

Catal at Downtown Disney: A Disneyland Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

In all the times we've visited Disneyland, we've never made it to Catal in Downtown Disney.

I was determined that our most recent visit would change that, so I went ahead and made a reservation to ensure that we would finally dine there.

It describes itself on its website as offering "...a relaxed, elegant setting with balcony seating, a panoramic view, and a tantalizing menu of Mediterranean favorites, including delicious grilled seafood, select meats, and the freshest salad entrees." It's also a place you can't miss as you wander through Downtown Disney, with its distinctive sign -- the name appears vertically down the side of the building.

□

□You'll have noticed that their description mentions "balcony seating," and indeed, from what we could see from inside from our table, it did look like the balcony had a panoramic view, but there was no way we wanted to sit outside, as we visited in December. California was having a pretty brutal cold spell and I'd estimate that it was in the low 40s the night we dined there, so being inside worked fine for us, although we did notice plenty of heaters outside for anyone hardy enough to go outside.

□

□We were seated upstairs at a table right by the window, so we had something of a view of Downtown Disney beneath us. Because we were there at Christmas, there were presents and poinsettias everywhere we looked, but there were also signs of the Mediterranean, with massive prints highlighting traditional fare such as bread and red onions. It was a little dimly lit inside, but having said that, it didn't affect our meal, as we could certainly see what we were eating, and I felt it added to the atmosphere.

So what about the food? There's a tapas section on the menu, comprised of a number of dishes that you'd traditionally find at a Spanish restaurant, such as brava potatoes with piquillo pepper-tomato coulis and garlic aioli, calamari, and Spanish tortilla frites. My husband opted for the Catalan stuffed olives marinated in lemon, thyme, and Guindilla peppers.

□

□I went for the appetizer section of the menu, and tried the sashimi of Hokkaido scallops with pineapple, aji-amarillo sauce, cancha, and

cucumber sorbet, which sounded very unusual, and it intrigued me. It certainly wasn't the standard Mediterranean fare I was expecting, but it was full of beautiful flavors, and it was one of the best appetizer dishes I'd had in a long time. If I return, and that's on the menu, I'll certainly have it again.

□

□A friend we were enjoying the meal with ordered the roasted mushroom soup, which she kindly let me sample, and it was very good, although very rich. Other options the night we dined there included house-made smoked lamb chorizo, and piquillo peppers stuffed with goat's cheese.

□

□Another option on the menu was the Spanish cheese selection, which I decided to have, as I was still quite full from a late lunch. You could also get a Spanish charcuterie selection of cold meats.

□

□The entree section of the menu was split into pastas and paellas, and specialties, with both my dining colleagues getting the hand-rolled cavatelli pasta with braised lamb in red sauce, Calabrian chilies, black olives, and house-made ricotta. It was an interesting experiment, as both dishes were very different, with one containing much more spice than the other, which is not what I'd expect.

□

□The specialties section on the night we dined there included market fish in a seasonal preparation, suckling pig, roasted half chicken, braised veal breast, hanger steak, and an interesting-sounding salmon dish that came with beets, corn, and soft pickled garlic.

□

□My appetite didn't let me try much more than the homemade sorbet for dessert, which was berry-pineapple, another intriguing combination. The flavors of it were superb, although the texture was a little strange, tasting like an odd mixture of sorbet, and ice cream, which didn't quite work for me. If I'd had more of an appetite, I would have been tempted by the pineapple upside-down cake, which I love, but rarely see on menus these days, or the Callebaut chocolate fondue, although this has to be shared between two people. Other options included chocolate-peanut butter torte, coconut "arroz con leche," and an apple crumble pie.

□

□All in all, our meal at Catal was very enjoyable, with some good quality food, and some unusual items on the menu, which is always pleasing to see, particularly when a restaurant has a particular theme to it, in this case Mediterranean. Catal will certainly be somewhere I'll be happy to head back to in the future when we visit Disneyland again.

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!](#)

Article last updated: 05-23-2013

View the latest version online at:

<http://www.passporter.com/articles/catal-restaurant-review.html>

Copyright by Cheryl Pendry. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act. Resale of this guide is strictly prohibited without the copyright holder's permission. If you purchased this publication from someone other than PassPorter Travel Press, please call 877-929-3273.

View more PassPorter Articles online at <http://www.passporter.com/articles/>