

THE ROYAL ALBERT HOTEL

16/20 

140 Commonwealth Street, Surry Hills 9281 2522
www.royalalberthotel.net.au

Bamboo, rattan, lots of (empty) bird cages and an old bicycle on a wall create a pan-Asian street-stall vibe at one end of this Victorian pub. The gang from Potts Point's Bamboo Dumpling Bar recently took over a trad pub-grub space overlooking Reservoir Street, and it's buzzing. The chef in the tiny kitchen is of Chinese background by way of Vietnam, and there is ample evidence of his devotion to dumplings. Try the steamed pork and chive variety, or the xiao long buns, which burst with hidden juices (both \$8.50 for five). Yum. A chic crowd tuck cheerfully into chilli prawn ricepaper rolls, or seafood and kaffir-lime skewers that are reminiscent of Thai fish cakes on chunky bamboo sticks (both \$8.50 for three). Mains are just as good. Peking-duck pancakes with hoi sin sauce (three for \$11.50) are juicy; poached chicken with pickled ginger salad is light and bright. Order at the counter: the food is delivered to your table by efficient but characterful waiters. There's about a dozen red and white wines to choose from, as well as half-a-dozen sparklings. Expect to leave feeling well fed but not waddling – and not too poor if you've gone for the \$10 Monday-Saturday lunch specials (Sichuan spicy noodles, barbecued pork with rice and Asian greens). The Sunday special – roast suckling pig (\$20) – is said to be a standout. Book ahead.

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Prices \$9.50–\$15.50

Open Daily noon–3.30pm, 5–10pm

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