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Pho, Pho, Pho – it's magic

ADRIAN SEAL eats at Pho
 22 New Broadway, Ealing, W5 2XA,
 020 3058 2778 www.phocafe.co.uk

STYLISH authentic design meets fresh vibrant Vietnamese street food is the story behind Pho's arrival on the Ealing food scene.

In the last 12 months there has been explosion of restaurant openings in Ealing town centre – which is great news for lovers of a variety of different cuisines – and the opening of Pho in New Broadway nails another colour to the international food map.

There are no real frills to the Pho experience and it's not a restaurant that you might linger in for a long lazy lunch or romantic evening – but what it does do is serve authentic Vietnamese street food with a big smile in a congenial setting.

Instantly recognisable by its distinctive bold red neon Pho symbol the long narrow restaurant has a good vibe about it, with the design by Neil Masters of CantorMasters sitting happily with the food its serves.

Exposed brick walls, distressed dark timber panelling and flooring and clever use of black bamboo pendant feature lighting create a warm neighbourhood

feel while a striking original graffiti art mural of a Vietnamese street scene dominates one wall. We settled into our compact wooden booth and joined the throng of shoppers taking a break from their pre-Christmas shopping in a welcome haven from the wild and blustery weather outside.

We kicked off with well-cooked fried baby squid (£8.75) bought to life with a warming salt and pepper and lime dip and then tucked into a large spring roll packed with flavoursome king prawn, crab and pork (£4.50). A traditional Vietnamese classic dipping sauce (nouch cham) with chili overtones lifted the roll into a real palate pleaser.

Fresh vibrant ingredients with crunch and texture were the star of a shredded chicken salad (£7.25) which was mixed through with herbs, peppers and a chilli and ginger dressing left a clean taste in the mouth and hints of heat.

Two refreshing Saigon beers went down well before we tackled the main courses – service is quick and efficient and comes with a friendly smile – both classic to a country which is very proud of the food it serves.

Pho (pronounced fuh) is the



■ AUTHENTIC: (From top) Vietnamese rice noodle soup, spring rolls with seafood, shredded chicken salad and chicken curry at Pho in Ealing Broadway (right)



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