

## The Cellar Door

619 Bukit Timah Road (near Coronation)  
6463 5296

This purveyor of wine and fresh, tasty fare from New Zealand is one of our perennial favourites. Judging from word of mouth, probably one of yours too. When we had family in town recently for the F1 Grand Prix, it was an obvious choice for a weeknight meal.

The place has received a complete makeover since our last visit. Roy was peeved that its erstwhile rustic, homey atmosphere and welcoming wine racks had been banished without so much as a by your leave, but I could see the appeal of the restaurant's cleaner, more sophisticated look, and the economic value of fitting in more seating, including a very long, high table down the middle.

We started with a basket of bread (\$4) and typical New Zealand dips (\$4 each) – nutty olive oil, fragrant dukkah, sundried tomato and the best basil pesto in town. That's rather filling, so you might want to share a starter. The deep-fried whitebait (\$13) was satisfyingly crunchy, and the rocket, tomato and Parmesan salad I requested (not on the menu) was happily whipped up for me.

Come the main course, we were delighted with the chicken confit (\$26), and Chef kindly emerged from the kitchen to share the recipe with us in enthusiastic detail. The big venison pie (\$31) came piping hot and fresh from the oven, but was perhaps not the tastiest I've tried.



All was washed down with copious amounts of NZ wine (of course!) – Witherhills Sauvignon Blanc (\$85) and Pinot Noir (\$110), so delectable as to render dessert unnecessary. From previous and apparently hungrier visits, though, we highly recommend the Pavlova with mango and passion fruit (\$9), the sticky date pudding (\$9) and the kapiti ice cream (\$8).

The service at The Cellar Door is always friendly, well-informed and efficient. And do remember that it has its own deli next door.

Verne Maree