

For a lunch or brunch to be memorable there need to be several features in play - and the combination of these factors make for a wow experience, we'll be back, plus friends!

This was the case for the discovery of the month in Abu Dhabi!



The Novotel Al Bustan needs no introduction, it being one of the landmark hotels of the UAE's capital city, but pool-side bar/restaurant/food is always an iffy prospect because even the top hotels see it as a sort of fast-snacky place, and serve accordingly - I mean, if you want to dine, then don't go sit on a deckchair in your swimming trunks, head up to the hotel's restaurants...

But Waves is different - and Waves got it right.

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Allow me to explain.



Yes, Waves is poolside - make that pools side, as there are three, city-sized - but Waves itself goes from one end of the terrace all the way to the other, and so the space is huge!

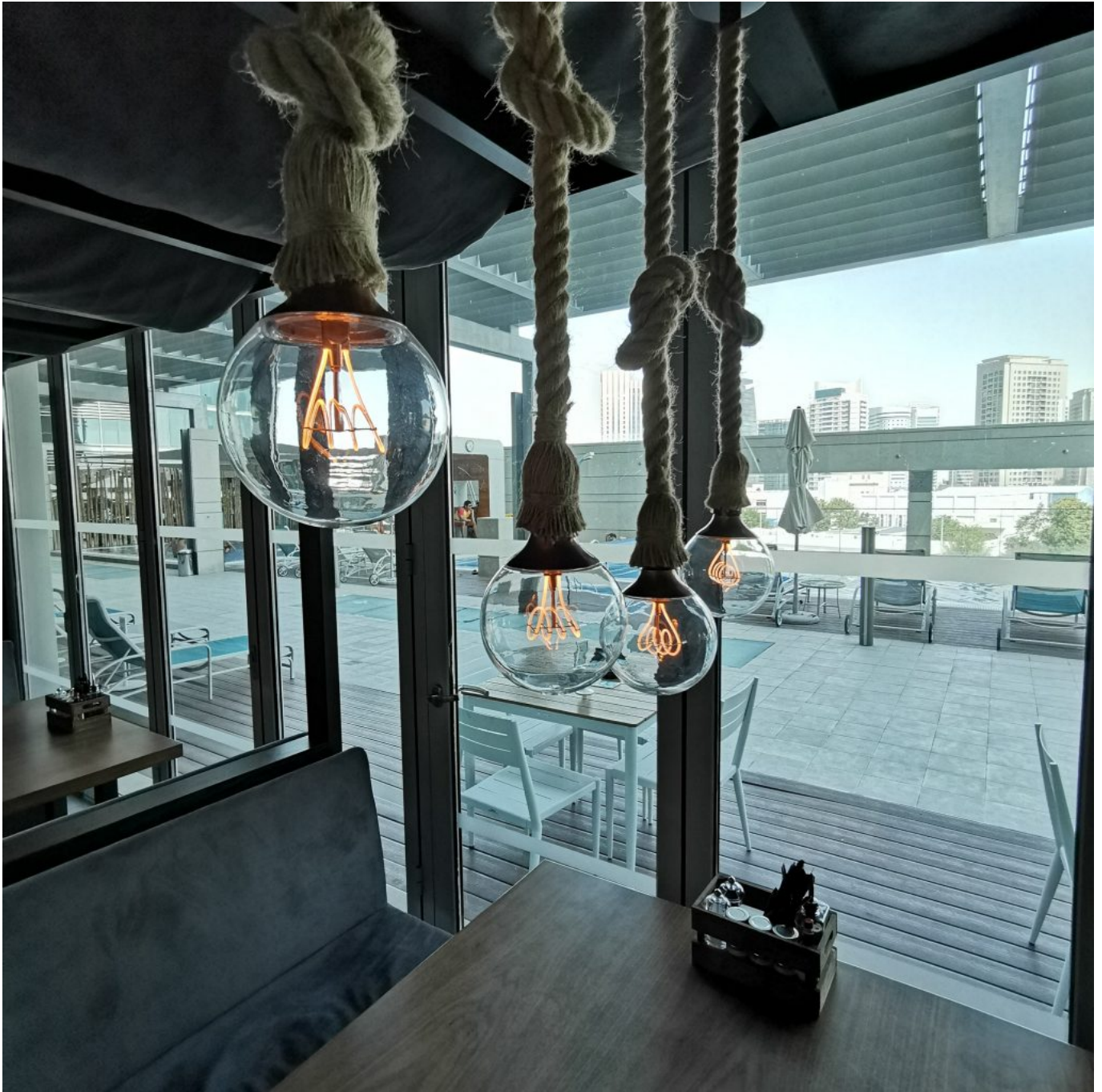
Huge enough that it can very cleverly create many zones, or niches, in which you can cuddle up with your party and create your own space.



There's the traditional poolside, but there's also the easy lounge area...



At the same time there's the indoor booths, with a totally different ambiance,



and there's the sports bar – both lounge and tiki counter.





Naturally, fully-stocked and ready for service - plus a fantastic variety of special nights and hours and promotions!



Of course, courteous silver-star service is to be expected!



But I'm not even done!

There's also an outdoor dining corner...



... and hanging nests!



So all of these niches offer individuality to suit your preferences, and the concept of the “poolside snack bar” is expanded smoothly into an energetic sports bar, a proper counter bar, funky chill-out lounge, etcetera - and all wrapped up in professional hotel service!

But, the food?

I’ll just answer that by describing the sliders menu option... and you tell me what you can expect from Waves...

Sliders

- green bun, chicken patty, lettuce, onion, tomato, avocado, coleslaw, capsicum, and cheddar
 - black bun, roasted beef fillet, caramelized onion, barbeque sauce, tomatoes, lettuce, sauteed mushrooms,
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and cheddar

- mini burger bun, beef patty, bacon, tomato, fried egg, lettuce, gherkins, and cheddar

Yes, that's one order!



A true marvel - the three amigos that arrive to your table, accompanied by a basket of very good thick fries, and fresh and light coleslaw, were each in itself worthy of being a stand-alone burger.



And each one clearly built on top-quality ingredients, and I'd say made from scratch.

The combination of parts in each burger blended perfectly into the whole, and it really was love at first bite... for each burger!



Yes, they really were as good as they look!

But all the other dishes brought forward that same charm and mastery from the kitchens , too.



From exciting sides, like the edamame - would you prefer spicy or salty? - to the most delicious sweet potato fries I've ever tasted!



And, a lovely rendition of a grilled sea bass, super fresh:



But the clincher was the following: most epicureans know that for specific traditional dishes it is the small specialist restaurants that out-class the professionals - those where people line up onto the sidewalks, and cars double-triple park out front... and that is especially true for the Lebanese mezzes (small dishes, like starters).

The professional, international-standard restaurants struggle to keep up with Grandma's recipes of delicacies back from the Bekaa Valley village!

And so I've never been fully satisfied ordering these items outside of the popular neighborhood eateries - they do come out alright, just never exquisite... except, you guessed it, at Waves...



The Oriental Taste platter was exceptional, and I suspect Waves has hired Grandma from Lebanon as consultant in the kitchen!



To conclude, a happy alignment of space, sterling service, hotel-quality ingredients, and magical recipes converged at Waves to deliver a truly delightful lunch - from the quintessential poolside snackeroo to a boisterous sports game, and from a cozy coffee morning to a healthy mid-afternoon smoothie, and then onwards to a proper weekend brunch or evening meal, Waves hit the sweet spot with flying colors!



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