My Somerset Life

A diary by Brian Snellgrove

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Francoise's birthday

Very strangely we had no clear idea before today about where we should go particularly to celebrate the birth day by having lunch. Looking through TripAdvisor is all very well but I find myself swayed by the one star and two star reviews who give very measured and reasonable arguments for why they did not enjoy the event. For example one very posh restaurant got a low rating because the proprietors let young children run around and presumably to disturb the other diners.

Roughly speaking if over 90% give a five-star rating it's probably not too bad but the trick is to look at when the reviews were written and you can have a number of bad reviews inside 2023 but unbeknown to you there was a change in management at the end of the year so the review should really be disregarded.

Before this I did feel quite flat at the day because nothing had been organised and I felt I had let Francoise down but she was as puzzled as I was about a lack of direction. Normally our inspiration does not let us down. Anyway, about nine o'clock, I decided to pay a visit to a restaurant we had known for some time, see below. We then decided we would visit the Yeo Valley establishment which includes a restaurant which was highly spoken of.

I also realise that I had done all I could in terms of my new venture due to start 25th September in Frome and I now had to hand it over to others to bring forward my ideas in a practical way.



We ended up by going to **Hartley's Kitchen Bistro** which is near Wells. We have been there many times and we I've never had any bad food and the proprietor, the ever affable Paul, always greets us and looks after us as best he can. We have known him so long that we can ask personal questions as to how he is and I asked a question about the arrangements for mailing us with information, so it's not all meaningless dribble.

We then went off to the Yeo Valley organic group that have an organic garden, but also a restaurant which they call rather and wisely in my opinion 'The canteen' I got on very well with the organiser and found myself writing a 2000 word essay to him on his website. The kitchen was a hotel at one point and has wonderful views over the Chew Valley. My first visit was pleasant and I don't think it will be the last. I don't have a huge amount of energy for diary writing at the moment but here are some images. If you want a meal with a difference here is the web site. Blagdon, Bristol BS40 7SQ



very pleasant dining room



this was a converted hotel



I had the honor to be the black sheep of my family



old fashioned Ordinance Survey map





men's toilets with organized graffiti



The building in its previous incarnation as a hotel

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