

Pure decadence



Named AFTER the ancient civilisation that first discovered how to cultivate cocoa beans, Maya La Chocolaterie in Dalma Mall is dedicated to chocolate. Neither a café nor a restaurant, this unique chocolate bar concept – with its range of exquisite chocolate treats – is famous for its luxurious and indulgent flavours.

The cooler weather may not justify a parka or roaring fire, but who can say no to over a dozen types of hot chocolate? Saving ourselves, we opted for a perfectly made coffee instead, but we'll make another trip just to try the West African Dark, the Ivory White or the Maya Spice.

If hot chocolate isn't for you, there's also a selection of scrumptious frozen chocolate shakes, and if you really can't stand the thought of all those calories, Maya offers sugar free hot and frozen chocolate drinks plus a selection of other sugar free options like chocolate fondant, apple strudel or raspberry mousse.

Of course, you can hardly visit Maya without trying the warm chocolate fondue. Available in dark, milk and white chocolate, a tea candle keeps the chocolate viscous while you dip in strawberries, banana chunks, marshmallows and freshly baked mini cakes. When you're ready to absolutely wallow in sin, check out Maya's La Decadence Boutique for one of the divine fondants, brownies or Mille feuille.

Pastries also abound at Maya, like the crepes, waffles and cookies. We especially loved the traditional babka, a pair of exquisite warm cinnamon brioche rolls served with liquid milk chocolate sauce. A whole kids' section is perfect for little ones – ours dove right into the chocolate pizza.

Laura Fulton

What? Maya La Chocolaterie

Where? Dalma Mall, Mussafah

Cost: Most items between AED 20 and 40

We say: With chocolate from Belgium, coffee from Seattle and New York, water from Scotland, a retail area chock a block with excellent gift ideas and a breakfast menu set to start soon, Maya is the perfect spot for a bit of sweet indulgence

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