

We can expect restaurants to serve delicious food, but very rarely do we find a culinary paradise serving absolutely exceptional dishes – such is dining at Paradiso.



But let us first consider...

What is “delicious”?

I mean, anybody can cook a fillet of sea bass with ditalini pasta, even following a recipe, but I assure you it is nowhere near the below masterpiece:



Not only in terms of culinary technique, in that the fish was crispy golden, but tenderly cooked – and superbly fresh – but especially in the way the flavors were arranged, magically, carressing the palate in waves, and yet not overpowering the delicate white fish.

And yet there was something even more than that: something ethereal, yes, paradisaical.

At first bite, you realize that this is a dish that could be displayed in the nearby Louvre museum, representing culinary art in its highest form.

And not surprising, actually, since the artists – pardon, the Paradiso chefs – have spent a lifetime playing with tastes and aromas, as painters do with brushes and colors: Nicole Rubi, the “culinary star of the French
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Riviera”, and Pierre Gagnaire, of 3-Michelin star fame.

And so, welcome to Paradiso.



Inside the dining halls, or outside on the terrace,



Paradiso has a spot for you to sit back and enjoy the Mediterranean feel.

The sea

The breeze

The view



Just a coffee and dessert, or the Paradiso Lunch Time set menu, or the marvelous a la carte selections, you can trust in an unequivocal fine-dining experience.



And it's not just the exceptional deliciousness of the dishes, either.

The whole ambiance – the very ethos of Paradiso – at the heart of the experience, are the people who work there; and who make your visit unforgettable.

From the lovely Ms Marigona, to Mr Loretto, here serving ice-cream at our table, to the unseen heroes in the kitchen, Paradiso impressed in many more ways than their exceptional culinary skills.



Let us start with an aperitivo, shall we?

Ricard on the drink list, of course, but it is Paradiso's signature cocktails that stand out.

THE PERFUME BAR BY EMANUELE BALESTRA, claims the drinks menu, presenting four bespoke cocktails - and yes, please!

Incredibly, la Grande Dame is served with a bottle of herbal perfume, which is lightly squirted at the table, blessing the precious liquid and exalting the aroma - exceptional.



Now, kindly keep this approach in mind, because this unique cocktail is not presented in this way at this restaurant by chance; and as you progress with your meal, I believe you will gain an appreciation of the significance and power of aromas as they pertain not to an olfactory experience, but in relation to flavor.

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In fact, taste is the sensation on the tongue and palate, but aroma is actually and specifically related to our sense of smell - and when these two play together, then you are in Paradiso.



Having disclosed my humble understanding of the magic at work, I can safely add that Paradiso also serves very simple and wholesome Mediterranean food - it's just that they do it exceptionally.

The burrata is not placed on some rocca leaves, and there you are.

No, it is served on a bed of phenomenal tomato jam, then placed upon young arugula to cut it with a little bitter; yet interspersed with toasted pine nuts for a tease of crunch, elevating the texture on the tooth; and then, as if this delight was not enough, served aside and poured on top is a divine homemade pesto sauce - copyright Paolo Rossetti, ask first for reproduction of contents (text, photos, etc.) - prosett@weekenduae.com

again, exceptional.

But wait!

What's that scent? It's... it's... there's something there, behind the tastes and textures, it's not the creaminess of the burrata, nor the sweet tartiness of the tomatoes, not even the basil of the pesto – it's more subtle, in the background... you take another bite, look at each other with arched eyebrows – “What is it?” you ask each other, puzzled.

Well, I won't spoil it for you – just enjoy it, this is Paradiso.



And so continues the meal - every dish a triumphant representation of the culinary traditions from the south of France.

Each ingredient carefully sourced, expertly paired, and craftfully curated.

And every dish has its soul, its mystery.

It speaks to you in poems, if you know how to listen; and it marvels all your senses, playfully, deliberately - yes, you are in the hands of masters.

After all, you are in Paradiso.





Look closer...



And that brings you to dessert - the dolci - where our server Loretto built us a fantastic ice cream on the spot.

Unique in Abu Dhabi; indeed, unique in this world.



Only in Paradiso



And so, for a fine-dining experience of Mediterranean charm, at a very high level of culinary arts, yet also unpretentious fun,



and accompanied by world-class service and all the fine flavors you could ever desire,



Paradiso is an out-of-this-world escapade - absolutely exceptional in all regards.

