

Food Review: Vinoteca is putting down a marker on Chiswick scene

- 16:22, 31 Oct 2013
- Updated 11:12, 4 Dec 2013
- By GetWestLondon

***Adrian Seal* eats at Vinoteca 18 Devonshire Road, W4 2HD. Telephone 020 3701 8822 - www.vinoteca.co.uk**

- Shares



It seems that the appetite for places to dine in Chiswick is insatiable with eateries queuing up to become part of the ever growing scene. The latest establishment to put its marker on the menu is Vinoteca which promises a vintage food and wine experience to match the best on offer in this haven for food lovers.

Their wine bar, restaurant and wine shop concept has already proved popular at three central London sites and they clearly spotted a gap in the market for a similar concept out in the suburbs, opening up last month in an area which is something of a haven for cuisines from across the world.

ADVERTISING

Nestled in Devonshire Road, Vinoteca is a mere pop of a cork from the High Road. The mid-terrace

building is unobtrusive from the street but once you have stepped inside you immediately feel at home – with a welcome and assurance you are about to enjoy good food and wine in a comfortable and stylish environment.

The design, inspired by Neil Masters of CantorMasters, is sympathetic to the restaurant's concept and perfectly reflects its food and wine theme.

An eye catching wall of wine dominates one side of the dining area with dark wooden tables and rustic oak floor blending in. There is also a touch of luxury with a sweeping comfortable green leather banquette which blends in well with the French grey tongue and groove panelling and soft, subtle well placed lighting making for a cosy and relaxed experience.

Beyond the main eating area there is an open plan kitchen, long bar and further seating on bar stools for diners who would prefer a more casual experience.

The menu, which impressively changes daily, has strong influences from the wine growing areas of France, Italy and Spain and is strong on rustic Mediterranean dishes with many products sourced from these regions. Devised by Head Chef James Robson ex- River Café , The Wapping Project, Artisan & Vine and the Tabernacle as well as an 18 months as Chef Patron of L'Office in Paris, it takes a sensible approach with six of the best for starters, mains and desert plus some daily specials.

For our evening dining experience I kicked off with some wonderfully fresh and juicy steamed Barra cockles and muscles (£7.50) served unusually with fried polenta and a delicate broth with hints of fennel and chilli running through. It worked and the polenta did mop up some of the tasty juices but a big chunk of bread would also have gone down well.

Fiona's plump grilled scallops (£8.50) did not disappoint, they were perfectly cooked and she was very happy to see they came with the roe. They sat handsomely on a bed of black rice, red radish and aioli for a star turn of a dish.

Meat was the order of the day for our mains with Fiona experiencing the grilled Devonshire lamb leg with squash caponata and salsa verde (£16). Her verdict was 'three yeses' with the perfectly cooked meat simply melting in the mouth and the dish really came together with the sensational salsa verde, comprising of anchovies, garlic, capers and basil.

My dry aged middlewhite pork braised in milk, a classic rustic Italian way of cooking the meat, (£15) might not have looked the most beautiful thing on a plate but it was no ugly duckling in terms of taste. The slow cooked meat was delicious and the dish was lifted by well flavoured and seasoned gutsy lentils and red kale. A side of well cooked cavolo nero and lemon (£3) added bite and colour to both dishes. We accompanied our starters and main courses with the recommended wine matches, which offered some interesting and varied choices including a soft and delicate white from the Three Choirs winery in Gloucestershire and a stunning Pinot Noir from the USA.

With our waistlines bulging we just about found room for desert. My well executed hazelnut and salt caramel semifreddo (£6) was bang on while Fiona tucked into her gorgeously gooey Gorgonzola (£6)

with gay abandon and raved about the deliciously sweet and perfumed fragolina grapes and flatbread it came with.

It looks as though Vinoteca, which is open seven days a week for lunch and dinner, may just be of the vintage variety in terms of its comfortable and stylish environment, good food, fine wine and friendly and efficient service from the competent service team.