

the BOND SISTERS EAT OUT

Sue and Gayla Bond

TOURNEDOS AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW: THE FLIGHT DECK AT HUGHES

Gayla and I were playing Mah Jong with Rae and Ann Salis the other day, and just generally bemoaning the success of our dieting. When Gayla dropped her white dragon on the floor and bent to retrieve the tile, she actually did NOT split a seam. That's when I realized we had been far too long at the buffets and not frequenting the more delicately weight-adding sauciers.

There are days when crowds of tourists (whom we all love and depend on for our very life) are not best for the digestion. We choose to sneak away to the very end of the earth...or the valley. Our discovery of the month is the Flight Deck Restaurant and the Omni Lounge; a most interesting pair of "eyes."

On entering the lounge (it is found on the second floor of the Hughes Air Terminal off Las Vegas Boulevard South/South), you are delightfully soothed with the melodious organ of Mr. Don Chapman, who seems to have a limitless repertoire of interesting and obscure show tunes at his disposal. Peppin and Star Wars have their own unique style under his execution. Sue was taken (much, too much) by the huge Strawberry Margaritas.

Although we were at the peak of the evening on Friday night, we were not rushed, and service was refreshingly low-key and the avoidance of the usual Vegas festination was most welcome. Not that we were overlooked, *au contraire*.

We both chose to indulge in the salad bar, where a basic, simple fare was offset with excellent French dressing. We were curious about this, but the sheer richness of the main course explained completely. An overly elaborate salad bar would detract from the subtle flavorings used with the features of the *maison*.

In particular, house specialties Veal Oscar and Tournedos King Henry VIII were among our samplings. Both dishes were excellent, although Sue preferred the beef. I was delighted to find an elegantly generous helping of crab setting off the asparagus featured over the veal. The beef did have a wonderfully cooked artichoke bottom with just acres of bear-naise. If all of this is making you hungry, you can imagine how we feel writing about it. It won't be long before we make our return visit.

Don't forget to try the escargot. The neighbor girl, Melanie Elise, overheard Gayla say that she couldn't live without a half dozen snails before a really proper meal, and lovely, blonde Miss M spent an entire morning finding the wretched things in our front yard and presenting them in one of her mother's best cut crystal glasses. What I wouldn't give to be seven years old again!

Do beware of the Rice Pilaf, it was gummy and much too salty. Probably baked.

The Omni/Deck duo is not a setting for a gourmet restaurant, but it doesn't try for that approach. It is a place to watch Las Vegas "tick" with the heartwarming awareness that the flying sardine cans will spill their throngs over on Paradise Road, while one quietly enjoys eating *very well*. Prices are not ridiculous, but just high enough to keep the budgeteer away. Expansive use of the room arrangements prevent the feeling that the next table can hear your conversation.

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criticism very badly," he says. "I get riled when somebody says I have done less than my best, or even worse, my best is not good enough." He resented, for instance, that having accepted an invitation to sing on a talk show, he thought he'd be asked to render an up-tempo song, not the ballad he preferred. He had done opera and B'way musicals. Luckily, they had him sing the ballad. He was worried though: "that's what they know about the history of black performers," Bob said. "Because I am black they'd have me do a tap dance."

From opera with a Cleveland company, he went with the U.S. Musical Theatre group touring Europe, played in Broadway shows and a movie and bit parts on "Julia" and "The Jeffersons." Now he is happy but cautious.....Stay Loose.

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