

Babushka – Opening Night Review

by pablo vision

Babushka is the first eagerly awaited venture into the 'nocturnal decadence' club scene by super chef Antonin Ducasse. "A homage to de Sade, as seen through the more grotesque lenses of Dali," the pre-publicity states; but the question on all of our lips: will it be as overwhelmingly dull and tedious as de Sade?

The much reported financial and legal problems that resulted in the delay of this grand opening have, of course, meant that other clubs have already capitalised on this niche but growing market, and one cannot, therefore, help but stifle a yawn at the chains, whips, and sundry fetishalia on display in the predictably dark entrance hall, where one waits until a 'master' attaches a collar and leash before being led to the table.

Babushka promises a different dining experience with every visit, but a swift perusal of the menu would lead one to doubt that there will be much repeat business; smoked duck and roasted artichoke hearts with a hazelnut, fenugreek and orange dressing, being indicative of the lack of adventure. Possibly to distract from the ennui of *Babushka's* distinctly underwhelming menu, they have arranged a different scenario for each table. Two very old women are suspended above the adjacent table; the sallow breasts showing obvious signs of the loss of tissue and subcutaneous fat that renders them flat and saggy; their slightly inverted nipples are clamped - and patrons are invited to summon the waiters by pulling on the attached chains; however, the service seems as lifeless as the prosaic dishes on offer. Set in the centre of our own table, there is a grope cage containing five old crones, who may be fingered at will, and, sampling only three of these tired hags, the monotony of

atrophied labia and prolapsed vaginas seemed to make the wait for the starter of tomato and smoked salmon roulade even more execrable.

The entrée itself, when it finally arrived, was of adequate texture, and the salmon well balanced with the tomato, but what should have been only a hint of tarragon was decidedly unsubtle, and the dressing - that only meagrely covered the rocket and watercress - seemed to resemble the watery secretions of our table entertainment.

The wine list, it has to be said, manages to salvage something of *Babushka's* reputation — as extensive and well thought out as any in London — but also true that it might be the most exorbitant as well. The Haut-Brion is possessed of a very deep nose and commendably robust structure (unlike the thin, disagreeably elastic, vaginal walls of the caged harridans) and the crescendo of fruit is delightfully impudent.

Babushka springs its first real surprise when one is led, once again by the 'masters', into the *sadetorium* for the main course. Geriatric gimps are chained to the walls, or otherwise restrained on torture chairs, and the fragile brittle bones and reduced cognitive functioning of these unwilling submissives, does add a touch of excitement to the ambience; but, like all else in *Babushka*, it wears thin very quickly, and is not, after all, that dissimilar to the pederastic attractions on offer at *Pied Piper*, with its infinitely superior cuisine. Again there are different entertainments offered at each table: Perspex commodes to view the dribble of stress incontinence; a 'pruritus vulvae triptych'; and a highly contrived, and almost geometrical, arrangement of one varicose beldam doubly penetrated by the stumps of two hideous termagant amputees. But, much like the food, there is a parlous lack of piquancy to it all: a distinct overall sense of disappointment. Having sensibly eschewed the lack-lustre duck and orange, I opted for the suckling pig stuffed

with foie gras, and although the young flesh was succulent and tender enough, still *Babushka* conspires not to make the most of the contrast between the food and the gristly old women on display: the acidity of the marinade having caused a leaching of bone into flesh, somewhat like the reabsorption of bone in the flagellated osteoporosis-harpies that may as well be served up instead. The passé perversity of throwing tequila-flamed calamari on the same plate as suckling pig again demonstrating that *Babushka* will soon be more of forgotten corpse than the most dismal cadaver ever fornicated at *Necro*.

So, wholly unsatisfied with everything on offer so far, I proceeded to the after-dining entertainment - bypassing desserts so dire they are completely unworthy of mention. The watersports room is entirely tiled, and the no-restrictions policy is at least fully observed. I was able to fuck some ancient bound and gagged witch from behind whilst pushing her head in the toilet bowl, or rubbing her face into the excrement splattered wall. But, once again, there was an interminable wait before I was able to mouth-fuck another of the senile shrews. So just as *Babushka* fails miserably with the food, so it does here too: the ratio of clubbers to available disintegrating orifices being as poorly planned as the menus. And, it has to be said, that it is precisely the age and pliability of the assorted harridans that makes the after-dinner entertainment seem almost consensual — even to the point of absolute tedium.

Babushka certainly isn't the worst of the nocturnal decadence clubs in the city, but, at prices around £300 per head, it is not that far away from achieving that particular accolade either. It may manage to survive for a few months on the cash of unsophisticated, and unsuspecting, American tourists, but unless it can resolve its many problems, and find some sort of inspiration from somewhere, it is quite likely to drag Ducasse down with it. And that is a great pity, for - let us not forget - he was once one of the most promising chefs of his generation.

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