

Laid back luxe



Reviewed by: Laura Fulton

If you haven't been to Fairmont Bab al Bahr, you really should check it out – the Shangri La's newest neighbour boasts a variety of venues, including the oh-so-classy Cedar Lounge.

Like Mexican food, Lebanese cuisine is simple by nature, which begs the question – is it really worth paying more for something you can get a lot cheaper somewhere else? If you like quality and atmosphere, then the answer is most definitely yes.

The traditional favourite hot and cold mezza starters are done to perfection; from the creamy hummus and light, crunchy falafel to the fresh, tangy fatoush salad. The kibbe has just a hint of the savoury lamb, a distinctive taste that can sometimes overpower, and unlike your average moutabal, the version on offer at Cedar Lounge is made with smoked eggplant, a unique flavour we couldn't stop raving about. Enough for two, the Cedar Lounge Mix Grill is full of tender, tasty

traditional favourites.

You'll be tempted to fill up early – the olive pastes are a salt lover's dream, and the fat round flat bread, while not great for scooping, comes fresh and soft from the oven. The good news is that your starters will be on your table in no time, so you can actually enjoy what you ordered rather than ruining your appetite on the greeting snacks. By the end of the night, you'll be hard pressed to find room for all the light, tasty traditional Lebanese pastries on offer, but we recommend you try.

Sure, you'll pay more at Cedar Lounge than you would at a lower end restaurant with the same fare, but you're paying for high standard ingredients, great service, excellent atmosphere and outstanding presentation.

What? Cedar Lounge

Where? Fairmont Bab al Bahr, Between Two Bridges City

Cost: More than enough food for two was AED 330 – nothing over AED 100

Why? Gorgeous atmosphere, impeccable service, delicious food and live entertainment daily

Why not? Food wise, it's not hugely different from what you might get in a neighbourhood cafe

We say: A perfect choice for traditional Lebanese food in elegant, modern surroundings

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