

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Di Vino by the Glass Bar



Di Vino by the Glass Bar is an attractive Italian restaurant located in the heart of Playa del Carmen on 5th Avenue in the **Riviera Maya, Mexico**. With four partners representing Naples, Rome, Milan, and Venice, Italy, expect the unexpected, with innovative haute Italian cuisine.

The long rectangular restaurant features wood floors, canvas fabric decorates the ceiling, silver ceiling fans provide a gentle breeze, potted palm trees add visual appeal throughout the dining room, and a singularly unique Gelato Trolley filled with homemade gelato is positioned at the back of the restaurant. There is a well stocked bar, and as one would expect, a large selection of wines prominently displayed behind a glass-fronted wine cellar.



Di Vino by the Glass Bar

Tables feature double draped linens and white napkins, and are accessorized with tea lights set in low round bowls with sand, a small vase with two white daisies and leather-leaf fern, and decanters of olive oil and vinegar to accompany the bread basket.



Dining Room

The weather in May 2008 was delightfully warm, and although many of the Di Vino patrons dined al fresco at the tables on the sidewalk facing the shop windows, Edward F. Nesta and I elected to dine indoors and enjoy the lively ambience of the pedestrian street from the interior of the restaurant.

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Wine Bar

Italian culture and cuisine merges beautifully with owners Daniele Personalì of Rome, Nicola Iorio of Naples, Chef/Owner Stefano Dal Ben of Venice, Chef/Owner Riccardo Bertazzoni of Milan, and Alessandro Ghiotto the Restaurant Manager of Torino bringing a taste of Italy to the Riviera Maya.



Bar



As this is an Italian restaurant, we began the evening with glasses of Prosecco, paired with an Amuse Bouche from Chef Riccardo of raw tuna in balsamic vinegar on a bed of julienne carrots and jicama to whet our appetites.

We continued with tempura shrimp and calamari in its ink, steamed lobster, and clams with caviar. This delectable trio was presented on a rectangular tile and consisted of delicately golden tempura shrimp and calamari inky black on a bed of marinated onions; steamed lobster with reduced balsamic vinegar; and an open clamshell with a succulent clam on one side of the shell and a mound of caviar on the other.



Delectable Trio

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The restaurant offers wine by the bottle, as well as many wines by the glass, and we paired the fennel soup with grouper carpaccio, and pink peppercorns presented in a large bowl with a deep center, with a glass of 2006 Poggio Bidini Insolia, d.o.c. 12% alcohol, Valle Dell' Acate, Sicily, made with 100% Insolia grapes. With just a hint of fennel, the soup was a very nice follow-up to the trio of amuses, and the wine was well matched with its mineral notes.



Next on the tasting menu was risotto carnaroli with red wine, pears, and Gorgonzola, and embellished with a line of balsamic reduction. This richly creamy dream of flavors really worked with the combination of taste and texture, and was paired with a 2005 Pierpaolo Pecorari, Refosco i.s.t. 12.5% alcohol, from Northern Italy, made with 100% Refosco del Penducolo Rosso and aged in oak for 10 months, that had a fruity yet earthy nose, with blackberries and tobacco on the palate, like a Grenache from France or a Shiraz.

We continued with a pasta course that was a lovely presentation of clams in their shells, cherry tomatoes, and zucchini, tossed with pasta and served in a broth; followed by an excellent seafood mélange of grouper, clams, mussels, potatoes, and saffron in a rich broth, and garnished with a rosemary spear, paired with a 2005 Caburnio, Tenuta Monteti, 13.5% alcohol from Tuscany, a blend of 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and 20% Alicante and aged in oak for 10 months, with a peppery, spicy nose, with black fruits on the palate.



Pasta and Clams

Mussels

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Our last savory course of the evening was pan-fried salmon encrusted with black sesame and fennel seeds, on a pear puree and moutarde cream bed, with sautéed cherry tomatoes, which was well presented and a perfect ending.

Savory courses finished, Chef Riccardo surprised us with a lovely pre-dessert of Banana Mousse served in a glass and garnished with a dollop of cherry puree, followed by a dessert of warm chocolate tarte with a flaky pastry crust served with thinly sliced apples and strawberries deliciously paired with a 2006 Coppa, Brachetto d'Acqui d.o.c.g.



Banana Mousse

Chocolate Tarte

Of course, this being an Italian restaurant, once we finished our tart, Alessandro appeared at the table bearing more sweets, a lovely mixture of three types of cookies and biscotti, which naturally we had to sample. Buon appetito!



Cookies

Di Vino by the Glass Bar is open from 7:00 am until approximately 1:00 am, and offers a buffet breakfast from 7:00 am - 11:00 am, lunch from 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm, and dinner from 5:00 pm - 11:00 pm. Read other articles about **Di Vino By the Glass Bar** in the **Chefs' Recipes** section in **English** and in **Spanish**.

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Please read other articles on **Riviera Maya** in the **Destinations, Hotels and Resorts, Spas, [Restaurants](#), [Chefs' Recipes](#)**, and **[Adventures](#)** sections.

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For information on **Riviera Maya, Mexico**, please visit the website: www.RivieraMaya.com.

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