



A fresh new look for Wembley

restaurant review

Alisan, Wembley ●●●●○

Anyone who's dined at Heavenly Hot Dogs on the walkway to Wembley's stunning new stadium knows the area has been in dire need of a decent place to eat. Now there is one. Newly opened Alisan serves up an inspired Chinese menu. Sure, there's the usual egg fried rice and prawn toast, but how about salt and pepper lotus root (an exotic version of homemade crisps), or lamb rack in black coffee sauce with chocolate chips (an unusual sweet and bitter mix)? The combinations are adventurous, and some are an acquired taste, but thank God for innovation in a culinary genre that doesn't often stray from the standard takeaway menu.

Desserts are equally daring, including red dates with poached bird's nest, a controversial Chinese delicacy of dried saliva from the swift bird, believed to improve complexion and boost sex drive, no less. We opted for melt-in-the-mouth cold rose ginkgo nut pannacotta instead. A refreshing selection of teas provided the perfect digestifs; the delicately floral black lychee brew is a must.

As for dim sum lovers, it would be criminal to go to Alisan and not order their appetiser platter, which boasts the biggest, juiciest dumplings this side of China. And despite the background music (not as pleasing on the ear as the décor is on the eye), Alisan deserves a place in your little black book for being by far the best place to meet near our new stadium.

Vegetarian options: Outstanding. There are meat-free dishes throughout the menu such as stir fried asparagus, lotus root, shimeji mushrooms, lily bulb and Macedonia nut. The tasty set vegetarian dinner for two costs £20 per person.

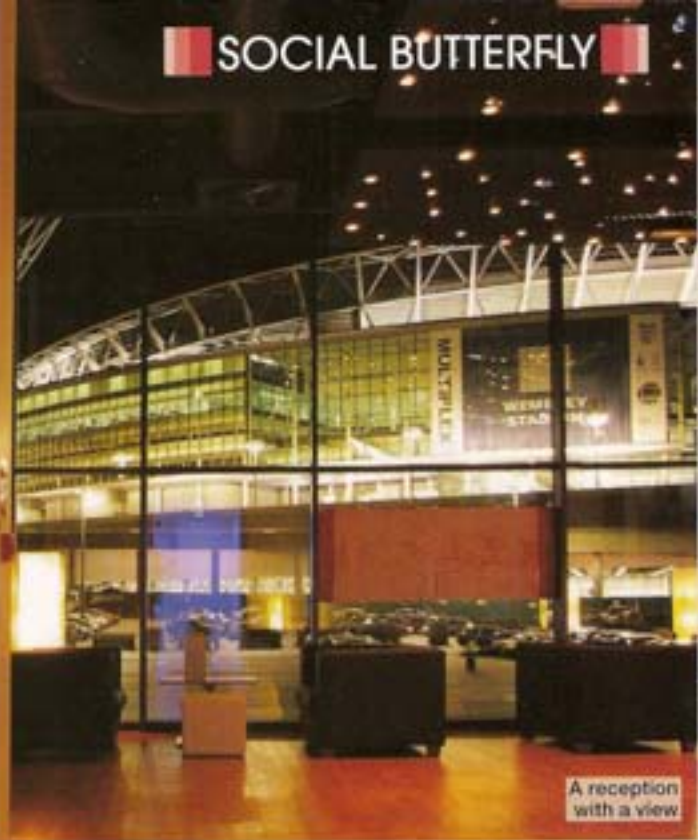
Opening Times: 12pm to 5pm and 6pm to 11pm, Monday to Thursday, and up to 11.30pm on Friday; 11am to 5pm and 6pm to 11.30pm, Saturday; 11am to 5pm and 6pm to 10.30pm, Sunday.

£: Starters from £3.80; mains from £7.50; desserts from £3.80.

Alisan, The Junction, Wembley Retail Park, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0ER. Call 020 8903 3888 or visit www.Alsan.co.uk.



Innovative Chinese cuisine beside the famous arch



A reception with a view



The light touch



Prawn mountain



Just desserts



Score a table