

noosaga ni **good living**



**Grown up ... the Bentley has been re-designed to suit its progressive cuisine.** Photo: Quentin Jones

balance and composition. Black sausage with prawn and pickled peach puree (\$16) links land and sea by way of a Mars Bar of crusty house-made blood sausage strewn with sensitively cooked prawn, fresh peach, a high-gloss puddle of pickled peach puree and dehydrated coriander seeds for a spicetastic crunch. I don't get where it's coming from at all but I think I love where it's going.

One of the most ambitious dishes, a black sesame and pea fondant (\$22), would bring joy to the most jaded vegetarian with its three glossy spheres of black sesame "skin" filled with a fresh, sweet ooze of pea puree. It's scary but in a good way. Also on the plate is a fresh chiffonade of crunchy snow peas, a lovely pea and sesame oil, a few peas, pea crumble and a wisp of cress.

Hildebrandt's wine list is as progressive as the food, pushing the trend back to the natural, organic and biodynamic with wines from crazy, wacko winemakers who insist on doing their own thing. A meaty, savoury Rayos Uva Rioja from Olivier Riviere is a steal at \$48 and brings real spirit to the table.

Steamed bacalao (\$22) features a

**Bentley Restaurant & Bar**

**Address** 320 Crown Street, Surry Hills, 9332 2344

**Open** Tues-Sat, noon to midnight

**Licensed** Yes

**Cost** About \$150 for two, plus drinks

single, firm cube of rehydrated, slow-cooked basquaise salt cod, sweet/salty pippies and mussels with fluffy white clouds of smoked potato mousse – a product Savage could, and perhaps should, market successfully. And just when I think it's all getting a bit bitsy, along comes a dish of slow-roasted duck breast, finely sliced and rolled into a long surf wave of baby-pink meat about to crash over a bed of intensely mushroomy mushrooms and little curls of tender cuttlefish (\$36). Cute touch: those tiny little slippery buttons are the caps of Japanese enoki mushrooms, snipped off their slender stems. A side dish of mustard-dressed cauliflower with nutty crumbs (\$8) also gives the hungry something to dig into with glee.

Dessert is a little challenging. Lightly salty cellophane sails pierce

a kebab of dark and light brown cubes that look just like steak and tofu. Instead, they are outrageously rich and caramelly toast custard (yes, custard infused with toast) and chocolate parfait (\$16), dropped into liquid nitrogen and flash-frozen, with a bittersweet cocoa soil and swish of lychee puree loitering underneath.

This is a key place shaping our city, showing us where the future of dining lies. It tells us you don't need tablecloths to dine supremely well, or to earn *Good Food Guide* hats; that you can be cool and modern yet still take bookings and look after people; and that you can challenge and amuse with highly contemporary food without sending your audience screaming into the street. Bentley Restaurant & Bar, your time starts now. [tdurack@smh.com.au](mailto:tdurack@smh.com.au)

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