

THE TASTE TRIALS

262 Blandford Road Beckenham Kent BR3 4NL (081658 4337)
French Pâtisserie - Thursday 10 October 1991

REPORT

List of Participing Pâtissiers: Bagatelle; Maison Bertaux; Maison Bouquillon; Cannelle; Filéric; P. Péchon; Roux; St Quentin.
Maison Blanc were due to take part but their produce did not arrive.

General

The evening produced spirited discussion and very close scrutiny of the patisserie. It proved to be a challenging and lengthy evening but we were able to discriminate between each product in each category very clearly. The generally high level of presentation occasioned some disappointment that the consumption of products did not live up to their appeal to the eye in many cases.

The views expressed in this report are not those of the Taste Trial organisers but are a collation of comments from the evening.

Croissants

These were not served heated. There was general disappointment regardless of the apparent hour of bake. An abiding impression of a salt, sweet or cloying aftertaste was noted.

Disputed best: Bouquillon / St Quentin

Apple feuilleté

This category was very broadly interpreted. Dissatisfaction with the flavour of apples was noted in many instances. Best (outside envisaged boundaries to category): Roux (Chausson), Bagatelle (Tart)

Fruit tarts

The wide divergence in the quality of fruit used was instantly perceptible. Unripe, rotten and tinned fruit were not appreciated. Unpleasantly textured bland crème pâtissière mixes did not find flavour. There was a wide divergence in the quality of pastry.

Best: Bagatelle

Cassis

Simplest met with most approval, especially where good quality fruit purée shone through. Those submitted - bar one - had a pleasing soft set and smooth texture. Some sponge layers were found to be too dry; jammy intrusions were not favoured. The use of chocolate was not liked on the whole.

Best: Roux

Opéra

Most were felt to be successful, though in some instances it was felt that the critical balance between chocolate, mocha and alcohol had not been struck.

The density and brittleness of the dark chocolate layer varied considerably between examples.

Best: Bagatelle

REPORT BAGATELLE

Attractively presented; did well in every category. Concept carefully explained; thankfully redundant in terms of the blind tasting - the products stood up without recourse to it.

Apple tart:

Excellent light, smooth purée with clean, tart flavour. Apple slices: well-cooked with well-judged texture; contrasts well with purée. Light, crisp flakely pastry. Some query about set level of glaze - too hard?

Fruit tart:

Best in category. Crème mousseline declared excellent, but some found it too rich. Flavourful, high quality fruit. Pastry: delicate and crisp - adjudged plain by some but conceded good contrast to richness of mousseline.

Cassis

Considered too complex, with too much sponge. Chocolate base layer was in balance with cassis but was generally not approved of.

Opéra

Beautiful presentation. Tremendously light and uncloying. Nuts perceptible in biscuit joconde: excellent texture and flavour element. Good bitterness to chocolate. Best in category.

THE BAGATELLE
CONCEPT Ltd

704-711 Tudor Estate

Abbey Road

London NW10 7UW

Tel : 020 8453 8000

Fax : 020 8453 8001

Order Department

Tel : 020 8453 8025

Fax : 020 8453 8026

BAGATELLE
BOUTIQUE

44 Harrington Road

London SW7 3NB

Tel : 020 7581 1551

Fax : 020 7591 0517