



Marco's New York Italian restaurant at the Fairmont Abu Dhabi

For a special occasion, choosing the right restaurant, with a superb selection on the menu, and a smooth ambiance can be quite a task in Abu Dhabi.

But for a memorable evening, looking for a classy but chilled atmosphere - definitely not all pompous and stuffy - and with chic, modern food; maybe a nice outdoor terrace, but cozy, few tables; add in a touch of special music...

Marco's New York Italian is your place!



Not only is Marco's hosted at the fab Fairmont hotel, and that immediately gives the entrance, through the lobby, and down the long staircase, a touch of class and sophistication,



but also the apertivo bar area is a fantastic way to open the evening with a luscious drink in anticipation of the dinner itself.

And do feel free to take your time, and extend that pre-dinner cocktail into an enchanting conversation in the lounge - Marco's is not a place where you feel rushed; in fact, an unwinding is part of the experience.



As for dining, the interior seating is lovely,



but for Valentine's Day, we had planned something a little romantic...

... and looking out from Marco's entrance, the whole world of love awaits.



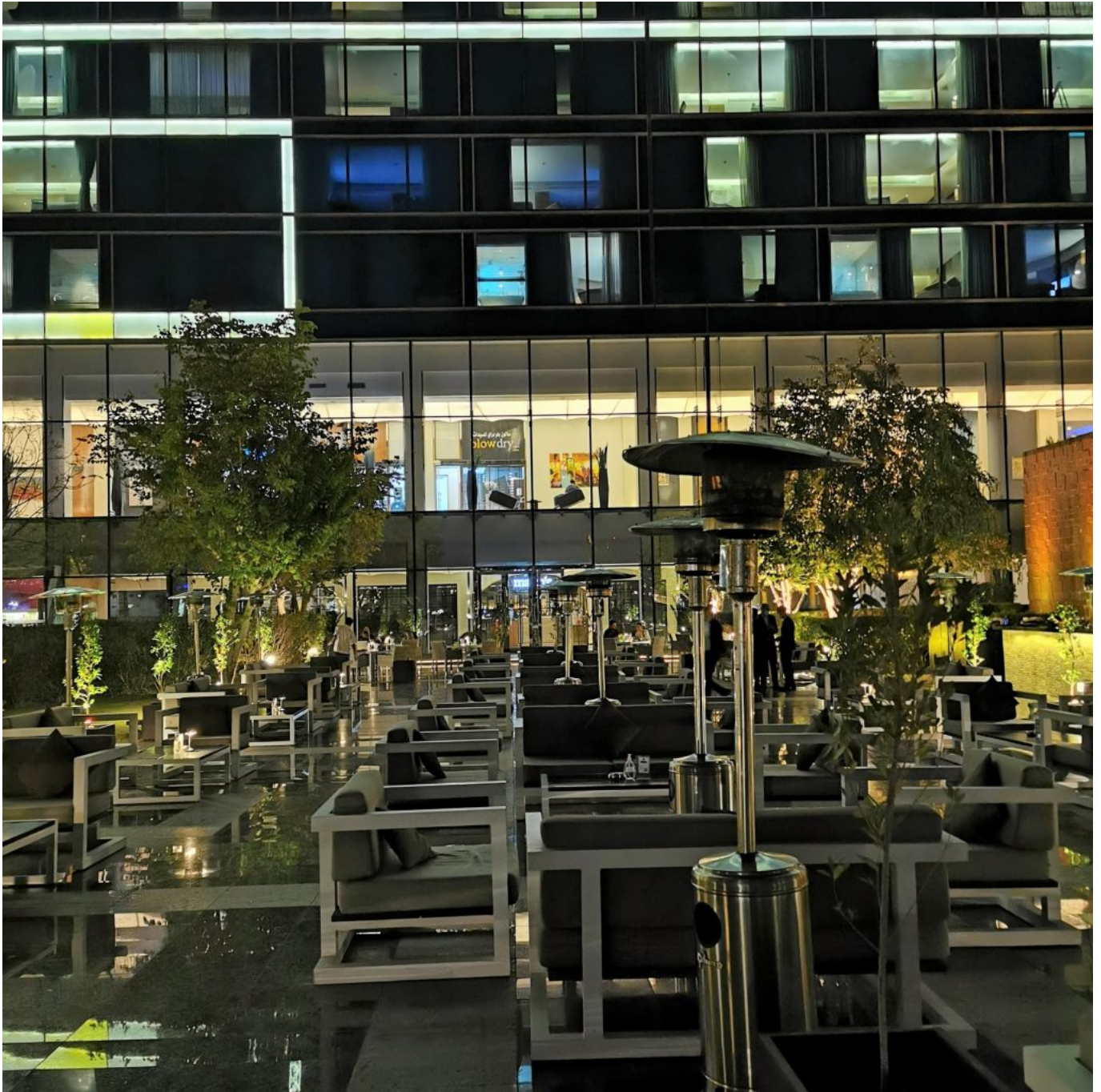
In fact, outdoors dining offered just the perfect mood we were looking for!



And our table was cozy and private, given that Marco's maintains only 6 dining tables on the terrace.



The rest of the expansive terrace, leading down all the way to the Grand Canal, with the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque directly opposite, is a lounge that gets busier later - and which makes the transition from dinner to post-dinner lounging very smooth... but that's another story!



Marco's menu is eclectic and a wonderful presentation of modern, Italian-inspired, contemporary New World dishes.

And each serving is unique in the Chef's interpretation - so it's a familiar dish, but as you taste it, your eyebrows go up in surprise, as there's something - a special touch - that catches your attention, and that tweak of favorite recipes makes the dining experience at Marco's that much more special.

For instance, the Quarter Salad, with Blue Cheese and Chives dressing, is presented like this:



And you think, "What in the world is this?"

But after some deliberation, you try it - and you smile!

A creamy, velvety, dreamy dressing - pungent but rounded, mature and enticing on the palate. And the lettuce: crispy to the point that now, finally, I understand why it's called Iceberg lettuce... all these years, and I'd never really tasted this ubiquitous salad leaf prepared as it should be!



And this theme repeats at every dish - and you know that there was a genius in the kitchen preparing each and every one.

For instance, take tha pizza...

How different can Marco's pizza be compared to any other pizza available anywhere in the UAE's capital city?

You'd be surprised - it's totally unique. And you could blindfold me three months from now, and serve me a slice among ten others, and I would recognize it instantly. That is perhaps what celebrity Chef Marco Pierre White was aiming for with restaurants carrying his name.



And look closer...



And so went the dinner, out on the terrace, an intimate dinner, a marvelous evening.

We gleefully dove into American-style nachos... licking our fingers and laughing like children...



We sampled an excellent Black Cod...



and were delighted by the lightly pickled cabbage used for the Russian Coleslaw.



All the while being serenaded by the suave voice of Frank Sinatra, and other timeless late '50s classics, and sipping away at the equally-amazing drinks menu.

Until it was time for dessert...

..and what a dessert! I can only describe it as a sensual waterfall of molten chocolate over the most decadent brownie I have ever tasted - a stupendously sinful dessert without boundaries!



And so the evening dining at Marco's New York Italian was a formidable success, highlighting that touches of "special" really do make the difference, in a relationship just as in fine-dining.

