

Sharks Underwater Grill: A SeaWorld Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

Dining at Disney is one of my favourite past-times, and I always like to try out new dining experiences, even when visiting other theme parks in Orlando.

☐ Sadly, some haven't really got the range and quality of restaurants that Walt Disney World has, but on our most recent visit to SeaWorld, we were able to experience one that would rival any Disney restaurant.

Sharks Underwater Grill is located right next to Shark Encounter, and that's the big draw of this place, as just like the Coral Reef in Epcot, all the tables have a view of the aquarium here. We were fortunate enough to be seated right next to the aquarium, probably something to do with the fact that we made our booking for 11:30am, when the restaurant opened for lunch. We were mesmerised by the sight in front of us, and we literally just sat there, gawping at the view in front of us, as various marine animals, including sharks, glided past us. In some respects, it was a bit of a creepy feeling to have them so close us, but they are such majestic animals, that feeling soon passed. I have to say it was a bit distracting though in the nicest possible way, as every so often you'd catch a glimpse of something out of the corner of your eye, and turn to look, which meant dinner probably took a bit longer than it would've otherwise done.

☐ The restaurant is very light and airy, which surprised me, given that the only light coming in is from the aquarium. With high ceilings, you do get a feeling of spaciousness, and it never felt that loud, although in fairness, there weren't that many people there the day we visited. There was classical music playing, but it was at such a low level that it didn't interfere with your ability to have a conversation, and it added an element of sophistication to the atmosphere, honestly making me forget that I was even in a theme park.

☐ One thing that is well worth seeing is the bar area, and if you're not seated near it, be sure to check it out either when you enter or leave. There's a mini-aquarium in the counter top, with fish literally swimming in front of your eyes, which is quite a sight!

As the setting suggests, this restaurant is heavy on fish and seafood options, which to a non-meat eater was wonderful news!

☐ We opted to share two appetizers between us, the chilled shrimp cocktail, made up of jumbo shrimp served with their own key lime

cocktail sauce, and although I was initially a bit wary of the sauce, it was lovely and the whole dish was very enjoyable. The other dish was the Godzilla roll, fried maki maki roll stuffed with shrimp, cream cheese and shredded carrot, topped with spicy Japanese mayonnaise, and miso mayonnaise. I was very glad that they warned you that the Japanese mayonnaise, as I don't do well with spicy food, and this was certainly on the hot side.

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□ However, aside from that, I couldn't fault the dish. Other options available included drunken mussels (essentially they were bathed in white wine!), bruschetta with tomatoes, coconut chicken tenders, lobster bisque, and a selection of salads, including the Sharks signature salad, which sounded very intriguing, including ingredients such as mango, gorgonzola cheese, figs, and pears. Sadly the presence of the final item meant it wouldn't work for me with my tree fruit allergy. If you wanted to make any of their salad choices into an entree dish, you could, with the option to add sirloin, chicken breast or sauteed herb butter shrimp to any of them.

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□ When you get to entrees, there are three sections, from the ocean for the fish dishes, from the garden for vegetarian items, and from the land for meat dishes. I debated for a long time before going for one of their specials of the day, which was the seafood special, salmon with Japanese style rice, and vegetables, including zucchini, squash, and carrots. Once again, the flavours in this were excellent, although it was one of the first times I'd had salmon on the pink side, which was a bit of a shock!

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□ I could have also gone for the tempura shrimp, the grilled mahi mahi, the seafood Alfredo or the snow crab, made up of a full pound cooked in coconut water, all of which appealed to me. Other from the ocean items were cioppino, which was mussels, shrimps, crab and fresh fish in a tomato saffron Chardonnay with noodles, something I hadn't heard of before, and seafood paella, although this was a traditional one with chorizo, which wasn't for me. True vegetarians only had one choice on the menu, pasta caponata, although for a seafood restaurant, meat eaters did have a number of options to select from. My husband opted for the New York strip steak 12oz, and I heard no complaints from him about it, and you could also get an 8oz filet mignon, a 16oz T-bone steak, chicken portabella or chicken Alfredo.

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□ The dessert menu wasn't quite as expansive, with just four items on it. My husband had the flourless chocolate cake, which he enjoyed, but said it was more like a soufflé than a cake. I had the Grand Marnier crêpe; me brulee, and that was absolutely superb, and trust me, I know my crêpe; me brulees! The caramel apple galette was out for

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me with my allergy, although I did seriously consider the loaded brownie sundae, as that sounded magnificent.

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□We absolutely loved our meal here. The food was superb, and the service couldn't have been better. We were lucky enough to have a server who genuinely cared that we were having a good time and enjoying our food, and she was constantly looking after us. However, none of this comes cheaply. The check came to \$130 for the three courses we had, plus a glass of wine for me, so it was more along the lines of a signature restaurant at Walt Disney World in terms of pricing. So was it worth it? You bet! It's somewhere I'd happily return to, although maybe next time we visit, we'll try out the Dine with Shamu option to see if it's as good as this place.

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□Priority seatings for Sharks Underwater Grill can be made through the [SeaWorld Orlando website](#) up to six weeks beforehand.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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