

**COLOURFUL neon lights form a bright pyramid of letters announcing The Suite's presence in Shenton Park.**

And inside, the glow of hanging light-shades against bare brick just makes things better.

The verdict, on leaving the little "shared plate" diner-cum-bar after a fabulous interlude of eating and drinking, was that Shenton Park is on a roll and is leaving starchy older sister Subiaco for dead.

I like the intimacy of The Suite, the casual nature, the itchy-bitsy food, the Spanish feel to the winelist and, of course, the history. My mum just happened to sell ice creams here when it was a shop adjoining the old cinema next door.

Brendon Aitken, one of the Darkhorse consortium that also owns The Cabin in Mt Hawthorn, is thrilled to be preserving a slice of the past while catering to hip young things with a dazzling array of cocktails – not ice creams – at the bar.

And this is one place you can relax without having to eat and it's already doing a roaring Friday night trade.

However, on a cursory glance at the menu, most people will opt for a chow-down thanks to the competent work of young chef Scott Darlow.

There's an enticing mixture of all the things to make your mouth water and flavour combinations that sing – pork belly and pineapple (\$17), harissa lamb cutlets with sweet potato puree (\$18), beet salad with goat's cheese (\$12) and crab ravioli (\$14).

We ordered blindly, however, with nary a suggestion from our waitress. She was polite and professional, but it would help if diners were told how the menu worked. Instead, we played a guessing game and when the dishes we ordered were plonked in the middle with no side plates we figured it out ourselves.

Warmed bread (\$6) slices were from Barrett's and came with olive oil for dipping. Tequila-cured salmon with radish and fennel (\$12) was a great flavour combo, almost as good as the pork and pineapple pair, which channelled the thoughts of the old ham and pineapple pizza.

A beet salad was wonderfully earthy with crumbled goat's cheese and a Spanish sherry dressing – and it all came to a decadent end with a chocolate and peanut butter fondant (\$14). Peanut butter? Yes, and with the crunch came the oozing chocolate.

Two glasses of Bodegas Carchelo (\$11 a glass) gave a rose-tinted view of things throughout the night.

And the noise level hit just the right pitch – ambient without being annoying. And after checking out the little lounge area at the back we left with the feeling that life is truly sweet – or suite.



Source: The Sunday Times

**THE SUITE**

**208a Nicholson Rd, Shenton Park**

**9381 2170**

**Licensed**

**Open seven days for breakfast, lunch and dinner**

**FOOD: Three and a half stars**

**AMBIENCE: Four stars**

**DRINKS: Four stars**

**SERVICE: Two and a half stars**

**LOVE: History and vibe**

**LOATHE: Lack of information when ordering**

**RATING: 15/20**