



Picture: CHERIS PAVLICH

# Thanks a Lot

## Go out

### Lot 40

40 Kings Lane, Darlinghurst  
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When dining out in Sydney it can seem like attitude is a requirement for both waiting staff and diners, so it's a relief to find that Lot 40 didn't get that memo.

Between Palmer and Bourke streets, near the Republic 2 courtyard, it's a little hard to find, but well worth it.

We were out of luck when trying for a table at 8pm on a Friday night, but were told they could fit us in a little later, so we had a drink or five and came back at 9.30pm.

Although the restaurant had nearly emptied, they happily told us that the kitchen was still open.

By the end of our meal we were the only ones there, but we were never rushed.

There's a healthy cocktail and wine list, but we couldn't go past the jug of sangria (\$20).

There's a choice of white or red, and when I ask if there's brandy in it, our waiter says

they keep it simple here – just wine, lemonade, fruit and mint – but he can add it if we like.

Gotta love it when nothing's too much trouble – but we give the brandy a miss and enjoy a perfectly slurpable sangria.

A free deep-fried ricotta and mascarpone ball with roasted capsicum puree starts off our meal. Filled with cozy, cheesy goodness, it's a generous touch on the kitchen's part.

It's obvious we'd like it seeing we ordered the BBQ baby bocconcini wrapped in pancetta and basil (\$9). It's delicious and a lot of fun stretching out the pliable, stringy cheese.

The seared beef fillets served with a tomato, onion and cucumber salad and roasted ground rice (\$15) is cooked perfectly and the salad is served on top of the meat rather than the side, which adds freshness and crunch to the dish.

The oven-baked duck crepe

with plum sauce, crispy eschalots and broccolini (\$15) melds French and Asian flavours and I like that it's served with broccolini to break a little of its richness.

Pork belly is always a winner in my book and Lot 40's version doesn't disappoint. It's twice roasted and served on a bed of green beans, barbecued onions and seeded mustard sauce (\$14).

By now the place is empty but I can't leave without trying the flourless chocolate almond cake with warm coffee butterscotch sauce and almond praline (\$8) and golly, am I glad I stood my ground. I happily announced I would come back just for coffee and cake but a nearby waiter who was wiping down tables grinned at me and said they didn't do coffee.

Oh well, it tastes just as good with a glass of sangria.

— RENATA GORTAN