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Vatika – vineyard in Hindi – has recently opened its very swish Anglo-Indian doors on the Wickham Vineyard estate, attractive un-English views of the 40-acre vineyard a given from its floor-length windows and terrace.

Michelin-starred chef Atul Kochhar, whose restaurant Benares in Mayfair wins plaudits, is a regular on programmes such as Great British Menu and Saturday Kitchen.

He has handed over the cooking reins at his Hampshire outpost to Jitin Joshi who himself has an impressive pedigree of working for some of the best London restaurants including Maze. Can Hampshire cope with such luminaries?

But the area is already a magnet for talented chefs from the capital with Giles Thompson, executive head chef of the Ritz, now running the Earl of March pub (Lavant), Sam Mahoney, of Kensington Place, at Field & Fork (Chichester). Michelin stars include JSW (Petersfield), West Stoke House (West Stoke) and 36 On the Quay (Emsworth).

The cooking at Vatika – modern British with an Indian twist – is perhaps challenging to those used to tandoor ovens and poppadoms. The reasonably-priced menus (a set lunch at £24.50 for three courses, £19.50 for two or a main menu at £35 for three, £30 for two) for such stellar quality contain dishes unknown to your average diner-out at Indian restaurants. Confit lamb spring rolls with olive lavender yoghurt; King Edward cakes with cumin, roasted tomatoes and tamarind foam, or scallop with peppered artichoke with ginger ceviche might kick off your meal. Roasted sea bass with a coconut beurre blanc, pearl barley risotto with red onion rings and parsley pesto or lamb shoulder cooked for a night and a day with spinach gnocchi and chlorophyll oil may follow.

They demonstrate the kitchen's keenness to experiment, modernisation quite close to the Heston Blumenthals of this world without letting go of the main component: a desire to please without losing the plot. But don't expect large chain restaurant portions; they're small.

Sit in the coolly elegant pale green-grey tableclothed room, banquettes lining the walls, three large crowns of lighting hanging from the pitched rafters. Service is uber-cool: smart, friendly, knowledgeable, agreeable and totally charming.

Breads are served with unsalted butter and four vials of different-coloured spices or salts to add, chilli, salt and coriander ones finding favour. The 18-page wine list of some sumptuousness throws up Rare and Fine but also a healthy affordable selection from £18, a glass of Wickham Vineyard fumé (£6.50) and a Brazilian Merlot of top quality.

Orange-cured mackerel with mustard raita and radish fritters demonstrated perfect marriages of ingredients, the fritters ethereal things of beauty. Charred basil chicken with turmeric crushed potatoes and smoked tomato fondue raised chicken to new heights, the fondue a stunning dense creation.

The only slight letdown to the meal was a saffron yoghurt parfait which could have had more saffron, and the pistachio biscotti which was rather muted and bland. However, the lime syrup and a sugar-crusted dried lime slice with chlorophyll added a surprising zing.

Coffee and petits fours, included in the price (eureka!) were totally ace, a tiny cinnamon-coated doughnut in a syrupy lime pool and a chocolate biscuit bar merely raising the bar to an even higher level of cooking, presentation and service.

How and why do we deserve such finesse of novelty cooking in our neck of the woods? It transpires that the new owner of the Vineyard, Nitán, a friend of Atul's, offered him the fine space at the back of the business. End of story.

It's like most things in life; it's who you know that takes you to places, even those in deepest Hampshire. Thank you, new owner. May Vátika thrive! It is deserved, a Michelin star or two in the post.

My bill came to £47.25 including 12.5 per cent service and was worth every single penny.

Diners' view Sherry and Jim Acheson, from Portsmouth: 'We loved the calm atmosphere, the wonderful service which you just don't get at most other places, and the really amazing looking and tasting food,' Sherry said. 'My courgette and tomato ratatouille with ravioli and smoked ketchup was quite incredible. I love the way they take you through each dish when served.' 'I've never tasted beef quite like the dish produced here and have never seen Indian wine on a list before either,' said Jim. 'Two firsts for me and we'll be back. The brown roll was the only letdown.'

Vátika, Wickham Vineyard, Botley Road, Shedfield, SO32 2HL. (01329) 830405.

Open: From Tue-Sat 6pm-10pm for dinner and Thu-Sun for lunch from midday-3pm.

Food: *****

Service: *****

Atmosphere: *****

Disabled access: Yes.

How to get there: Exit the M27 on to the A32 going towards Alton and Wickham. Follow the A334 to Wickham and Winchester turning off on to the Botley road. The vineyard is on your right down this road, the restaurant at the back of the vineyard buildings on your right. Car park.