

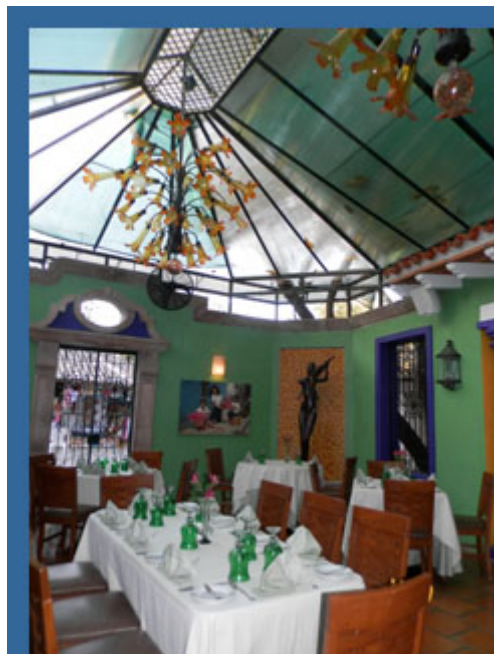
Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

River Cafe, Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico



Stunning and romantic best describe the **River Café** located on the **Isla Rio Cuale** in the center of **Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico**. Family owned since 1997 by **Evangeline Sánchez** and her husband **Margarito Larios**, their son **Steven Larios Reynolds** is the manager, and **Chef Roberto Chavez Oviedo** is the impressive talent in the kitchen.

The ambience is artsy and romantic; there are many sculptures and interesting paintings by local artists located throughout the restaurant, recycled wine bottles shaped into trumpet flowers form two large chandeliers, live Jazz music wafts in the night layering in romance, and nature beckons from the open sides. Tables are attractively dressed with beige linens, green napkins, with hand blown green glasses with clear stems, vases of fresh flowers, and votive candles casting their soft spell across the tables.



River Café

For more intimate dining, or for small parties, there is a gazebo with linen curtains held in place by long streams of natural shells overlooking the abundant greenery deftly meshing nature and cuisine.

The restaurant has an excellent cocktail menu and we began our dinner in late April 2014 with a mango margarita and a tamarind daiquiri to accompany the live Jazz music and the basket of hard-to-resist hot rolls offered with rosettes of butter and chili butter.



Cocktails - Tamarind Daiquiri and Mango Margarita

As a welcome, Chef Roberto Chavez Oviedo sent us a delicious amuse-bouche of a sautéed baby Portobello mushroom garnished with a parsley leaf to whet our appetites for what was yet to come.



Amuse-Bouche - Sautéed Baby Portobello

The menu is rich and varied with an excellent offering of appetizers, salads, soups, pasta and rice dishes, seafood, meat, and poultry. (Edward) began with an appetizer (Entrada) of Octopus Tradito which consisted of wafer thin octopus topped with baby arugula, black olive aioli, and pesto sauce, (Tradito de Pulpo, rebanadas de pulpo, hojas de arugula y tomate cherry con Aioli de aceitunas negras y pesto de albahaca.) Gorgeously presented on a piece of slate, the octopus served as a very tasty piece of art from the sea.



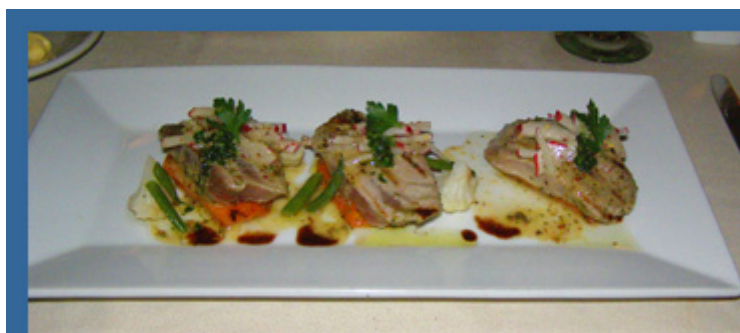
Tradito de Pulpo

There are many delicious salads (ensaladas) on the menu, and (Debra) had the River Café Salad, a delicious blend of baby organic mixed greens, roasted eggplant, tomato slices, goat cheese, and local basil vinaigrette (River Café Ensalada, lechugas mixtas de la huerta, berenjena asada, tomate, queso de cabra y vinagreta de albahaca.).



Mixed Greens with Roasted Eggplant and Goat Cheese

From the Fish and Shellfish (Pescados y Mariscos) section of the menu, (Edward) continued with Seared Tuna served with grilled papaya slices and "quimixto" vinaigrette (Escalopas de Atún Sellado servido con rebanadas de papaya a la parrilla y vinagreta Quimixto), which was definitely a highlight of the evening.

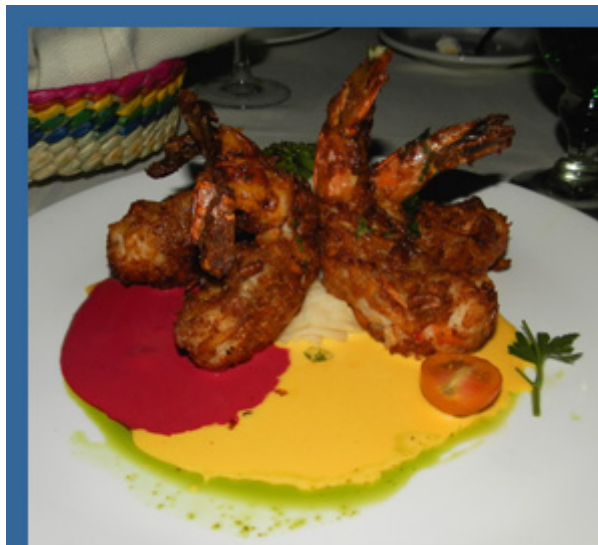


Seared Tuna

(Debra) continued with the Rainbow Jumbo Shrimp encrusted with roasted pecans and shaved coconut served with orange and red beet sauce accompanied with cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, haricot vert, and

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cherry tomatoes (Camarones Arcoíris - camarones gigantes empanizadas con coco y nuez en dúo salsas de naranja y betabel.) This was another well executed course where flavor easily matched the stunning presentation, and the crunchy texture of the shrimp and the interplay of flavors made for a memorable course.



Rainbow Jumbo Shrimp

For the grand finale of the evening, we had the Mexican Coffee, which was both a delectable drink and performance art as our waiter deftly crafted the flaming drinks made with coffee, tequila, Kahlúa, and crowned with a generous mound of vanilla ice cream. We lingered over our coffees, listening to the music, soaking up the ambience and loving the absolute romance of it all; another perfect evening in Puerto Vallarta.



Steven Larios Reynolds, Debra Argen, Chef Roberto Chavez Oviedo

The River Café is open daily from 8:00 am until 11:30 pm. The restaurant serves breakfast from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm, followed by lunch and dinner service. There is also Brunch on Sundays. There is live Jazz music Thursday through Saturday from 8:00 pm until 10:30 pm.

Read the **Chefs' Recipes** section for an interview with **Chef Roberto Chavez Oviedo** (in **English** and in **Spanish**) who also graciously shares a few recipes to provide a delectable taste of the River Café until you can personally visit the restaurant.

River Café



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Isla Rio Cuale #4

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