mayor.

Cr. Robin Lieferring  
Chairman, WDC Judicial Committee  
Past Chairman, Finance and Administration,  
and Environmental Services Committee

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