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### Bangkok Spoon DeLuxe

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The Bangkok Spoon Deluxe opened about a month ago, and has generated a lot of buzz in Dundas. That's partially because of the sheer amount of work the owner, Neil (Teeradach) Pramauntanyathath, has put into making the space unique, and partially because the eatery's the former site of the legendary DeLuxe Restaurant. The diner became famous after the former proprietor, Sue Wong, closed it after her husband died in the 1970s. She kept the restaurant exactly as it was when she ran it with her husband; the booths, stools, counter, and even candy and cigarettes in the glass cases behind the counter were kept perfectly intact. The DeLuxe was featured in a number of movies and television shows, centred out by location scouts who were understandably drawn to the perfect vintage diner. In June, though, the DeLuxe was opened up one last time, for an auction sale where all of the fixtures and memorabilia were sold off. Then the renovations began. I didn't really know what to expect from Bangkok Spoon Deluxe; I wasn't sure how much of the diner Pramauntanyathath would have retained in the renovated space. Apart from the tip of the hat with the name of the new restaurant, the old DeLuxe has been given a thorough and complete makeover. The vintage black façade has been replaced with a dark wood veneer and modern sign, and the front is now all floor-to-ceiling windows. The doorway has been tiled in gorgeous tiger's eye mosaic, accented by an alcove with coloured glass Buddhas. Stepping through the front door, we were transported into a masterpiece of modern restaurant design: from the beautiful fountain filled with fresh flower petals and traditional Thai metal decorative panels to the deep grey walls with deep orange accents, slate floors, and modern wall tile accents, the attention to detail is stunning. The space is modern and alluring, while respecting traditional Thai elements. On a recent weekday evening, we stopped by the packed restaurant for dinner, and we were quickly seated at a table for two right at the front. Our server presented us with large menus, divided up into different meats. The restaurant serves noodle and rice dishes, as well as main courses based around beef, pork, seafood, chicken, duck, and vegetables. The entrees all come in at around \$10 each, and a noodle or rice side dish is recommended to round out the meal. Our server brought us water, and we placed our drink orders: my guest had a glass of Yellowtail Shiraz (\$6.95) and I had a coconut smoothie (\$3.75). As for food, we started with the appetizer plate (\$11.95), a selection of a bunch of their appetizers on one handy plate. We got two hand rolls – fresh vegetables like romaine lettuce and julienned carrot and cucumber wrapped in a sheet of rice paper; a couple of torpedo shrimp, tasty jumbo shrimp deep fried in a spring roll wrapper; red onion and carrot slaw in a zippy, creamy dressing; two chicken satay skewers; and two crab and cream cheese won tons. Everything was fresh and good, but the crab won tons were the standout: the crispy fried wrappers held a large spoonful of crab, and paired with the cream cheese, these mouthfuls were a rich and tasty delight. We ordered two main courses, along with a noodle dish. Our first choice was the Nuer Kata Ronn (\$11.95), strips of tender beef with chunks of onion and green and red pepper. It was served up on a hot cast iron skillet, and the black pepper sauce was added at the table for a sizzling effect. Our second entrée was the Kang Ka Ree Kai, or golden curry chicken (\$10.95), a deliciously deceptive dish: starting off sweet with a hint of coconut milk, the sauce quickly went from mild to extremely hot. Chicken, large chunks of potato, and tomato wedges were bathed in the amazing yellow sauce sauce. It achieved that perfect balancing act between sweet, sour and hot that is the goal of good Thai cuisine. Our side dish, Pad Si-Ew Pork (\$9.95), was a large plate of stir-fried wide egg noodles with Chinese broccoli and flakes of barbequed pork. They were a little on the greasy side, but they were extremely tasty, with a light oyster sauce flavour. Bangkok Spoon Deluxe doesn't really break any new ground on the food front, but their dishes are well made and beautifully presented. I'd probably go back specifically for the golden chicken curry; it was a standout. Prices are on the higher side for Thai food and the portions aren't huge, but quality is good and the surroundings are beautiful. The service was extremely attentive, and it was nice to see the owner talking to customers one-on-one. I'm sure this restaurant's star is on the rise, and if you like Asian cuisine, I'd recommend stopping by for lunch or dinner... if you can snag a table. They're open seven days a week for both dine-in and takeout service. V [ALEXANDRA BATES] Bangkok Spoon DeLuxe HHI 57 King St. W Dundas 905.628.8808



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