

A racy Italian



Ferrari World boasts plenty more than gravity-defying rides, including the world-class restaurants on offer. Inspired by all things Italian, Abu Dhabi Week took a pit stop at Mamma Rossella.

First impressions of the venue are mixed. We like the food stations offering a glimpse of the kitchen, but we're confused by the stack of trays and the self-serving soft drinks pumps by the till: have we wandered in to the staff canteen?

Thankfully the welcoming staff explains the set up. The stations offer a selection of pastas (all homemade), pizzas, salads, main dishes and desserts. You choose and order, pay, and then eat. Simple. Fast, fresh food is the aim here.

Authenticity is also the aim at Mamma Rossella: in fact, all of the ingredients are wholly Italian, with a big shipment arriving at Ferrari World once a month from Italy. And while that stamp of authenticity may not do any favours for Abu Dhabi's carbon footprint, the produce certainly pays off in the dishes.

Caesar salad is perhaps not the toughest dish to put together, but the plump shrimps tossed in and the heaped shavings of Parmesan, finished with the light, classic dressing certainly make for a pleasing dish.

The margarita pizza – a beautifully light, crispy base created from the wood-burning oven, carrying the freshest mix of tomato, mozzarella, garlic and basil – is quite simply the best we've ever tasted. And it's not just any pizza; Mamma Rosella proudly carries the third certificate (France and Japan carry the other two) in the world for making authentic Italian pizza.

From the well known to the barely known, all the dessert dishes on the menu claim to be Italian. The light and airy Tiramisu, a blend of fresh cream dusted with 80 percent Amedei coco, or the delightful mix of vanilla and soft caramel in the crema catalana (not to be mistaken for crème brulé – although we're sure the mistake is that the dish is in fact Spanish) make unmissable choices.

Mamma Rossella rightfully deserves high praise. In fact, the only thing lacking here is a busy ambience. Despite this, one thing's for sure: if this is this is the way Mamma makes it, we shan't be going anywhere else for Italian fare ever again.

Charlie Kennedy

What? Mamma Rossella

Where? Ferrari World, Yas Island

Cost: From approximately AED 120 per person

We say: Fine fare without the fuss and frills of other top-end eateries

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