



THE WYKHAM ARMS

SIBFORD GOWER

PRESS

The Four Shires Magazine

Published: 23 June 2008

Have you visited The Wykham Arms recently? If not - why not?

The Four Shires spends a delightful lunchtime in Sibford

I have to say that it's always a pleasure dining at The Wykham Arms in Sibford Gower near Banbury, and on this my fourth visit, my enjoyment of lunch was made even better by glorious sunshine and charming company.

Damien and Debbie Bradley are in their third year at The Wykham Arms (longer than both previous owners) and they are deservedly listed by the Daily Telegraph as one of the best village restaurants in the country. They do have a head start, Sibford Gower is one of the most picturesque villages in The Four Shires and the 17th century inn is situated opposite a glorious mini-stately home, which is very pleasing to the eye!

"We wanted to open the restaurant and give something too," said Damien. "We have children at the local school and feel that we are gradually becoming part of the community. Unlike previous owners at The Wykham Arms we were never 'looking for the main chance' here. This is where we live."

Damien and Debbie's investment and dedication in the pub is clear for all to see. Themed evenings, including their justly popular lobster and champagne nights work well for the restaurant and Damien is considering investing in a people carrier to transport groups here and there within a reasonable distance to help diners enjoy their night out. On our recent visit to The Wykham Arms we chose to sit outside to enjoy that rare English treat – an early summer's day not spoilt by humidity or thunder flies. It was warm enough to bask in the sun and enjoy conversation with my partner for the day, Kelly. There is a bar menu at The Wykham Arms and another more wide ranging menu – both however contain gastro-

nomie delights and one should not really take precedence over the other.

For my starter I enjoyed the bruschetta of roast vegetables and air dried ham with dolcelatte and my partner for the day, the terrine of confit Barbary duck leg with chilli jam. My vegetables were delicious and I was assured that the terrine was too – not at all soft – often a failing with this type of dish. For my main course I had the ever tasty Lighthorne lamb with asparagus and beans and my partner, the sea bass served with gremolata mashed potato and finished with sauted spring onion, olives and garlic.

Both dishes were wonderful as they always are at The Wykham Arms and the attention we received from the very pretty Debbie was never intrusive.

If we hadn't chosen the courses we did, we could have eaten Scottish sea trout, grilled calves' liver or vegetarian ravioli as mains; the fresh beetroot, orange, endive and glazed goat's cheese.

