

Food & Drink

Village pub Packs a punch when it comes to food!

Brad Barnes dines at The Pack Horse, Northborough

www.the-packhorse.co.uk

The disappointment of Jasmine's football match being postponed on Saturday morning was soon forgotten when we decided to go for lunch at The Pack Horse in Northborough.

The place reopened last summer, after being closed for some 18 months, a move that was warmly welcomed by people in the village.

Their gain was all of our gain, based on the weekend treat served up for us.

Lesley Newitt and the team (our thanks to Carol who looked after us) have worked hard to create "a cosy and welcoming atmosphere where you can relax, enjoy great food and have a fantastic time with family and friends".

They have also – thanks to the skill of talented chef Dan Roche – put The Pack Horse firmly back on the map when it comes to seeking out somewhere to eat.

It is a pretty, stone-built pub with a big welcoming garden area, packed with benches and surrounded by a coloured picket fence – one for the hopefully soon to arrive warmer days.

Inside there's plenty of exposed stonework and wooden floors, with farmhouse kitchen-type tables and chairs you might expect.

Daffodils on the table were a nice touch – so too the Trivial Pursuit question cards which were proving popular with other diners.

We ordered drinks and set about the menu – choosing to overlook the salads, soup and a cured meats sharing board and concentrate on the main courses.

Slow cooked pork belly, duck breast, Gnocchi, seabass with tiger prawns – the chef's favourites. And the dilemma? I could only choose one!

The latter (£18.50) was an absolute dream dish. Beautiful seabass fillet, nice and flaky with crisp skin. Amazing. And the prawns had a little firmness, just right.

It was served on a bed of



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BY
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saffron, tomato and basil orzo pasta – wonderful in its own right, but the flavour and heat from the parmesan cheese and chilli oil took it to another level. An outstanding dish.

Having been advised the fish and chips from the classic menu section would be too much for my 11-year-old, she opted for the fish goujons, chips and peas from the young diners section (£8.50). She loved the golden, crisp and fluffy chips while the fish was just what she was hoping for with a nice, light batter.

We both found room for desserts and were not disappointed,

Homemade sticky toffee pudding with toffee sauce and a scoop of vanilla ice cream (£6.50) for me, while Jasmine had homemade vanilla creme brulee with an orange shortbread biscuit (£6.50).



There's a good selection of beers on offer too – a lovely pint of Neck Oil IPA for me which went down a treat.

Chef Dan also showcases his creativity with monthly theme nights (February's 'Italian night'

is sold out) while I hear his Sunday lunches are in demand.

Tuesday nights see street food vans in the car park serve up something different – all of which can be taken inside and enjoyed.

