

# At Q2, they understand 'Thai spicy'

**Q**2 sounds like the name of an ocean liner, or maybe a car. In fact, the name stands for Two Qs: Quality and Quantity. This midtown Thai restaurant, done up in black and white tiles set off by splashes of color from brocade dolls' dresses, is so shiny-new that you can almost see price tags hanging from the light fixtures.

Not quite. It's owned by the same people as Aura, an Asian fusion spot in the 30s, and if Aura is a good place to go before the Garden, then Q2 is a natural for before the theater. Much of the menu will be familiar, which is not a bad thing when the cooking is good and when you tell the waitstaff, as we did, that you want it done "Thai spicy."

## eats beat

That's what we got with the duck salad, a fresh, crisp tangle of slivered duck, cashews, pineapple and thinly sliced red onions, scallions, zucchini, and Granny Smith apples in fiery lime dressing (\$9.95). Much mellow were disks of curry-scented ground fish fried till they were crunchy and dipped in a fresh cucumber pickle sauce (\$4.95).

The chef remembered that we wanted "Thai spicy" when he simmered surprisingly big shrimp in a rich massaman curry sauce that was thick with diced potatoes and onions and sprinkled with chopped peanuts (\$10.95). But he lit no fire at all in a Chinese-influenced stir-fry of chewy broad noodles, asparagus and slivered green peppers in a sweet yellow bean sauce (\$7.95). The most heat came with fried tofu cubes topped with sliced green beans, onion, garlic, Thai basil leaves and jalapeno peppers (\$8.95). This was hot enough to make me cough and my eyes water.

I meant to cool off with just sweet milky Thai iced coffee. Instead, we shared an Asian rice pudding of warm sweet sticky rice that had a scoop of vanilla ice cream melting over it: \$4.95 and irresistible.

Irene Sax

**COOL CUSTOMERS:**  
Q2's dishes range from mild to fiery.



LINDA OBUCHOSKA

✿ Q2, 788 Ninth Ave., at 52nd St., (212) 262-2236. Mon.-Thurs. 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Fri.-Sun. to midnight. All cards.

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