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Vagabondo Italian Ristorante – 75%

Posted on January 24, 2013 by Zach



Last night I had a great opportunity to check out **Vagabondo**, an Italian restaurant and lounge located at 32 Wellington Street East, only a short 5 minute walk from King Subway. This meal was actually provided by the wonderful people at **Samba Days**! The Samba Day cards are actually really awesome – you can find them in a lot of stores including Shoppers Drug Mart, and for one price, they allow the person to actually choose the experience they want! The dining cards allow you to pick from a dozen restaurants in Toronto for example. And my experience with them so far is flawless – hand over the card and you can walk away! So thank you profusely to **Samba Days** for the wonderful experience with your product!

I had made a reservation for 6:30, but alas TTC

delay had me arrive at 7, which wasn't a problem as it turns out. Perhaps due to the fact that it's been so horribly cold outside, but the dining area was certainly not full and was instead dotted by patrons. Which I kinda like, because it means you get better service! With the Samba Days card, there's a special menu of items that you can order off of rather than the full menu – but with plenty of selection, there was certainly items to appease all tastes.



Being that this was the first time I had seen my friend Val in a month, we spent more time catching up than looking at the menu initial. We opted to get both appetizers on the menu – Bruschetta and the Calamari. And let me tell you something, they were incredible! I've talked about garlic and bruschetta in the past, well this again didn't have too much and was heavier on salty tomato goodness that we had plenty of fresh parmesan sprinkled on top of. And the calamari was PERHAPS the best breaded kind I've had in years. (I still prefer grilled). The big thing about calamari I always take issue with is the heat... by the time it gets to your table it's generally just warm at best, and in most cases barely room temperature. Well, these came to the table very hot and very fresh! (You can tell the difference between fresh and old/bad calamari based on smell and how chewy it is. Fresh isn't stringy or rubbery.)



Next, we each had a Caesar salad which was okay. Nothing to write home about, err... nothing to write here about really. Just a

standard Caesar with very crisp lettuce. Then as our main, I had the veal parmigiana while Val opted for a chicken pasta dish. Well, what I want you to do right now is to look at the image below of my veal parmigiana. It was a very large piece of breaded, cheesy, saucy veal that was nicely seasoned. On the side, 3 large vertical slices of carrot, two large segments of zucchini, several pieces of baby potato, a piece of red pepper, a nice chunk of broccoli and a handful of green beans. The veal was a thing of beauty. The vegetables were nicely cooked (maybe the carrot could have been cooked just a bit more). But as a meal, I couldn't finish it! (Guess what I'm having for lunch today?)



Val's Pasta dish was equally tasty. A very healthy portion, tons of chicken, a sweet and salty tomato based sauce, some vegetables, and a well cooked pasta (perhaps a little bit more than I typically like – but I'm a fan of just a second before being done, so there's still some texture to it). With a bite containing a little bit of everything, it was delicious!



The place is also pretty nice. Lots of seating, a great bar (as shown above), and a nice feel. The music at times was just right, and other times was a bit out of place – Italian vocals on classical and down-tempo lounge tracks... but then from time to time an incredibly upbeat Italian pop song was thrown into the mix which threw off the vibe a bit. And while the restaurant was sufficiently warm on such a cold

day – I can't say the same for the bathroom, which was incredibly chilly and clearly had an outdoor vent accepting outside air in. Also, the service was great. Attentive without being overbearing.

Overall, the experience was very good and certainly a place I would like to go back to in future.

45/60 - Based on 3 criteria, food, service, ambiance.

Vagabondo Italian Ristorante and Lounge is located at **32 Wellington Street East**

Good for Dates, Family Dinners, A Drink with Friends

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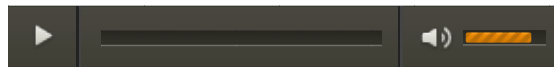
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 1  3  17

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about an hour ago i replied to @ [PaulineGrantTO](#) Congrats! Most people never get past a few months. :)

about 3 hours ago i said, RT @ [SambaDays](#) @ [asponsoredlife](#) @ [ValTorontoGal](#) hope you guys had a fantastic night! @ [VagabondoTO](#) @ [sambadays](#) supports ur year long goal! [http://t.co/RNhSjRjh](#)


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