

London restaurant to charge 1966 prices found on menu under floorboards

Thursday 2 January, 2014

The Giggling Squid Thai restaurant chain is to charge the same prices as those found on a 1966 drinks menu by builders during recent renovations.

Back In 1966, the year the England football team won the World Cup for the only time, when its latest opening in Stratford on Avon was then The Old Tudor House, a restaurant owned by one RS McColl.

Giggling Squid has been able to date the menu which was found with a scrap of the Daily Mirror newspaper of 29th March 1966 – two days before the general election of that year. The paper cites the incumbent Prime Minister Harold Wilson as 16 -1 on to be re elected, as he was with an increased 96 majority. The losing Tory leader, Ted Heath, was quoted as saying Britain's future lay with Europe and warned, "If we are left outside. We shall find ourselves a small power on the boundaries of a big one."

On Monday 20th January, Giggling Squid will offer dinners accompanying drinks at 1966 prices at all its seven restaurants in Brighton, Hove, Crawley, Tunbridge Wells, Reigate, Henley and Stratford. Spirits were 'half a crown', that is two shillings and sixpence or 13 pence at today's money. A glass of wine was three shillings (3/- or 15p). A bottle of lager was 2 shillings (10p). Liqueurs were three and six (18p). Mixers were a shilling (5p.) There was no mineral water on the menu.

The menu does have a "Budget Surcharge" sticker however, adding a penny a pint on beer and tu'pence to spirits.

Known for its 'tapas' style dining, Giggling Squid has never used offers for its marketing before, preferring to focus on the value and quality of its "rustic" Thai cuisine, with the emphasis on sea- and street-food.

"The Giggling Squid group had a very good 2013 and we've never run a promotion, but as 2014 is another World Cup year, we thought it might be fun to do something special as a one off, on a long dark day in January when every is feeling a bit down," said owner Andrew Laurillard.

"Looking at the '66 menu, it's interesting to see familiar names – Gordon's, Johnny Walker, Remy Martin, Smirnoff, Harvey's and the like – it shows products' longevity when owners continue to invest in their brands," he said

Some other brands have lost some of their popularity, however. Babycham and Cherry Heering sales volume have declined since the '60s and Watney's Red Barrel at 2/4 (12p) a pint – much derided by ale drinkers in the 1970s, has since disappeared from our pubs.

Wine buffs have admired the list and noted that most were also available in half bottles. Glossing over the 1962 Blue Nun Liebfraumilch at £2 six shillings a bottle, their attention was drawn to the 1961 Chablis and eighteen and six (under £1). The reds feature a St Emilion at 13/- (65p), a Beaune for just over £1 and a Nuits St George at 22/- (£1.10), qll 1959 vintages although no vineyards are mentioned. The sole Champagne on offer was a Moet & Chandon at 42/6 (£2.23). A solitary Rosé is unspecified at 11/6 (58p).

The offer is available to dinners ordering a 2-course meal for lunch and dinner on 20th January and limited to one aperitif, a bottle of beer or glass or wine, and a liqueur (three drinks).

Editors' Notes:

Giggling Squid, which opened its first restaurant in 2008 in Hove, has established a strong reputation for its authentic, rustic and fresh Thai cooking with the emphasis on street food and coastal specialities. The food, described by The Times as "exciting", is prepared by master Thai chefs using fresh ingredients, sourced locally where available.

Stratford is Giggling Squid's seventh location – its first in the Midlands – and marks the next step on its quest to become the first national Thai chain in the UK, with a portfolio of 80-strong properties with 7 years.

Further openings are planned for Marlow, Maidstone and Horsham, adding to existing sites in Brighton, Hove, Crawley, Tunbridge Wells, Reigate and Henley-on-Thames.

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The lunch menu offers a choice of six Tapas-style 'tasting sets' that allow diners to sample several of different dishes in at a single sitting, costing between £8.00 and £10.50 with 16 individual dishes priced under £3.90. "Big" dishes with rice cost £6.50 to £7.95. "Combi" meals with starters are priced between £6.00 and £7.25.

The evening menu is more extensive with over 50 dishes available. The ever popular Thai Green Chicken Curry is £8.50. The signature "Gigging Squid" – steamed baby squid filled with minced chicken, squid and herbs with basil and chilli – is £10.50.

Press contact: Hi res photos and menus available. To review or organise competition prizes call: George Shaw, Avocado Media. T: 01892 750851 M: 07860 695555 E: shaw.geo@gmail.com?

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