



# Little bit of Paris for lunch



**DELISH DISH:** The Belle Epoque French tasting plate, and, *right*, chef de cuisine Sebastien Labbe.

**WORDS: WENDY HALL**

A **LITTLE** bit of extravagance can go a long way. My lovely sister and I had a window of opportunity to catch up last week sans children, which means we get to exchange full sentences.

So I took her along with me to try the new tasting plate they're doing at Belle Epoque and it turned out to be one of the most memorable lunches we've ever had.

Picture a lavish six-course French degustation dinner and now downscale the servings even more, to fit on one large platter, and that's what Belle Epoque's tasting plate is all about.



It's a sampling from the restaurant's main French menu and is ideal for a special occasions, or simply a catching-up lunch. It is available daily from the bar menu and during lunch and at \$30, which

includes dessert, it's undeniably good value.

Our plates included prawn with tomato chutney, a neat little salad, goats cheese on toast, foie gras and escargot in parsley and garlic. Lamb cutlets arrived in little copper saucepans on a rustic nest of light gnocchi in sage.

Now, we are fairly adventurous in the food department but turned out neither had ventured into escargot territory, so that in itself was a memorable moment – we both dithered a bit, saying we were “saving them” and “waiting for them to cool down”, before finally downing one each and agreeing the parsley and garlic was great.

Apparently a fair number of diners are not keen to give them a go, so that morsel of knowledge made us feel a bit better about our less-than-gallant efforts.

The dessert, a flaming creme brulee, was a gorgeous finale to a lunch that left us both wondering how we would face the kitchen and cook for our families that evening.

The Belle Epoque Tasting Plate features escargot, foie gras and salade de chevre chaud, plus three seasonal dishes that change daily, including dessert.

Book on 3852 1500.