

☒ **Some things are best not planned.**

Last Wednesday we both had a day off work by chance. Diane has Wednesdays off to compensate for her ten hour Saturdays and I had an appointment with the optician which they had to rebook. So the little eating army were at school and we had an unplanned day to ourselves. I could have fished my tools out of the shed and sorted the annoying utility room door out but just as a casual thought I suggested we jump in the car and take a road trip as our daughter and her fiends call it. No great persuasion was required...

Having parked up in York and wandered round the shops and sections of the wall we both fancied some lunch. Diane thought it would be nice to eat outdoors. Easier said than done in York and after trying several places we decided the chances would be better out of town. It was only half eleven when we left so the day was still young. We drove back through a series of country lanes and eventually came to Cawood. This looked promising. Looks can be deceiving, both pubs we found were closed. So mobile phone at the ready and not wanting to be beaten it was time to try the Trip Advisor App. That came installed on my phone.

Monk Fryston Hall? I vaguely knew there was a hotel in Monk Fryston, I'd noticed the signs on the odd occasion I'd driven through the village, but neither of us had every thought of it as a place you might be able to just drop in for lunch. We couldn't have been more wrong. As we drove up the drive the hall was impressive although to be fair my impression was tainted by the daunting possible expense. I didn't need to have worried. The lady at reception was warm and friendly and there was a relaxed atmosphere about the place. We asked if it was possible to have lunch outside and without more-ado we were seated on a wide patio overlooking beautiful gardens. There were several other couples nearby eating and the food looked great.

So our meals.

As we were due home within a couple of hours and the eating army would be back from school we decided to just have main courses. Diane picked Pan fried Sea-bass fillets and I went for Duo of Helmsley Pork. Our meals arrived quite quickly as there were a large party of older people dining inside and both dishes looked incredible. Everything was cooked to perfection presented with style and tasted wonderful. The belly pork fell apart and was succulent and just wonderful.

Diane's sea-bass had a crisp skin and a satisfying hint of lemon. The vegetables which are often an afterthought in some restaurants were tasty and looked great. At just short of £25 including drinks I had to check the bill. I was expecting at least £40.

Monk Fryston hall, we will be back.