



Lloyd Park

## SCANDALS

It is a pleasure to report that *Scandals Restaurant* in Christchurch is one of the finest restaurants in New Zealand, and also reasonably priced. There are no false notes or attempted big-noting; it remains BYO as a matter of policy.

Christchurch has always been a problem city for restaurants — as far as travellers go anyway. The more established licensed restaurants have in the past been of a good standard, but in this tight-fisted conservative city they are doing a bit of a freeze in these tight-money times. The time for the high-quality BYO has arrived. Unfortunately most in Christchurch appear permanently booked out, especially when you phone at 6pm for a table the same night. Not so with *Scandals*: despite a long wait on the phone, the service from host Thomas Manning (pictured above with chef Anne Beetham), was pleasant, unobtrusive and thoroughly professional. His professional attitude is reflected in the staff and the service they offer.

The menu is one of the most surprising in the country. The speciality is fresh seafood, but it includes steaks,

salads, beef stroganoff, fish of the day, and duck. The menu changes every six weeks or so.

Trying to sample the speciality of the house at one sitting (and being slightly greedy as well), madame Editor and I had whitebait fritters (juicy, plenty of whitebait); Scallops à la Parisienne (sautéed in butter, with garlic and parsley, smothered in a parmesan and white wine sauce, served in a scallop shell); Crayfish Newburg (morsels of fresh crayfish tail flamed in brandy, spiced with garlic, onions and parsley, served in a liaison of cream and egg yolks, all served in the shell of the crayfish); Saumoneau Chinook (fresh baby Nelson-bred salmon, pan-fried whole and served in a delicate shrimp sauce and garnished with tomato — see the photo above). In every case the flavour was as it should be — the additives not over-done, the seafood cooked to perfection. The only criticism I have is that the whole baked potato was served in the ubiquitous silver foil. Not good enough, Thomas.

*Scandals*, 265 High Street, Christchurch, Telephone 64-754 American Express, Bankcard, Diners Club, Visa Speciality — Seafood, Seats 75, Reservations essential, BYO. Open for dinner Tuesday-Saturday inclusive. ■

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The  
Melba

This is a swinging place recently opened in Auckland. A tremendous amount has been spent on the decor and design; it's an elegant place to see and be seen, right in the centre of Auckland. The management is still a bit abrupt — large parties are **not** encouraged, but once the teething problems are over and the staff stabilises it should be better than now. The potential is there for an amazingly successful dinner/disco/socialising centre for the Beautiful people of Auckland. Worth seeing, soon.

*Melba*, 2 Courthouse Lane, Auckland, Telephone 33-714 American Express, Bankcard, Diners Club, Visa Speciality — Chinook Salmon, Seats 60, Reservations essential, Fully licensed. Open Monday-Saturday for lunch, dinner and supper. ■