

It's just two months old and in the middle of a people-free zone on the edge of Khalifa Park; the Park Rotana complex is still a bit of a mystery to everyone



At least there's no mystery about the interior design for its fusion restaurant 'Teatro'. Stunning hand-painted Venetian masks welcome you at the entrance, deep red satin drapery and fat, milky white candles are scattered across the space, and the tables have names like 'Evita' and 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Even more theatrical is the way that everything is on show – a large square bar at the entrance, live sushi station, vast glass-fronted kitchen.

The menu is exhaustively exotic (Thai, Japanese, Indian, Italian) so we took a chance and left the ordering up to the restaurant manager. For starters, we went with a selection of dim sum and some Peking duck spring rolls, in front of us the minute we closed our menus and very yummy too.

Some of the mains on the menu were a bit pricey; but it was worth it. Tender and succulent can't begin to describe the lamb rack (although it was a bit too rare towards the middle for our taste) or the miso soup soaked sea bass.

The panna cotta with peppermint pesto for dessert was a pleasant finale, though it's definitely something you either love or hate.

They've got some bright ideas on the menu that certainly make them stand out. If we had bigger stomachs, we would have liked to try the green papaya salad with chilli, shrimps, apple and peanuts, as well as a curious sweet miso soup dessert that somehow incorporates marshmallows.

So a second trip might be in order. Generally, this is a place to visit on a special occasion or to try something you've never heard of before, provided you don't mind the trek or the cheque. Service is excellent and the food gets near enough to hitting the spot for us to leave smiling. And we'll give the place extra points for all-round creativity.

What? Teatro

Where? Park Rotana Abu Dhabi

Cost: Around AED 400 inc one drink and service charges

Why? Atmosphere, care and expertise

Why not? Because your wallet can only take so much

We say: Oh, go on then. This place will pick up once the hotel becomes better known

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