



## Manchester Evening News - January 2006

### Cocktail Heaven

Dashing and debonair is how I would describe Room. The sumptuous new bar and restaurant on King Street has all the trappings of this fashionable area of town - sleek furnishing, subdued styling and some very posh wallpaper.

It feels like a very exclusive club, and I am reminded of the building's previous incarnations as Reform and Hurricane. It seems like the sort of place that works well in the short term but has problems maintaining the clientele, perhaps due to its first floor location or an impression of exclusivity.

Anyway, let's hope that Room will defy the odds and prosper, as I really enjoyed the friendly, unpretentious service and the saccharin-free pampering.

The bar menu is packed with exotic-sounding cocktails and I did sample two of the most splendid examples - The Fall Mojito, a kumquat, mint and vintage rum concoction topped with Grand Marnier for a heavier flavour than the usual minty mixtures, and a Rainy Day Companion for a sharp alternative to the usual gin and tonic.

Both were on the happy hour menu, which allows everyone between 5 and 7pm to select some of Room's finest cocktails and sample them for only £4. Great if you fancy a bit of luxury prior to the trek home or as a precursor to the Room dining experience, which is screened behind the illuminated glass bar area.

The relaxed tone of the bar stretched to the music, too, which was a laidback soundtrack reminiscent of Jamie Lidell and the like that made the enormous regal space seem intimate.

There is a small DJ booth to the side of the leather couch seating for the late night soirees and you can go the whole, elegant hog and hire the private Rose Room for entertaining and showing off.

Personally, I loved the anteroom with its swish chairs and expensive hues. I felt like I had entered a 1970s James Bond set. If you want the luxury of surroundings and skill of bar staff, but without the additional attitude, Room will not disappoint.