



The French Connection

By Diana Cormack

A fairly recent addition to local eating-places is to be found at 42 High Road, where **Chez Nous** has taken over the long-empty site of Jerome the jewellers. From the name, many passers-by assume it to be French, though the full title is "Chez Nous Meze and Grill Restaurant," which is a bit more helpful.

Cosmopolitan

The waitress provided the description "Mediterranean food," which covers many of the courses on offer, though not really the breakfast, which has a definite English emphasis.

For lunch or snacks, ciabatta rolls and special sandwiches are served with salad or chips but,

if you fancy a bigger meal, you can begin it with a hot or cold starter from the Mediterranean Mix. Whether you fancy British, French, Greek, Italian or Turkish, you should find something to choose in this café restaurant.

Chez Nous, tel 8444 1332, is open daily 10 am to 11 pm.

Thais are us

By Diana Cormack

If proof were needed of the popularity of Thai food in the country today, a visit to the Nahling at 106 High Road should suffice. Since opening at the end of March, it has been inundated with customers, both for the dining in and the takeaway service.

Nahling means monkey face and was inspired by Lek Rayner, who runs the place with husband Mick. Her hometown of Lopburi is known as monkey town in Thailand, because its people revere the monkey (the full story is told on the restaurant menu). As a child, Lek was nicknamed monkey face and Mick was constantly called a little monkey, so the name is doubly fitting.

The couple, who live in Creighton Avenue, have previously been involved in catering for private functions as well as importing Thai furniture and



Service with a smile Photo by John Dearing

Poseidon adventure

By John Dearing

On the afternoon of Sunday 4 April a party was held to celebrate the opening of the new Poseidon Fish Restaurant. Partners Stephano and Stelios laid on an excellent buffet of all manner of fish, seafood and meat dishes for a considerable number of guests.

The restaurant has been created by linking the premises next door to the existing fish restaurant and completely refurbishing both, a job which was started last October and took until the end of March. The restaurant section is in two linked parts, the front room including a fully licensed bar, and an arched doorway leading to the back room where a large skylight provides a natural light and space for a palm tree to grow.

Classical theme

The decor is mixed, with the front section in more traditional materials such as the wood used on the bar and the restaurant fronting, but overall the design is contemporary with abstract pictures and decorations, resisting the temptation of a piscine theme. Rather, they intend eventually to introduce a classical feel, with a representation of Poseidon, god of the sea.

Stelios has been involved with the Poseidon Fish restaurant for nearly four years



Steve and his colleagues celebrate the opening of the new Poseidon restaurant. Photo by John Dearing

and has built up a successful trade. Stephano previously ran a family restaurant business, the Nautilus in West Hampstead, for over thirty years. The closure of Toms Butchers offered them the opportunity to join forces to create the new restaurant.

Menu

The menu focuses on fish and seafood, both fried and grilled, with fish mezes, fish starters, chicken and lamb kebabs, and steaks also offered. The restaurant seats 70-80 people, and opens Monday to Saturday, 11.30am to 10.30pm.

furnishings. The amalgamation of these two skills is evident in Nahling, where diners can get an authentic taste of Thailand both in the food and in their surroundings. Special touches like the colourful couchette cushions in the non-smoking section upstairs and the pagoda in the garden all add to the ambience.

In the summer they plan to serve barbecue food and special Thai salads, as well as having

a different lunch and dinner menu. At present the most popular dish is Pad Thai prawns, but whatever your choice it will be the real thing, because 90% of the staff are members of Lek's family.

Nahling is open for lunch from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm and dinner from 5.00 to 11.30 pm Tuesday-Sunday and Bank Holidays; Monday for dinner 5.00-11.30 pm Phone 8883 8688 to give this Thai a try.

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