

Mare Mare restaurant, Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island Resort in Abu Dhabi

Here is the restaurant's frontal scenery...



...and here is your restaurant, on the ground floor!



So, between the sea and the pools, Mare Mare is directly in the most amazing location possible, within the luxurious Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island Resort - it is really in another intergalactic dimension, where time and space take on their own quantum physics, and your whole being just relaxes and unwinds - spectacular!

And we haven't even entered the restaurant proper!





Spacious and elegant, and with a fully-stocked bar



High ceiling, and kissed by natural light, and in the cooler months caressed by the sea breeze - the whole glass facade folds open! - this is the view from your table:



And yet, it is more than just its fortunate location... or the elegant decor...

You see, a restaurant needs to have a beating heart. I don't care if it's the most opulent, most expensive - look at the diamond chandeliers! - or if it's the smallest hole-in-the-wall in a souq... it has to be honest, to be real.

Especially in the UAE, with our plethora of five-star restaurants, I'm sure you've been to places where, yes, it was luxurious and amazing, but it just felt artificial... like a fake Hollywood movie set.. like a 3D project created by eager designers and marketing gurus... and yet totally lacking soul.

And so I am myself surprised to report to you that Mare Mare's top feature wasn't actually the best-in-Abu-Dhabi beach seafont location or the superb interior decor - and you've seen in the photos just how amazing it
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is! - and neither is it going to be the food - which you'll soon see is also absolutely spectacular and delicious!... no, I really believe the best feature of Mare Mare from my experience visiting is actually its true and sincere soul.

And that is something that can't be bought.



But it can be built - one day at a time, with genuine passion and consistency, and dedication - and, yes, overcoming difficulties, and creatively launching new ideas, but especially by being sincere in your enthusiasm for delivering an authentic dining experience, that may be sophisticated all you like, but it is grounded in the roots of culinary and hospitality tradition - from the deepest point of the heart.

And that was Mare Mare.

And here is the human heart of Mare Mare - a young but very experienced, and majestically talented Italian Chef, Simone Federici.



And with his team, this is what you can experience at Mare Mare:



But, before we get ahead of ourselves, back to the basics: the first test of any Italian restaurant - the bread.



Freshly-made, super crunchy on the outside yet soft and spongy on the inside, you may think it's laughable, but actually it is a crucial measure of the attention to all details and to the willingness to not cut corners due to the convenience of outsourcing what is a laborious process - at Mare Mare, I kept the bread at the table even after the appetizers were over because it was simply excellent!

The menu is eclectic and leaning towards fresh seafood - clearly, given the seaside location! - but, also a very interesting and traditional lamb ragu', a meat-sauce lasagna, as well as some solid carnivore mains, with heavy-duty steaks, and even a veal Cotoletta alla Milanese (from my city: Milano!) are on offer - and I also noticed a good vegetarian selection. Overall, a very intelligently curated menu.

However, it is the seafood that reigns supreme at Mare Mare!

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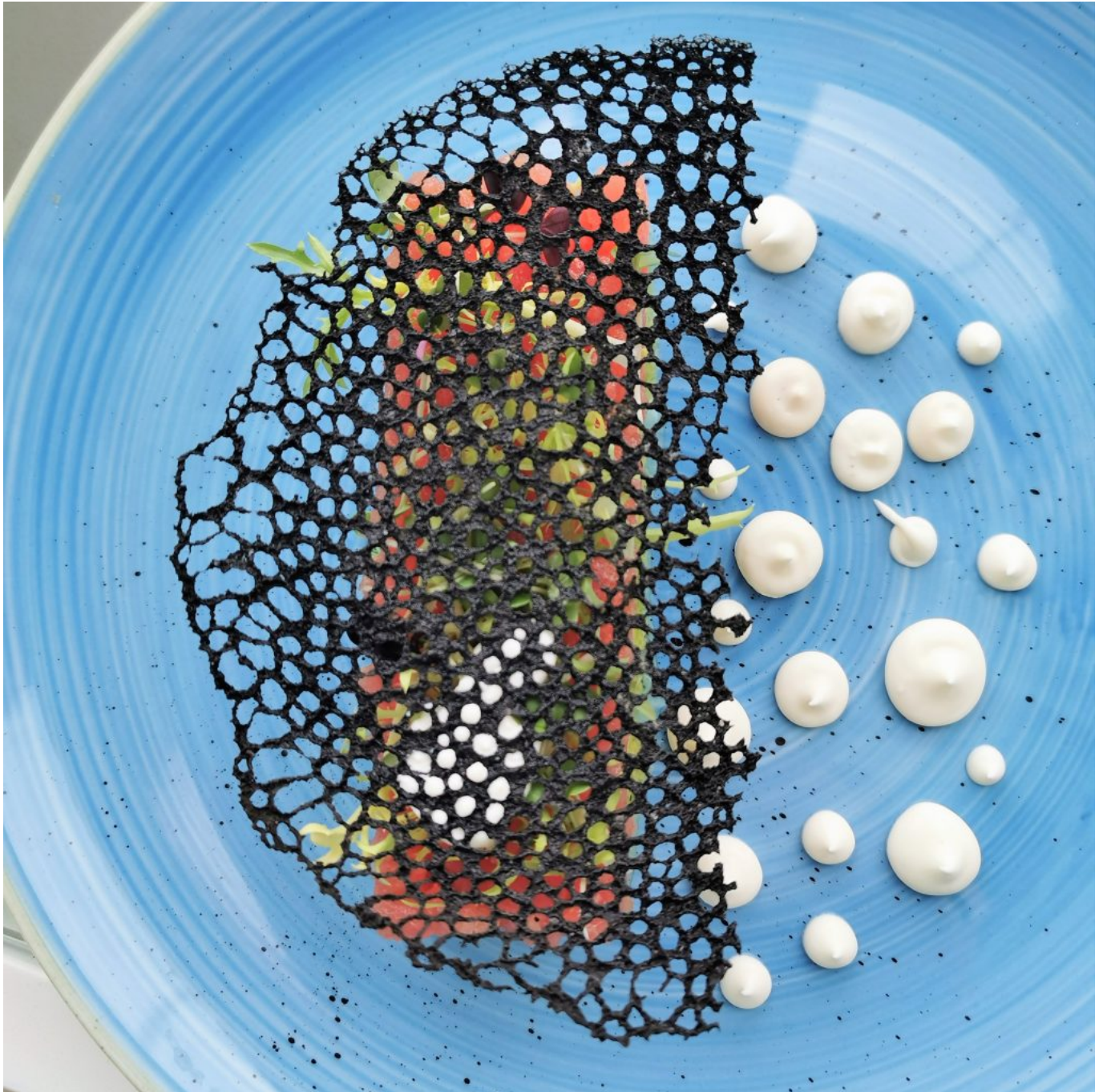
Several varieties of shrimp and shellfish are listed in the appetizers, and I advise you to take it slow, because you have a world-class culinary journey ahead of you!

Not only that, but Chef Simone is also an accomplished and well-reputed Sommelier, and you'll find the drinks menu quite enticing, although I'd most certainly follow whatever the good Chef recommends.



Continuing with our antipasti, a tasty tuna tartare, with avocado base, and a superb thinly-sliced octopus salad rounded up our starters at Mare Mare.





The presentation was excellent, but it was the attention to detail in the choice of quality ingredients and preparation that really made these dishes spectacular.



And then the first course blew us away!

A simple but also extraordinary pizza - with a unique approach to the tomato base, and then loaded with creamy burrata.



Excellent and authentic Italian dough, and made all the more amazing by the background...



Add to the pizza a plate of house-made delicate and outstanding tagliolini with Canadian lobster, and time stands still as the taste receptors in the palate take over the brain's function - and all peripheral thoughts stop, and there is just flavors, and aroma, and textures; and occasionally a deep and satisfying mmmmmmm escapes from the throat - it is really the pinnacle of Italian seafood delicacies.







And in due time, when you think you are fully satisfied, desserts enter the scene!

And you are presented with a mallet to pound that cheeky Sbrisolona tart, as well as made-from-scratch zabaglione custard, and a berry compote (not too sweet, and relying on the quality of the fruit selections to give it taste) - not only a delicious end to a spectacular meal, but also a fun activity... who doesn't like to swing a wooden mallet to knock off chunks of yumminess!?





Overall, a spectacular dining experience. One that is perfectly suited to the location and ambiance of one of Abu Dhabi's finest beachfront resorts, and also exceptional in the delivery of a world-class culinary journey proudly representing Italy, but especially in its sincerity and genuineness, in that the sophistication is understated and an almost incidental part of the dining experience, and not presented as a pretentious foundation of the restaurant's essence.

Mare Mare restaurant - a genuinely spectacular weekend destination in Abu Dhabi in all regards - even if there were no sea.



Rated **4.3** 28 votes
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