

The View review

Who ate all the pies?

Esther Apodaca

did her best



Venison and red wine pie with chips

Pembroke Arms • Shaftesbury Road • Fovant • Wiltshire • SP3 5JH • 01722 714201

Visit the Pembroke Arms in Fovant and you'll find not only a welcoming ambience and traditional English fare, but also a vibrant lesson in local history. Fovant is well known for the regimental badges carved into a nearby hillside. These badges were cut into the chalk by soldiers garrisoned in the area during World War One and are clearly visible to drivers along the A30, which runs through the village.

The Pembroke Arms has a collection of carved replicas of those regimental badges along with anecdotes, photographs, maps and diagrams that explain the part local men played in the war effort. Indeed, until only a few years ago the World War One Museum at the Pembroke Arms, as it was known, boasted a large collection of memorabilia. The Fovant History Interest Group has now taken responsibility for the well being of the collection and much of it has now been put into storage for future generations.

Now, although some wall space is still devoted to that fascinating history, the pub is all stripped floors, pale-oak furniture, stylish upholstery and low lighting. Two blackboards are handwritten with the day's menu and

'I had a good helping of it and the sauce was buttery and the potato pleasingly truffly. But at heart I'm a pie kind of girl. Apple cheeked, broad hipped and full of goodness'

there is a generous selection of pies to choose from. The wine list is a good length and features a number of wines by the glass.

My companion had the moules marinières to start – they tasted like a rude holiday in Whitby: salty, punchy and saucy, although we agreed a splash of wine might have improved the cooking liquid. Being the type to spice a meal with opaque interludes he pulled an intriguing face and said 'it's all about psychology, texture and influence'. Then he winked and tried to put me off my sea bass, lime and ginger cakes. Subtly flavoured, they were bolstered with fluffy potato and the salad was fresh and delicious.

Later, I had the venison and red wine pie with chips. The pastry was generous and the chips cooked to perfection. He had skate wings with truffle mash. I had a good helping of it and the sauce was buttery and the

potato pleasingly truffly. But at heart I'm a pie kind of girl. Apple cheeked, broad hipped and full of goodness.

And girls who like pies, love puddings: my chocolate and almond parfait with ice cream was deeply indulgent and sprinkled prettily with a delicate frosting of icing sugar. He had the apple tarte tatin, which was a delicious variation on a classic, also with a scoop of ice cream.

We finished our delightful meal with a chat. Mike and Helen run this place and it was Mike with whom we struck up conversation. He has some stories up his sleeve... you can tell even before he says anything; he's got one of those faces. We could have stayed all night but all good stories have to come to an end. ▼

Our meal without drinks came to £52

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Moules marinières



Sea bass, lime and ginger cakes