

## ▼ Modern European



## The Angel

Since taking over at the helm of The Angel, Shobna Joel has made it her mission to spread the word among discerning diners that this gastro pub need no longer be a special occasion only destination. Exceptional food is served at unexceptional prices, illustrated by its excellent, value for money winter warmer two-course set meal at only £9.99. Its excellent location alone tempted celebrity chef Marco-Pierre White to consider buying it before Shobna stepped in, and her policy of buying locally sourced organic produce, wherever possible, has been of great benefit to the surrounding rural community.

However, on entering you are also reminded that as well as being a restaurant serving exquisite food, The Angel is also a country pub, with the prerequisite stripped wooden floors, open log fire and wide selection of ales. The spacious dining area has décor in keeping with the pub, and the staff are knowledgeable and passionate about the food on offer.

*'...although tempted by the smoked salmon, I opted for the salad of Parma ham with fresh figs...'*

As an act of atonement for being away for Mother's Day, I took my mother along. We shared the 'while you wait' Mexicana olives, dipped in a spicy chilli marinade while for starters, although I was tempted by the Scottish smoked salmon, I opted for the salad of Parma ham with fresh figs and Dolcelatte cheese – a choice I did not regret. Meanwhile my mother chose jumbo asparagus and was equally approving.

The restaurant's policy of quality over quantity is more than vindicated and for the main course I opted for the prime Welsh tender beef fillet topped with garlic mushrooms and crispy pancetta with red wine jus. On the subject of red wine, the smooth and fruity Chilean Palena Merlot went perfectly with the food. Having always been partial to seafood, my mother needed little persuasion to go for the tiger prawns pan-fried with linguine.

For dessert, I was sold on the warm chocolate fondant with vanilla ice cream, which was well worth the 20-minute wait whilst it was lovingly prepared, while my mother settled for the Cointreau and orange crème brûlée.

In addition to her unbridled passion for serving food of the highest quality, Shobna is only the second restaurateur in the UK to stock the award-winning d'Arenberg wines from the McLaren vineyards of South Australia.

Located in a prime position on the A4 between Reading and Newbury, The Angel is already attracting diners in the know from an ever-expanding radius, and being one such diner now, I can safely predict their numbers to continually rise.



**Location:** Bath Road, Woolhampton, Berkshire, RG7 5RT

**Tel:**

**Open:** Mon-Sat noon-11pm; Sun noon-6pm

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