

Deli nice



Here at Abu Dhabi Week, we are huge fans of the popular Jones the Grocer café in Al Mamoura and now that the eponymous Jones has opened a new 100-seat branch in the Pearl Plaza building in Khalidiya, we decided it was high time to check it out.

To those who are unfamiliar with the concept (where have you been?), Jones the Grocer is much more than just a café. Think of it as more of a gourmet deli, a haven for foodies with fine taste.

The interior of the new store is large and airy with a general feeling of laidback casualness thanks to the rustically simple furniture and t-shirted staff. The walls are lined with the finest chutneys, crisps, breads, pickles, spices, sauces, cookbooks and kitchen utensils, not to mention the fantastically pungent cheese room and the interactive tea and coffee section.

Despite being open for just a couple of months, there's already a healthy buzz about the place as we take our seats.

There's one item on the menu that we've been looking forward to all week – Jones' legendary wagyu burger. Described by our very own Laura Fulton as “more than just a sandwich – it's a mega mouthful of everything that's good about civilisation”, it's more than worth the wait. Served on a simple wooden chopping board with small crispy fries and deliciously tangy homemade ketchup, the chunky hunk of a burger is perfectly cooked, succulently juicy and bursting with flavour – a true meat-lover's delight.

Our dining partner opts for the Vietnamese duck wrap and this is equally good. Crispy and flavourful but not too spicy, accompanied by a fresh, zestily-dressed green salad.



Feeling pleasantly stuffed, it's time to head back to the office but we make sure to take a few minutes to check out the interactive coffee station on our way out. Occupying the entire end

wall, the huge selection of fresh coffee beans from all over the world are complemented by an assortment of weird and wonderful coffee-making paraphernalia – glass beakers, tubes and bowls gently bubbling and dripping away – that would look more at home in a science lab than an upmarket café. We're not entirely sure how it all works but you can't argue with the results – superbly strong and aromatic coffee.

Jones the Grocer take great pride in their concept, and it shows. It's a great place to go for a simple, healthy meal and do some gourmet shopping at the same time. And with a delicious new range of seasonal Easter treats now available, there's never been a better time to pay them a visit.

Jon Muller

What? Jones the Grocer

Where? Pearl Plaza, Khalidiya

Cost: AED 50-70 for lunch, incl. drink

We say: It's never been so tasty keeping up with the Jones.

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