

TIBITS

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VISIT TO TIBITS, 12-14 HEDDON STREET, LONDON W1 – 20TH NOVEMBER 2008

Do you work near Regents Street – if you do then I envy you as you have on your doorstep a new restaurant where you can either sit in or get a takeaway. Tibits in Heddon Street is a delightful vegetarian oasis in the arid desert of the West End. Since the demise of Country Life there has been no vegetarian restaurant of this standard in this area and it is a most welcome addition to the eateries of London. On the evening of my visit a Thursday evening in mid-November in the middle of the global credit crunch it was heartening to see the number of people eating here.

It was unfortunate that my intended companion could not accompany me on this visit but I was given a very warm welcome as soon as I walked in the door of this delightful restaurant. First impressions are always important and the bright decor is immediately eye-catching as is the central “boat” where the buffet is laid out. The friendly staff members talk everyone through the method of service; on the “boat” is a selection of 12 hot dishes and 24 cold salads, these are varied every day according to seasonal availability. One hot dish that stood out when I visited was coconut-peanut balls. All dishes were labelled and if you were in any doubt about any of the ingredients the staff have a full list to refer to and will check for you. There are an amazing variety of salads, the desserts are fairly limited but included fresh fruit salad, chocolate cream and a delicious gingerbread-orange tiramisu.

Normally no booking is necessary unless you are going in a large group.

Tibits also has a branch in the newly opened Westfield Shopping Centre in Shepherd’s Bush, which I visited at the beginning of January and provides a perfect setting to sit down for a delicious meal or snack while out shopping. On the day I visited while there were queues for some other restaurants there was no queue at Tibits and although it was quite busy there were tables available. The setup is the same as Heddon Street where you select your food from the boat and take it to the counter to be weighed and choose any drinks, pay, choose your table and enjoy your food.

Both branches are well worth a visit.