

# Beers & Bangers at The Fat Cow Joelle Deyo

I'm a Midwest girl by birth, so I know a thing or two about meat and potatoes, and I'm a Brit by blood, which means that I know a good banger when I taste one. The new Beers & Bangers menu at The Fat Cow, Gordon Ramsay's posh-yet-approachable gastropub (which opened in October this past year and is located in the heart of The Grove in Los Angeles) has some of the best I've ever tried—at least on this side of the Atlantic. Executive Chef Mathew Woolf designed and prepared this new menu with one idea in mind—a great one, if you ask me: beer, beer, and more beer.

Wednesday night we were treated to a tasting of Chef's creations that had us talking, laughing together, and making doe eyes at our plates while we simply ate. Okay, ate *and* drank. With our break-neck LA-paced schedules, it is not very often that we experience the kind of meals that melt away our stresses and allow us to be present in the moment, to take our time, and to be well and truly satisfied while being looked after by genuinely friendly, top-notch servers. But these rare meals are the ones we remember the most and the staff at The Fat Cow transported us outside of the ordinary as they served up rich, completely yummy fare that can only be described as traditional comfort food with an "of-the-moment" flair.

For our first course, Chef prepared a creamy Beer and Cheddar Soup and paired it with ice cold Pilsner Urquell. The pairing works wonderfully to bring out the subtle malted flavors of the Bohemian brew, which is also the special ingredient in the dish. The soup was followed by Beer Marinade and Chili Chicken Wings. The juicy bites of slightly spicy, just-right salty meat came with bottles of Third-Shift Amber and were a favorite at our table.



Following our starters, we were served a sampling of three main courses—all variations on a theme: Bangers and Mash. But these aren't your old mum's bangers and mash. Each entrée is prepared in a unique manner and each has a personality of its own. The Toad in the Hole features handmade sausage served over velvety mashed potatoes with young roasted carrots and a tender, toasty sweet-bread that melts in your mouth. From a distance, the plate looks slightly ominous, especially for banger novices, and the name falls somewhat short of inspiring gastronomical anticipation, but don't be fooled by appearances! There may not be an elegant way to do a Toad in the Hole, but it is as satisfying as it is delicious. Served up with a glass of Peroni? Even better.



The second entrée in the line-up, Duck Sausage with Mashed Potato and Mustard Glaze, was the true standout of the meal. Our table went silent for a full five minutes while we tucked into this succulent, flavorful sausage dish. In my home, silence around the dinner table was not the mark of an out-of-sync family, but an indication of pure contentment as we were nurtured by my mother's lovingly prepared meals. I was definitely transported to that special time and place in my mind—something that happens only rarely when I dine out. The mustard glaze is citrusy, tangy, and nicely textured, and the Blue Moon makes the flavors pop on the tongue. If the true beauty of good food is found in its simplicity, Chef Matt has beauty down to a science in this dish. It's smashing.



Finally, we tried a Beer-Braised Sausage with Onion Gravy. A gamier banger than those served with the other entrées, this guy sports big, bold flavors perfect for the adventurous palate. Of course, it's also served with a nice, cool Batch 19 prohibition-style lager. Altogether, the tastes rounded out the meal well and whetted our appetites for dessert, which included a dense, rich Chocolate Beer Cake and raspberry sorbet served float-style with more Batch 19 poured over the top. Slushy and refreshing, it was the dazzling final note of the meal, and left us ready to do the whole thing over again next month.

A big thanks to wunderkind Chef Matt and our wonderful servers who never missed a beat, kept the food coming, the beer flowing, and left us feeling pampered and replete. We'll be back!

If you haven't visited The Fat Cow yet, summer is the perfect time. Reserve a table on the patio for the next Beers and Bangers night, or dine inside to sample their regular menu. Oh, and if you haven't had a handmade ice cream sandwich from the Moo Bar, do! The Fat Cow is located at 189 The Grove Drive, Suite O10 in Los Angeles. For reservations, call (323) 965-1020.