

Dining Out



Scents and D'Sens-ibility

Story by Charlotte Shalgosky

Bangkok diners take note. For those desperate to escape the chintzy pastels, starched linen and creaking teak of stodgy hotel dining rooms, get yourself over to the Dusit Thani and its newly-opened D'Sens restaurant,

Celebrating post-Starck modernity and flavourful food, D'Sens' look is new - shockingly so - and utterly revolutionary for this, the Grande Dame of Thai hotels, whose restaurant's location provides panoramic views of the whole city from up high.

At the entry to D'Sens, designer Imaad Rhamouni has brought in vivid colours. Long aquariums glow turquoise around the lower bar area, and in the main dining area, the scarlet-lit ceiling and lime-green, lizard-print circular booths scream for attention. Stone-coloured leather couches undulate around the dining tables whose free-standing leather seats double as modern rocking chairs.

Add cruise lounge music, which can vary from Latin crooners to house funk, and you have a place for anyone who relishes fine food as much as funky ambiance. The menu offers a sweeping selection of dishes reflecting France's southern Languedoc region, all of which come packed with flavours so fresh the ingredients could have been picked out of the garden a few minutes earlier.

With the French chef Olivier Caparros, at the helm in the kitchen, the *menu de degustation* sets the scene for an eclectic gastronomic voyage: his special flair has been applied to the young pigeon which comes with an unusual cocoa sauce, the crispy-skin Sea Bream on a Vegetable Julienne, and the mouth-watering rack of Australian Lamb with Courgette Mash; plus, desserts to die for. "I

cook from the heart!" he declares with fervour, and no one can disbelieve him.

The tasting menu is of mind-boggling proportions, but excellent value when each and every bite-sized portion (with around 30 different platters) are so meticulously prepared. Exquisite flavours explode throughout: rich Pigeon Giblets laid on a bed of fragrant Celariac Mash, a delicate Chilled Pea Soup, or Vanilla-Scented Cantaloupe atop Pressed Lobster.

Chef Caparros, who has Spanish-Greek origins comes from a background in private restaurants; he admits he has never worked in a hotel before, but he is adamant the care and precision in his detailed preparation is maintained in his kitchen. "This is not fast food!" he laughs, "I do not work with a wok!"

Behind the scenes, the French twins, Laurent and Jacques Pourcel who set up D'Sens here should be congratulated. They have managed to capture the same culinary magic as their popular Michelin-starred eateries in France - which are now expanding to London, Tokyo and Shanghai. Indeed the celebrities have already been pouring in, from soul songsters Whitney Houston and Dionne Warwick, to revered Thai royalty.

Bangkok residents should count themselves lucky that their capital has been included in the Pourcel brothers' global expansion. 🍷



D'Sens
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Reservations recommended

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