

restaurant review

Geraldine Johns can count on Auckland's Two Fifteen

The name is the number. Two Fifteen is the first solo venture by young chef of great note Jeremy Schmid. If you don't recognise his name, you might his sausages; he's the bloke behind the Little Boys brand that has worthily won national awards. As well, and after some years as a sidekick in restaurants elsewhere, he has finally ventured out on his own.

In his first week, Schmid charges half price for food. That's because he wants to iron out any creases without punishing the punters. Never before have I encountered such an accommodation. And by the end of the evening I will avow that I would have happily paid full price.

Two Fifteen is chiefly a bistro. That means comfortable food in smart, yet warmly informal surrounds. It will

prove to be an address of generosity: in every sense.

We first-timers start with smoked salmon blinis (me); duck tacos for Mr Black. Both are winning dishes. Next I get pork and cheese sausage with lentils and mustard mash (yes, I go barmy over Schmid's salami) while Black gets the risotto. He wanted the prawn; he gets the mushroom. Who cares; it's still gorgeous.

So too is the dessert: chocolate tart with raspberry jelly and lemon sorbet. And the service – cute and efficient and well-informed. The wine list also works, especially when matched and explained to the degree that it is.

Early days, yes. But impressionable indeed. Two Fifteen, we agree, is the sort of place that will warrant regular visitations.



Jeremy Schmid

And so it is that – a different date at hand – I return a few weeks later. What was good before has been further finessed. Try, do, Schmid's spinach, ricotta and pine nut cannelloni. Do not go past the golden flash-fried squid. Never say no to the market fish.

This from a concise and ever-changing menu. The first episode saw a food charge of \$55.75; ordinarily – and by the time you read this – it would be \$111.50. The wine is additional. That second visit totalled \$135, two glasses of wine included.

Schmid says that if he can make each dish from scratch he will. We

Two Fifteen 215 Dominion Rd, Mt Eden, Auckland. **Phone** (09) 630 6474
Hours Dinner, Tuesday to Sunday, 4pm to late; Lunch Friday from noon.
Food Solid bistro with some verve
Service Abundantly warm and competent
Wine An innovative, largely local, list. Includes glass, bottle and 500ml decanter
Ambience Comfortable
Bathrooms Two unisex.
Spick and span **Rating** ★★★★★

love him for his dedication, his efforts and his achievements. We love his new home too. Go before he gets unbearably famous.



I got my water bill this week. It was \$510.87. I nearly fainted. I could have fainted out of sheer indignation, except then I would have needed another glass of water.

Since the beginning of November I've consumed 119,000 litres of H₂O. The average residential water usage in Auckland is 180 litres per person

self-sufficiently lynda

Where has all the water gone?

per day. Even if I factor in three thirsty cats, I'm still guzzling almost 10 times that. I'm squandering the planet's most precious resource for selfish reasons: juicier tomatoes, fatter eggplants, sweeter sweet corn.

Unfortunately, Metrowater's billing formula is based on the old adage that what comes up must go down. To pipe the fresh stuff in costs \$1.47 per cubic metre; to pump the dirty stuff back out costs \$3.53 per cubic metre. Metrowater has calculated that 75 percent of the water we use ends up going down the drain. Metrowater's accountants clearly don't have green fingers.

My water bill triples in summer. I know it's not cheap to keep my citrus trees hydrated and all those swelling

marrows sated, but \$5.31 a day? Surely that can't be right.

I checked out Metrowater's conservation tips. Only water your lawn once a week, it said. I don't have a lawn. Use a broom rather than a hose to clean your driveway. I don't have a driveway. Turn off the tap when shaving. I don't shave. Wait for a full load before using the dishwasher. I don't own a dishwasher. Use the waste disposal unit less often. I don't have a waste disposal unit. Put a plug in the sink when washing your vegetables. (People actually wash their vegetables?)

Or I could just get dirty. If I spent one minute less in the shower each day, I could save \$18 a year. Perhaps I'll just lather myself up and stand

under the sprinkler when I'm watering my dahlias.

My favourite tip? Check your toilet for leaks. Add a few drops of food colouring to the cistern. Wait 15 minutes. If it looks like someone with a technicoloured urinary tract infection has relieved themselves, call a plumber. And while he's there, get him to install a dual flush. The average flush wastes 11 litres of water. I already have a dual flush toilet. And even if I was subsisting on prunes and vindaloo – which, for the record, I'm not – there's no way I've flushed 10,818 times in the past three months.

Lynda Hallinan edits NZ Gardener magazine. For tips on growing your own food, sign up to the magazine's free weekly e-newsletter – email getgrowing@nzgardener.co.nz

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