



Weekend Dining at Marco's Italian at the Fairmont Bab al Bahr in Abu Dhabi

Marco's Italian is one of Abu Dhabi's finest all-day dining restaurants - in fact, blurring the lines where "casual" becomes "fine-dining".





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Located in the eminent Fairmont Bab al Bahr hotel, alongside the Grand Canal and across from Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, where everything is five-stars by default, Marco's Italian softens the rigidity of an outright fine-dining establishment with very clever allocation of space to give a relaxed feel.

Indeed, a wonderful lounge area sets the scene, particularly for pre-dining conversation and aperitivo!

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This concept sets Marco's Italian apart, and creates an unhurried tempo of enjoyment, particularly in connecting with your fellow diners person-to-person.





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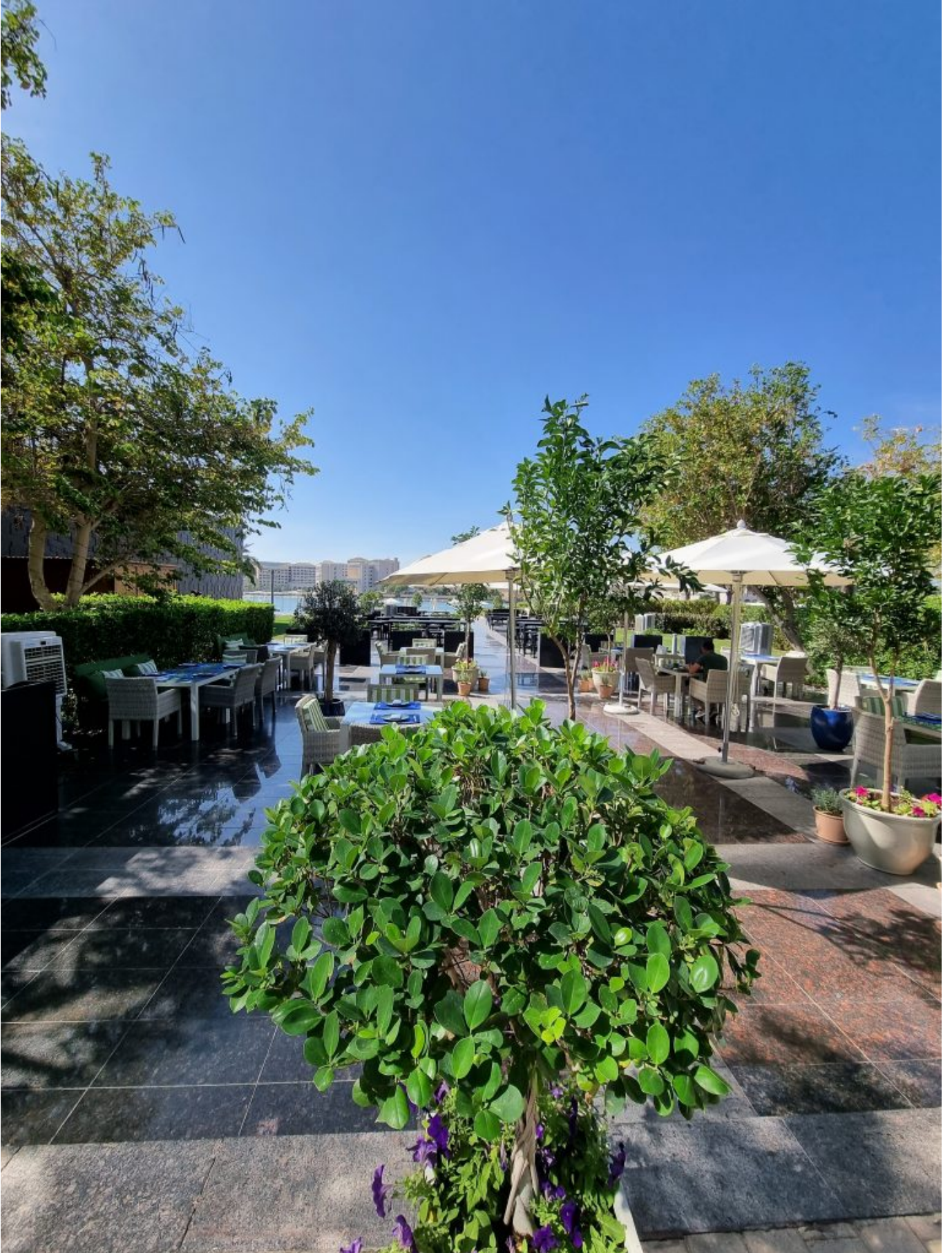
Alternatively, elegant seating at the fully-stocked bar beckons...





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...and another magical dimension is added for Marco's Italian's dignified guests' seating preference when also the terrace dining is considered!





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Not only marvelous for the upcoming winter weather, but also perfectly shady to make *al fresco* dining an option.





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But make no mistake, whether you choose lounge, bar counter, or dining table, or outdoor terrace leading to the pool and beach beyond... when the stellar service reaches the palate, you know you are certainly in a fine-dining venue!

And you are in for a treat!

Marco's Italian is the brainchild of award-winning celebrity Chef Marco Pierre White, and it is a privilege to taste his culinary creations, focused on authentic Italian fare.





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I'll start with a magnificent drink - The Godfather, bourbon and amaretto, like an Old-fashioned but benefitting from the sweet nuttiness of the Amaretto liquor! - and then I'll jump straight to the desserts!



These two magnificent but opposite ends of the meal we experienced at Marco's Italian set the bookends for what was a truly memorable and enjoyable weekend in Abu Dhabi - highly recommended.

The list of drinks is extensive but also very carefully curated - and the distinction in perfect mixology reflects the reason for providing such a wondrous lounge seating area in the restaurant.

I'd rate it one of Abu Dhabi's top bars.

As for the *Cannoli Siciliani* sweets - ahhh, those were heavenly, and masterfully prepared! The crunchy pastry roll exhaled the creamy, but surprisingly light, filling; and there was a genius background flavor which I couldn't quite place - maybe a special aroma infused into the candied fruits? - but which sang to my taste buds!

The menu itself is straightforward and no-nonsense, and the specialities are presented in a way that offers something for everyone, without crowding nor attempting to be too fancy - it's like the good chef is saying: "Look, everything is delicious, we don't need to convince you."

And delicious everything was!





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The Panzanella salad, originally from Tuscany, and the rich Insalata Contadina, with duck confit and a flourish of healthy greens, were excellent in choice of ingredients for an outstanding combination of flavors and textures, and then blessed overall with a precise seasoning.





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And generous in portioning, too!





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The pasta dishes were magnificent, as expected - and the seafood spaghetti hit the right spot with a balanced acidity of the fresh tomato sauce, while the Tagliatelle alla Bolognese clearly had been simmered over low heat for hours of loving care to achieve that melt-in-your-mouth smoothness on the palate - both were pasta masterpieces!





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Pizza at Marco's Italian made use of a signature sourdough crust, and the options of toppings are many and all so enticing!



And then we are back to the jewel on the crown of a fantastic weekend lunch, with Marco's *cannoli* twins!

However, I would be remiss if I did not also mention the outstanding efforts of Assistant Manager, Ms Anastasia Allahvetdova, who was everywhere, seamlessly behind the scenes, and who added a sincere friendly touch of professional service to make sure all was perfect.



Overall, for a combination of excellence in pre-dining lounge comfort, supported by a tip-top bar, and augmented by magnificent seating options, but especially noting an exceptional menu of Italian favorite dishes, Marco's Italian restaurant at the Fairmont Bab al Bahr offers epicureans an unforgettable dining experience in the UAE's capital city, Abu Dhabi.