



My Cafe'

The Journal of Culinary Explorations

- by Sawsan Baluch -



BREAKFAST

WITH THE SUN

There I was, in the midst of a secluded bistro café in Paris, savoring the taste of bitter espresso as it danced around my taste buds with its flaky, buttery partner, the sweet Pain au Chocolate. I found a gorgeously typical Parisian café, a perfect place for me to sit, write in this diary and enjoy the morning peace. Breakfast is and always has been my favorite meal.

In India, they say a sweet start means a sweet day, I couldn't agree more. Mornings were always a big deal in our household. From my childhood days waking up to the smell of my grandmother's cooking to the elaborate breakfasts I made for my own children later in life.

At a very young age, my grandmother taught me how to make the simple stuff: Aseedah, Khatees, Eggs, Mehyawa, even the slightly more complicated Balaleet. Always cooking on a furn or a choolah, the small single-burner camping stoves.



To this day, the smell of kerosene mixed with the aroma of hot chapatti from the tawa is a powerful trigger for my childhood memories. My grandmother would teach me how to make the dough, patiently teaching me morning after morning how to get it right. We used to eat the chapatti with Sujji, a porridge-like concoction made of toasted semolina mixed with a sugary saffron infusion. My how those rich aromas bring back memories, of home, of family, of wonderfully simple yet elaborate breakfasts that bound us together... Breakfast really is the one meal that truly means family...

EGG

Florentine D 4
poached egg, spinach

Short Ribs Florentine D 6.6
poached egg, spinach, basil hollandaise

Mushroom Omelette D 5.2
cheddar, herbs, caramelized onion, truffle

Omelette D 4.6
feta, avocado

Lentil & Beetroot Hummus 4.6
poached egg

PASTRY & SWEET

Chia Pudding D
(Choice of)
rose, cardamom, cream 4.8
coconut, passion fruit 4.8

Overnight oats D
(Choice of)
vanilla, chocolate chip 5.2
apple, pecan, cinnamon 5.2

French toast D, N
(Choice of)
caramelized apple, cinnamon, salted caramel, nuts 5.2
banana, nutella, homemade peanut butter 5.2
Lemon curd, berries 4.6

Crepe D, N
(Choice of)
caramelized apple, cinnamon, salted caramel, nuts 5.2
banana, nutella, homemade peanut butter 5.2
lemon curd, berries 4.6

Waffle D, N
(Choice of)
caramelized apple, cinnamon, salted caramel, nuts 5.2
banana, nutella, homemade peanut butter 5.2
lemon curd, berries 4.6

Banana Bread D, N 4.9
banana muffin, peanut butter

Bakery Basket D, N 6.2
assortments of freshly baked pastries

Homemade Muesli D, N 5.2
muesli, dried apple, coconut flakes, sunflower seed,
dried apricot, almond, greek yoghurt

Chocolate & hazelnut granola D, N 5.2
oat, chocolate chip, hazelnut, coconut flakes,
greek yoghurt

Cinnamon & pecan granola D, N 5.2
oats, pecan, cinnamon, dried cranberries, sunflower seed,
greek yoghurt

Sweet
Orange



FETEER

Cheese D 7.5
parmesan, feta, mozzarella

Spinach D 7.5
cheddar, mozzarella, olives

Meshaltet D 6.1
honey, chantilly

Minced Beef D 8.8
parmesan, cheddar, mediterranean seasonings

SIGNATURE

Arabian Breakfast D, N 6.4
fried egg with garlic, fowl medames, labneh,
olives, mehyawa

Egg Gratin D, N 6.4
poached egg engulfed a in cheese gratin, My café
bacon waffle sandwich

My Café' Shakshouka D 5.2
egg, tomato

Panino Frittata D 5.7
tzatziki, sujuk beef sausage, potato frittata,
grilled tomato

Trio Of Avocado D 5.5
burrata, parmesan cracker, scrambled egg

Dosa 4.5
lentil sauce, coconut chutney

Fine Cheese Selection D, N 14.7

BREAKFAST PIZZA

Calzone D 7.5
mehyawa, feta cheese, fried egg, chives, lemon

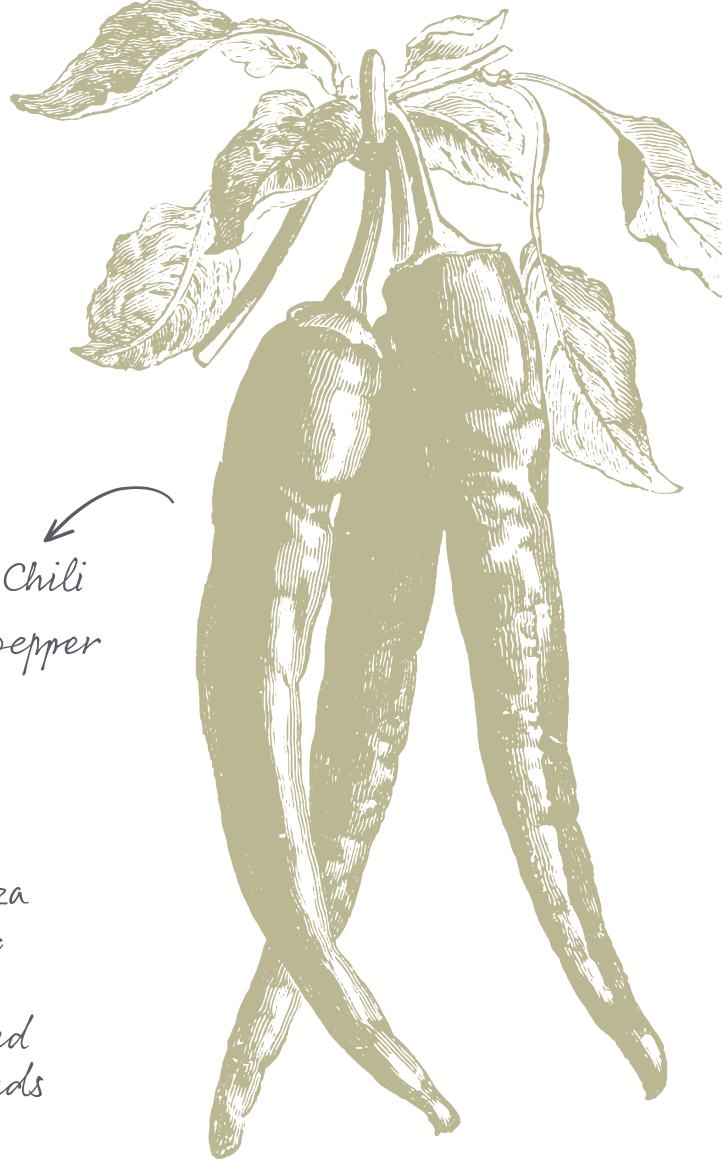
Zaatar D 8.1
cherry tomato, labneh, feta

Pizza al Tegamino D 5.7
tomato sauce, cherry tomato confit, parmesan,
basil, fried egg, beef bacon

Cheese Manaeesh D 6
mozzarella, parmesan

A TASTE OF MAINS & A HELPING OF STARTERS

Chili
pepper



I am now in Antibes, sitting inside Michelangelo's pizzeria on the Rue de Cordiers, enjoying a perfectly simple pizza with little cheese and cherry tomatoes, the pizza base is the true star of this show. The crust so thin and crispy, yet dense and doughy, with a distinct aroma that reminds me of Khabbaz bread.

It brings my memories to my childhood, when on cold winter nights my grandmother would tear up fresh hot Khubez into pieces, and drizzle a savory concoction of Yugut (round goat cheese balls, similar to Kishek, or Jamid) with fried onion, garlic and plenty of burnt butter - a hearty and tasty meal for winter! "It all begins with the right Tamse", she would always say, as the smell of simmering onions, garlic, ginger and chili wafted through the house, several times a day. My earliest childhood memories are of my grandmother in her kitchen, she practically lived in it!

I grew up to become the kind of wife and mother who integrated her family, social life and businesses with and around her kitchen. Even my grandmother's famous Afghani Lamb, her best dish and a favorite in our household, I made sure it was on my menu from the moment My Café opened its doors. This dish began in my grandmother's simple kitchen, and continued into my family home, and can now be experienced by all through My Café, forever a tribute to a woman whose hands fed me, taught me, showed me how to do it all, and to whom I owe my success. I'm sure she is up there smiling down at us as we savor every bite.

APPETIZER

VEGETARIAN

Eggplant Parmigiana _D 6.4

tomato sauce, eggplant, mozzarella, parmesan, basil

Eggplant Miso _{D, N} 7.3

eggplant wedges, japanese style sauce, yoghurt, sesame

Confit Tomato _D 4.2

confit cherry tomatoes, ricotta, feta

Dahi Poori _D 5.8

lentil fritter, sweet yoghurt, tamarind sauce, mint chutney

Baked Ricotta _{D, N} 6.5

ricotta, parmesan, eggs, oregano, grilled baguette

Fine Cheese Selection _{D, N} 14

homemade crackers, honey, fig jam, nuts, dates

Selection of Homemade Bread _{D, N} 3.7

served with herb butter, rosemary infused olive oil, tzatziki

DUCK

Seared Foie Gras _{D, N} 15.2

orange zest puree, crème brulee brioche, red chicory, pear, mushroom marmalade, pistachio & date sauce

CHICKEN

Crispy Chicken Bao _{D, N} 7.5

breaded chicken, veggies, coconut flakes, roasted peanuts

Chicken Tikka Ravioli _D 7.5

crunchy dumpling, mint yoghurt, curry sauce, fried herbs

BEEF

Wagyu Beef Carpaccio _D 10.2

fresh strawberry, feta cheese spherification, rosemary dressing

Wagyu Beef Cold Cuts _D 13.9

homemade Pastrami / Biltong / Cecina / Bresaola
horseradish cream, mustard, grilled bread

SEAFOOD

Fish & Chips _D 8.4

hammour fritters, hand cut potato fries, tartare, pea foam

Popcorn Shrimp _D 7.5

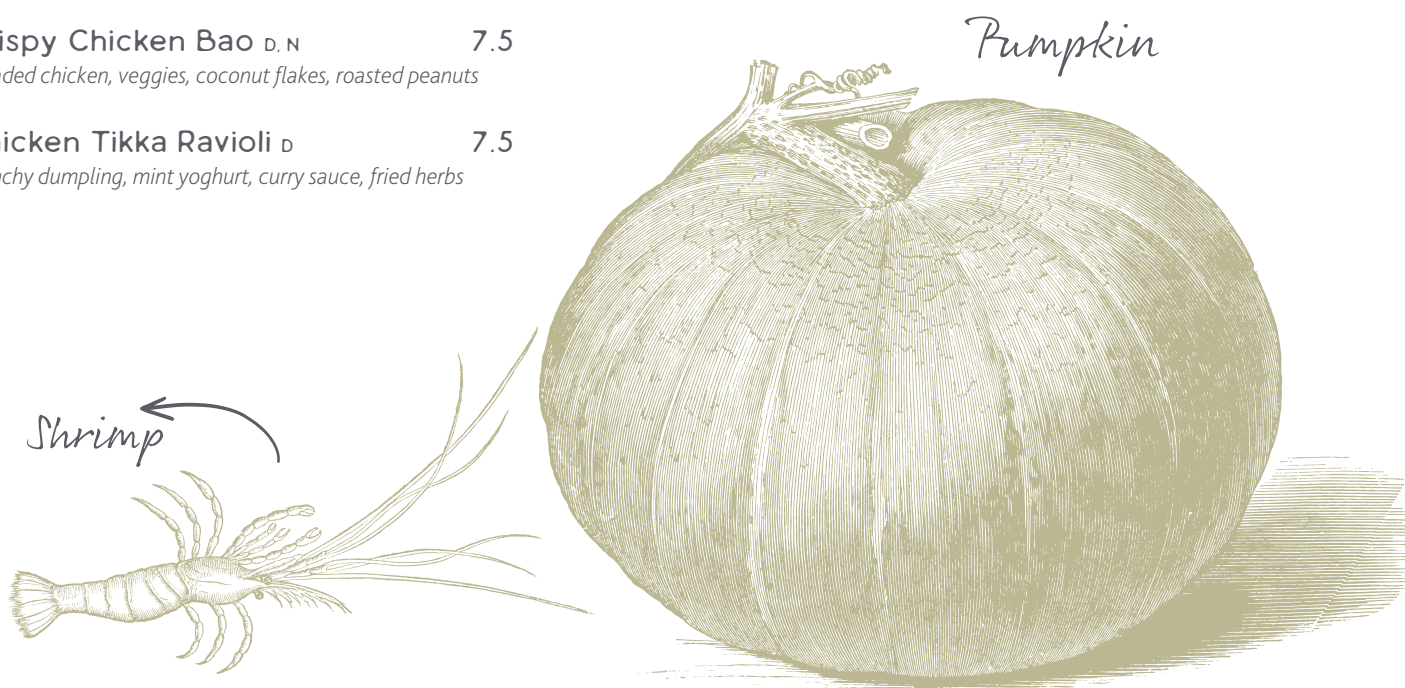
tempura, lime zest, homemade spicy mayo

Grilled Octopus _D 14.1

yellow split pea, caramelized onion, crispy caper

Grilled Calamari _D 7

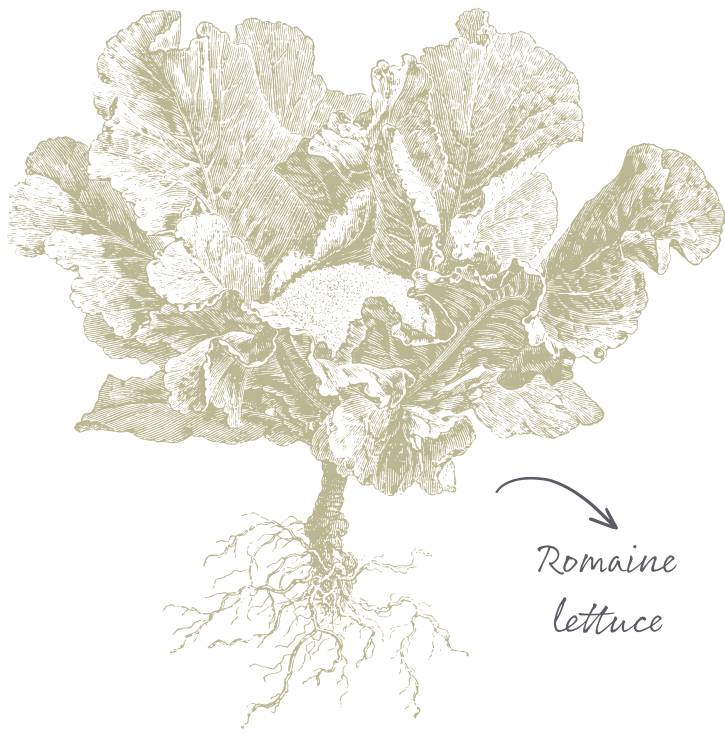
miso butter sauce, raisin, pickled fennel, parsley puree



D - Contains Dairy N - Contains Nuts

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Romaine
lettuce

SALAD

Kale Salad N 5.8
roquette, green beans, baby spinach, hazelnut, citrus dressing

Potato Salad D, N 6.2
roasted potatoes, green beans, pickled radish, saffron aioli

Burrata Salad D 9.5
tomatoes, buratta, balsamic caviar, peach, Raspberries

Dukkah carrots & Hummus 6.2
baby carrots confit, hummus, pistachio, coriander

Date Salad D, N 6.2
roquette, feta, blanched almond, orange blossom vinaigrette

Chicken Caesar Salad D 7.5
romaine lettuce, basil, sun dried tomato, parmesan, crouton

Mixed Bean Salad D 6.5
peas, beans, cherry tomatoes, feta, oregano, lemon dressing



Tomato

HOMEMADE PASTA

Truffle Pappardelle D 11.4
mushroom ragout, porcini, truffle cream, pecorino, parmesan

Casarecce Arrabbiata D 7.1
homemade tomato sauce, chili, basil, parmesan

Tagliatelle Bolognese D 10.2
beef mince ragout, basil, cheese fondue, nutmeg

SIGNATURE PASTA

Spaghetti Vongole 7.1
clams, garlic, chilli, parsley, olive oil

Chicken Penne D 7.5
creamy sauce, mushroom, parmesan

Linguine Carbonara D 8.8
creamy wagyu bresaola, parmesan, mushroom

FROM THE OVEN

Panino Frittata D 5.7
ciabatta, Tzatziki, sujuk beef sausage, potato frittata, grilled tomato

Detox Wrap 6
sushi rice, seasonal vegetables, iceberg lettuce, soya based sauce

Short Rib Panini 10.4
slow cooked short rib, caramelised onion, gruyere, homemade garlic mayonnaise

Wagyu Beef Burger D 13.4
My Café bun, shiitake marmalade, Wagyu beef patty, smoked cheddar

Chicken Caesar D 8
caesar dressing, horseradish mayo, match stick potato

Vegetarian D 7.2
eggplant caponata, sundried tomato pesto, feta, artichoke barigoule

Roast beef D 10
wagyu roast beef, mature cheddar, truffle cream, pickled cucumber

Tuna D 9
onion jam, guacamole, seared tuna, truffle oil

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PIZZA

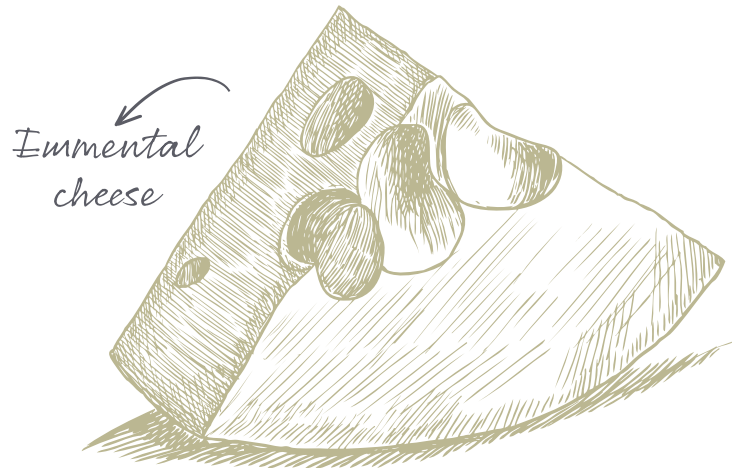
Margherita D	7.5
<i>tomato sauce, mozzarella</i>	
Pepperoni D	8.7
<i>tomato sauce, mozzarella, pepperoni</i>	
Zaatar D	8.1
<i>cherry tomato, labneh, feta cheese, zaatar, sumac</i>	
Mushroom D	11
<i>mascarpone, buffalo mozzarella, wild mushrooms, parmesan, truffle oil</i>	
Mehyawa Calzone D	7.5
<i>mehyawa sauce, feta cheese, fried egg, chives, lemon</i>	
Schiaffone D	9
<i>bresaola, pecorino, mozzarella, burrata, black pepper</i>	
Quattro Formaggi D	7.6
<i>mozzarella, gorgonzola, taleggio, parmesan, basil, black pepper</i>	

MY CAFE SIGNATURE PIZZA

Short Ribs D	16.2
<i>mascarpone, mozzarella, caramelized onion, parmesan, spicy tomato sauce</i>	
Seafood D	15
<i>calamari, shrimp, clams, crème fraîche, chives, gruyere</i>	
Bufalina D	8.7
<i>parmesan, beef bacon, pecorino, egg, pepper, mozzarella, cheddar</i>	
Mediterranean Chicken D	9.2
<i>homemade beef sausage, mozzarella, mushroom sauce, garlic, lemon</i>	
Black Truffle D	18.5
<i>mushroom sauce, gruyere, truffle</i>	
Artichoke D N	11.5
<i>homemade beef sausage, mozzarella, mushroom sauce, garlic, lemon</i>	
Certosa D	8.5
<i>mozzarella, bresaola, taleggio, roquette</i>	
Gnocho Fritto D	7.8
<i>fried dough, ricotta cream, bresaola, arrabiata, basil, oregano</i>	

FETEER

Minced Beef	7.5
<i>parmesan, cheddar, nutmeg, mediterranean seasonings</i>	
Spinach	8.8
<i>cheddar, mozzarella, olives</i>	
Cheese D	7.5
<i>parmesan, feta, mozzarella</i>	



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MAIN

Roasted Seabass D	11
<i>pan seared seabass, clams, sauce Poulette, leeks, yuzu foam</i>	
Roasted Hammour D, N	14.4
<i>celeriac, horseradish, celery root puree, shallots, walnut</i>	
Organic Grilled Chicken D, N	14
<i>chimichuri sauce, potato purre, fresh fennel salad</i>	
New Zealand Lamb Chop D	27.3
<i>Shish Barak, pine nuts, yoghurt and labnah sauce, pepperoni oil, yakitori sauce</i>	
Mediterranean Veal Cheek D	15
<i>slow cooked veal cheek, Fregola pasta, olives, sundried tomato</i>	
Prawn Machboos D	13.3
<i>aromatic rice pilaf, grilled prawn, chili & lemon pickle</i>	
Black Angus Fillet (250grams) D	28.2
<i>choice of side dish & sauce</i>	
Afghani Lamb D, N	13.9
<i>rice pilaf, roasted nuts, crispy onion, caramelized carrots</i>	
Short rib Orzo D	16.8
<i>8hrs braised short rib, thyme, chives, beef jus</i>	
A5 Japanese Wagyu Sirloin D	Price on selection
<i>choice of side dish & sauce</i>	
A5 Japanese Wagyu Ribeye D	Price on selection
<i>choice of side dish & sauce</i>	

TO SHARE

My Cafe Signature Risotto D	20.8
<i>prepared in a barrel aged parmesan wheel, acquerello risotto, wild forest mushroom, truffle oil</i>	
My Cafe Linguine Carbonara D	23.6
<i>prepared in a barrel aged parmesan wheel, creamy wagyu bresaola, wild forest mushroom</i>	
Veal Chop Milanese D (500grams)	42.7
<i>bearnaise sauce & two side dishes of your choice</i>	
Angus Chateaubriand D (500grams)	55.6
<i>truffled tapioca mash, chermoula sauce, demi-glace, two side dishes of your choice</i>	
Wagyu Sirloin Grade 9++ D (500gms)	63.5
<i>bearnaise sauce & two side dishes of your choice</i>	

SIDES

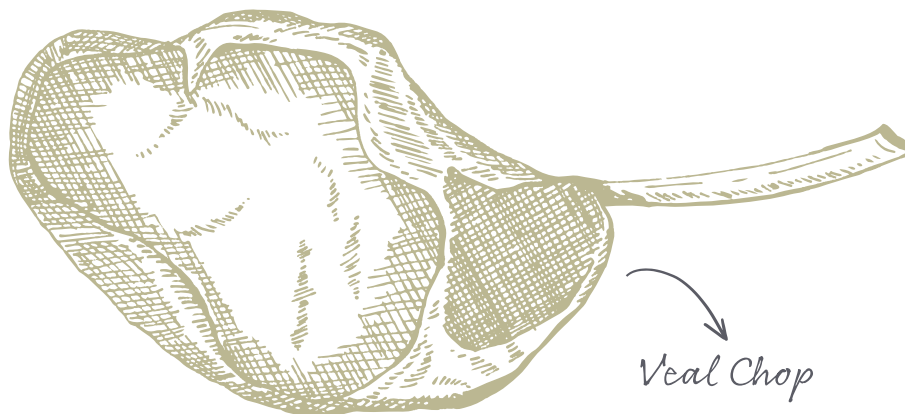
2.9

Side Salad
Spinach Florentine D
French Fries
Matchstick potato
Garlic Bread D
Olive Bread D
Sweet Potato Fries, truffle oil D
Crushed Potato D
Green Bean
Sautéed Vegetables
Button Mushroom
Lentil Salad D

SAUCES

1.8

Béarnaise Sauce D
Chimichurri
Porcini Sauce D
Green Peppercorn Sauce D
Blue cheese Sauce D



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DESSERTS FOR A GRAND FINALE



It is a breezy afternoon in St. Tropez, I decide to sit in Alexandre's Micka's original patisserie, enjoying its namesake "La Tarte Tropézienne", also known as "La Tarte de Saint-Tropez". Brigitte Bardot was introduced to this divine dessert and named it after the town.

FROM THE COUNTER

Pure Pistachio D, N	6.5
<i>pistachio sponge, pistachio crèmeux, raspberry sorbet</i>	
Chocolate Caramel D	5.8
<i>moist chocolate sponge, chocolate caramel, cocoa nibs ice cream</i>	
Tiramisu D	5.8
<i>viennese sponge, coffee cremeux, mascarpone cream</i>	
Pecan Financier D, N	6.2
<i>financier cake, frosted pecans, caramel ice cream</i>	

ALA CARTE DESSERT

Hot Chocolate fondant D, N	6.4
<i>salted caramel, chocolate tuille, vanilla ice cream</i>	
'My' Sticky Toffee Pudding D, N	5.9
<i>frosted pecans, caramelised pistachios, vanilla Ice cream</i>	
Churros D	5.8
<i>deep fried churros, dulce de leche sauce</i>	
Russian Honey Cake D, N	5.5
<i>burned honey sponge, yoghurt sorbet</i>	
San Sebastian Cheese Cake D	5.9
<i>mascarpone cream, raspberry sorbet</i>	
Hazelnut Tart D, N	5.8
<i>tender sponge, praline cremeux, hazelnut ice cream</i>	



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COLD DRINKS

TO REFRESH & REJUVINATE

On those balmy summer nights on the Mediterranean, nothing cools me down more than a refreshing glass of French lemonade, the gorgeously fizzy Citron Pressé that is so clear and sparkly, it brings me joy with every sip!

Breathing in the scent of citrus and the salty sea breeze, my mind goes back to those hot Bahraini summer afternoons of my childhood, when a glass of Limonada was such a rejuvenating relief. My grandmother would add rose water to her lemonade, and always served it alongside another gorgeous cold drink, a sweet saffron infusion with puffed basil seeds, which continued to cool us long after the drink was consumed.

I pay homage to these summer drinks with my own concoction, my signature Saffron Lemonade, a sweet and tangy elixir with orange blossom flower essence. This mix was a favorite in our household, and I made sure it was on my menu – a refreshing and reviving drink that cools the body and soothes the soul.



MOCKTAILS

Saffron Lemonade 3.4
saffron infuse, orange blossom, sweet & sour

Hibiscus Lemonade 3.4
pineapple, homemade hibiscus soda, lime

Apple Mojito 3.4
apple, mint, lime, honey

Watermelon mojito 3.7
strawberry, lime, watermelon

Pomegranate Velvet 3.6
pomegranate, yuzu, agave

Yuzu Lemonade 4
grapes, mint, yuzu, elderflower

Caribbean twist 3.4
coconut, strawberry, rose, lime

Lime N Milk 3.1
lime, condensed milk

Mandarin Punch 3.4
mandarin, coriander, sweet & sour

Spiced Pear 3.6
pear, grapefruit, homemade turmeric syrup, lime

Mandarin POP SODA 3.4

FRESH JUICES

Comfort 3.4
beetroot, pineapple, green apple, lemon, ginger, honey

Detox 3.4
lemongrass, coriander, spinach, red apple, lemon, ginger



ICE TEA

Lemongrass 3.1
tea, lemongrass, sweet and sour

Rose 3.1
tea, rose water, rose syrup, sweet and sour

Mix Berry & Peach 3.5
tea, strawberry, raspberry, peach, sweet and sour

SOFT DRINKS

Coke, Coke Light, Coke Zero, Fanta orange, 7UP, 7UP Light Soda water, Ginger ale 1.7

MILKSHAKES

Vanilla, Strawberry, Chocolate 3.5

SMOOTHIES

Strawberry, Banana, Mango 3.5

WATER

STILL	L	M
Acqua Panna, Italy	3.7	2.7

SPARKLING	
Perrier, France	3.9
S. Pellegrino, Italy	4.5

HOT DRINKS

GROUND, BREWED & POURED



As I sit at the Promenade de la Croisette, the iconic boulevard and the beating heart of Cannes, I savor endless cups of espresso on sunny breezy afternoon, people-watching and writing in my diary, contemplating the similarities between our the Arab and the French - we both love luxury, finery, fine food, jewelry, high fashion etc. - yet I find it wonderful how we both appreciate coffee so much.

My mind goes back to my childhood, how every morning my grandmother would show me how to make chai, a simple drink, yet requires a lifetime of practice - piercing and toasting the cardamom, boiling the milk correctly, preparing and adding the saffron at the right time, how to mix and prepare and pour the hot beverage we were so depended on. In the afternoons it would be red tea served with gand, crystalized fruit sugar. We would wake up in the afternoon after our naps to the smell of Arabic coffee wafting.

I always remember the simple white porcelain bowls filled with fanayeen, tiny coffee cups that would be swirling in water, clinking together. When I grew up and explored the world, I realized how in every corner of the earth, and every era of history, the rituals and traditions surrounding hot beverages are all different yet the same. From elaborate Japanese tea ceremonies to an Italian barista's preparation of a cappuccino, from the Bedouin gahwar rituals to the complicated South American methods of preparing a perfect mate, we all love our hot drinks because they bring us together - they are social facilitators. A coffee or tea is fine alone, but with friends and family, it is an experience, a conversation, a memory...

SELECTION OF TEA

Chamomile Breeze	2.2
Earl Grey	2.2
Green Tea	2.4
Jasmine Silver Needle	2.8
English Breakfast	2.2
Fresh ginger, Lemongrass tea	2.4
Karak Tea	2.7
Peppermint	2.4
Orange blossom	1.7

SELECTION OF COFFEE

Americano	1.9
Espresso	1.5
Ristretto	1.3
Macchiato	1.8
Double Espresso	2.2
Café Latte	2.2
Flat White	2.4
Cappuccino	2.2
Turkish Coffee	3
Iced Latte	3.4
Matcha Latte	3.6
Flavoured Latte	3.6
Mocha	2.8
Arabic Coffee	6.4

SPECIALITY COFFEE

Brulee Latte	3.2
Café bonbon	2.3
Rose & beetroot latte	3.6
Cardamom Latte	3.6
Iced coffee & Saffron Latte	3.2
Coconut Hot chocolate	3.2
Orange Hot chocolate	3.2



I've learned that the concept of "cuisine" is an illusion, from curry-spiced macaronato mehyawapizzas, food is fluid because people and cultures are fluid, especially in this day and age. It all comes down to what you do with ingredients. All I ever search for, when trying new recipes or restaurants, is excellent ingredients prepared in a perfect way using authentic, innovative or simple interesting technique, because I love learning and exploring new ways to prepare a simple ingredient.

I always advise my fellow diners to try as many different dishes as they can, don't hold back, be excited, savor every bite, revel in its deliciousness! Because care, consideration and passion truly show in the food. I firmly believe that taste is in the fingers, it is the heart and soul of a chef that makes a beautiful dish. A good meal means happiness, good food affects your hormones, your mood, your self-esteem, your relationships.

Breaking bread with loved ones reaffirms your ties, celebrating over a feast makes the night unforgettable, and if we are having a fight with a loved one, cooking and eating together are the fastest way to get over things.

Ultimately, food brings us together, sharing a meal is one of the most fundamental things about being human, and never forget that life is short and the ability to enjoy food is one of its greatest gifts.

So go on, enjoy!

- Sawsan Baluch



My Cafe' 

