

**FOOD REVIEW**

# A fine kettle of fish

The fare at Fish on Florida is simply sensational, writes **Greg Ardé**

HISTORY books are not sure, but it was either a Jewish immigrant by the name of Joseph Malin or one Mr Lees who opened the first fish and chip shop.

That was back in England in 1896 and last year the Poms scoffed a truckload of fish and chips — 382 million servings of fish and chips to be exact, drizzled with vinegar and accompanied by mushy peas, according to the National Federation of Fish Friers (yes, such a body actually exists).

It being the national dish, there are 10 500 chippies in the UK, versus 1 200 McDonald's and a paltry 840 KFCs.

Charles Dickens in 1859 made the first reference to “chips” or chipped potatoes, cheap fodder for the masses, in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

Quite what you make of that trivia, I have no idea, but it's not codswallop, I got it all off the internet, promise.

I tucked down at Fish on Florida last week and it was scrumptious.

The restaurant is a cool addition to an already abundant offering of eateries on trendy Florida Road. But while there are nightclubs nearby, patrons didn't appear to have to compete with dish-dish boom music.

**“A pickled politician held court there. He was marvellous**

Dapper Mark Quigley, a shareholder in Florida Park Hotel above the restaurant, owns Fish on Florida. A butcher by trade, the inimitable Quigley brought in the proprietors of the now defunct (but once enormously popular) Café Fish on the Victoria Embankment to run his restaurant.

Wise move.

It is a complete hit, tastefully furnished with character furniture and distressed wooden artifacts that reflect the maritime theme. It is classy middle market, appealing to book-club biddies and



IN COD WE TRUST: Sheena Hosmer serves up some ocean delights at Fish on Florida

Picture: JACKIE CLAUSEN

**NEED TO KNOW**

**When to go:** Lunch and dinner.  
**What not to do:** Miss the chatty politician, if he's there.  
**Whatever you do:** Have the fish basket.  
**How much:** A starter, two main courses and two beers cost R400, including tip.  
**Where?** 170 Florida Road, opposite Europa.  
**Phone?** 031-303-1147

beautiful Florida Road babes alike.

White linen and brilliant service complement the sensational food. There is a deck for outside dining and revelry.

When I visited, a pickled politician held court there. He was marvellous. “Do you know who I was?” he demanded.

An old duck at the table opposite me devoured Gone Fishing from an extensive menu that includes eisbein. I couldn't have hoped for a better commendation. Two draught beers later and I smacked my own bountiful basket of scampi prawns, fried calamari (sublime) and fish goujons on a mountain of chips.

My wife had tasty grilled prawns.

My criticism is negligible: don't bother with the langoustine spring rolls for starters. Spring rolls are just boring, wherever you eat them.

**BOTTLE OF THE WEEK**

## Why I get a kick out of you

**NEIL PENDOCK**

**Bottle of the Week:** Elgin Ridge Sauvignon Blanc 282 2014

**How much and where?**  
R120; [www.elginridge.co.za](http://www.elginridge.co.za)

**Why?**  
What's puzzling about Elgin is pronunciation. Is it eGIN as in gin & tonic, or ELGin as in *Begin the Beguine*? Beguining was the rage back in 1935, after the song was penned by Cole Porter.

If modern sauvignon blanc had been invented in the 1930s, it's precisely the drink Porter would have relished as an aperitif. But it was Cloudy Bay from New Zealand that pioneered the fresh and green style that flooded the world with a

tsunami of pleasure a generation ago.

This one is not like that. It's far more serious and delicately fruited than the cat-box style with added acid that's so prevalent on supermarket shelves.

This wine is two years old and has just been released as it needed time to collect itself. It's biodynamic, too, which means the rhythms of nature have been respected.

**Rating \*\*\*\*\***

\*\*\*\*\* It's de-lovely

\*\*\*\* Anything goes

\*\*\* Night and day

\*\* I've got you under my skin

\* Every time we say goodbye

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