

An ode to the Aegean

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GREAT FOOD: There is plenty of Greece in every bite.

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Estia, the Mediterranean restaurant does everything to perfection

You cannot blame me for expecting Meryl Streep to come running out of the kitchen, dressed in dungarees and clip-ons, singing “Dancing Queen” and doing a little jig. Estia, the Mediterranean restaurant from Aloft Hotel, reminds one of the sets from the hit musical “Mamma Mia”. The restaurant is fashioned in blue and white and wood and does a fantastic job in making you believe that you are a stone's throw away from the ocean.

Now that location and mood has been taken care of, the agenda for the night that lay before me was rather simple. I fought the urge to ease back into the couch and kick my feet up, and putting on my work face I asked for a cocktail.

Tangy litchi and lime juice spiked with a dash of vodka, the “Fiji Lychee” is a fancy martini glass, brimming with light summery cheer.

The “Mediterranean chicken tapas” was a light pop of spices. Just hints of garlic, cilantro with olives and lemon to take care of the zing. “Gambas al ajillo”, I nearly poisoned myself to be a part of this. I forced myself to forget I was allergic to shellfish to be a part of the prawns that were gently sizzled in olive oil and garlic.

“Aveglemono”, a Greek soup made with chicken stock, lemon and rice is interesting, but once it came I wished I had asked for the “gazpacho soup” instead. Do not fall prey to the familiar and overdone call of the Greek salad.

The “salad estia”, a Mediterranean salad complete with haloumi cheese, roasted peppers, chick pea, and of course, the olives, is light and elegant. Pay attention to the balsamic dressing, and haloumi cheese.

For your main course you could have the “gambas pil pil”, king prawns with chilli, garlic, paprika and the ubiquitous olive oil. An option I had to forgo, the slight swelling that had started to show was sufficient warning.

I chose instead a Moroccan specialty, the “castalata lamb chops”, and was not disappointed. Lamb marinated with olive oil, garlic and oregano, then crusted with broken wheat and grilled. The regal fare came resting on a bed of mashed potatoes, I was content.

Estia does it all in style. The presentation of every dish is done with an international perfection, right down to the little specks of olive oil that carelessly garnishes the plate.

It did not matter that I was full till I had olives coming out of my ears; there was definitely room for dessert. “Tiramisu”, “crème brulee”, “mousse au chocolat”, it was a beautiful life, and a beautiful night. Estia is located in Aloft, 17C, Sadaramangala Road, Whitefield. For reservations call 66707748.

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