



Weekend Dining at Ristorante Loren, Palm Jumeirah, Dubai

Ristorante Loren is in a class of its own.





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And not even just among the most sophisticated restaurants of Dubai, but it would be top of its class also in Italy.



Indeed, one expects nothing less from a restaurant whose concept is representing La Dolce Vita of the Italian Riviera, particularly from the peak years of the 1960s and '70s!

And Ristorante Loren does so with such nonchalance, such ease.





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A simple coffee becomes an expression of elegance...

... and a table set for dining is an invitation to an unforgettable feast.

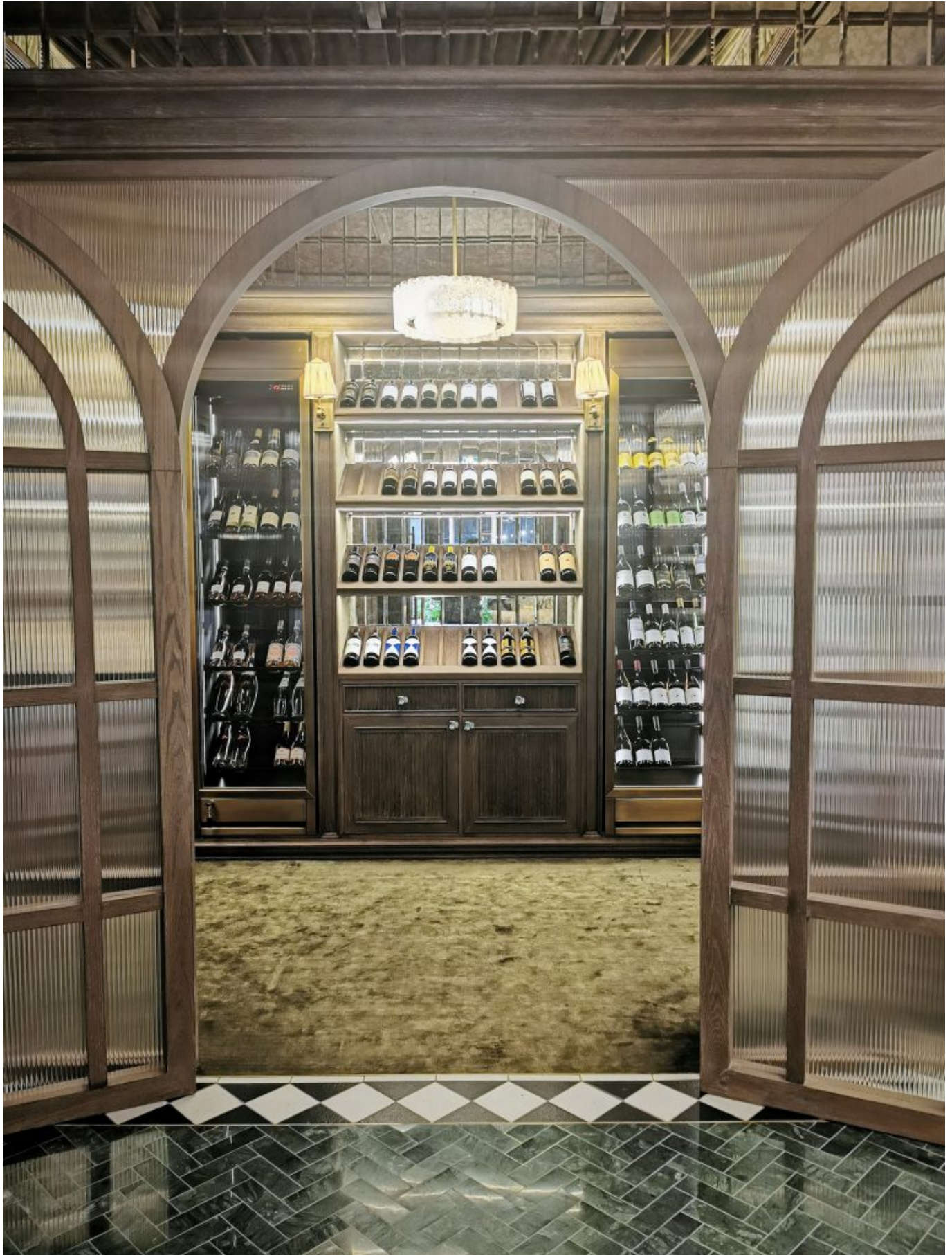


But before we get to the food – oh, the food! – the ambiance deserves a better introduction, because it is truly majestic, yet without falling into a trap of gaudiness.

The location is at The Club, Palm West Beach – enter the underground parking just after the Fairmont Hotel entrance, and you’ll be shuttled to the restaurant by electric cart, if so you prefer.



Ristorante Loren's reception opens onto an exceptional wine cellar, confirmed to host an encyclopedic selection of the finest.



But Ristorante Loren goes beyond hosting – for what good is a library of wines, if the expertise in pairing the bottle to your dish is not there?

And this I believe is where Ristorante Loren truly excelled, and also where many top-level restaurants fail – the professional expertise of the staff.

Anybody can splash a random house wine into a glass for a brunch; but extremely few have the know-how to inquire as to your tastes, and then present an exceptional bouquet!

Clearly, it is one thing to purchase and display the world's finest wines – but the accuracy of a courteous recommendation is beyond the purchase. And let this be a lesson to the restaurants in Dubai who aspire to greatness.

And Ristorante Loren is led by a team of immense professionals, whom I am honored to mention because between them they actually bring alive the restaurant's soul and concept: A special place born from Italian dreams of taste and style – Mr Nicola Lafronza, GM; Mr Alessandro Longhi, Assistant GM; and Head Chef Giovanni Cortese.

And this is their realm.





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But let us turn to the food – because we are in for a treat!



The *antipasti* instantly set the tone of the meal, and I beg of you not to skip them.

From fresh oysters to prized caviar and beyond, an exciting and enticing menu of starters and salads takes centerpiece at Loren!

The *Insalata di Mare* (seafood salad), in the photos, set the scene for the meal ahead – and it was nothing short of exceptional.



Besides the variety of fresh ingredients from the sea, and the very attractive, almost joyous arrangement on the plate, the flavors were intense and pleasantly balanced – it is clear a masterful Chef has created this dish.



The secret was in the dressing, and those magical little bubbles of condiment, actually yuzu gel, which were just fireworks of ecstasy on the palate!

Similarly, the homemade *Pate De Foie Gras*, served with Tangerine Jam, brought forward a playful presentation and very special combination of ingredients!



Pate De Foie Gras can be an ultra-rich and even overwhelming specialty, but the genius contrast with tart and sweet mandarin jam launched this dish into its own universe of yum!



Mediterranean cuisine is sometimes offuscated by the heavier winter dishes, but not so at Ristorante Loren, where the good folk in the kitchens have captured the true essence of a dining experience that is light and flavorful - and totally healthy.

Both the *Nizzarda di Tonno Scottato* (tuna salad), and a marvelous rendition of a pasta dish are witness to this philosophy.



The *Spaghetti Vongole e Bottarga* was magnificent!

At this stage of the meal, you are totally at a loss for words - and your taste receptors are going in tilt!

It truly is a beautiful, sweet life when you are in Ristorante Loren's embrace - you are living La Dolce Vita.

The pasta was a work of culinary art, and the already tasty and perfectly-cooked spaghetti are so simple yet so outstanding, you really can't understand what's going on (spoiler: it's the *bottarga*!), and you look up from the dish, and realize that the view is really Dubai Marina, and not Portofino.



And the salad with lightly scorched tuna and quail eggs was an excellent accompaniment to Ristorante Loren's crispy wholemeal pizza, too!





The pizza at Ristorante Loren is a must-try as it is unique to Dubai, and again we see the simplicity of ingredients combining to delight with an outstanding dish – the *bresaola* (cured beef) is homemade, and the cheese is an unusual choice (creamy stracchino cheese from the north of Italy – maybe you’ve never tasted it before!), but so magical that you’ll never want plain mozzarella on your pizza again!

And of course the fresh live greens set the pizza apart.

Below, a superb rendition of a Slow Cooked Grilled Octopus, Potato Gnocchi, Goat Cheese, BBQ Sauce, and Spicy Pumpkin... wow!



I will leave you to explore the mains on your own, so I don't ruin the surprises prepared for you, but I'll just highlight that you can expect any choice to be true to Ristorante Loren's ethos.

As for dessert, prepare yourselves!

Even simple ice cream comes as an award-winning delicacy!



Overall, Ristorante Loren is a beacon of hope for authentic restaurants in Dubai, where an amazing beachfront location and exquisite interior decor are supported by a team of world-class professionals, who not only understand the cuisine deeply, but actually share the dream of the concept and bring it to real life – attention please: Ristorante Loren has the chance and perhaps is destined to become Dubai’s best fine-dining Italian restaurant.