

The Taste of Spain

Contemporary is what most new restaurants aspire to be. Tapping into new culinary élan, the recently open Don Quijote is poised to attract discerning individuals with its warm wood interior, tall wine racks, and groovy Spanish tunes. Unlike other Spanish restaurants, Don Quijote is bold and contemporary—we're talking modern and chic. Self-billed as the *hottest new concept* in Spanish dining, the menu is designed to live up to nouveau expectations with interpretations of cuisine offerings from Spain. Once past the first hurdle of picking dishes from the vast menu, we were treated to a meal of tantalising delicacies.

As we took our table, it was obvious that the only commonality between the diners was their desire to enjoy a great meal in a great restaurant. On the night that we visited, the restaurant was filled with a truly cosmopolitan after work crowd. The patrons ranged from a group of young couples, who appeared to be enjoying the flair of both atmosphere and fare, to heavysset dark suited businessmen in power ties.

A few exquisite highlights on offer are the *Tabla de Don Quijote*, *Almejas a la Marinera*, *Calamares Fritos*, *Tortilla Espanola*, *Rollitos de Repollo com Arroz*, *Albondigas*, *Rabo de Toro*, *Fideaua Negra*, *Paella Don Quijote Special*, and *Sangria de Cava*. Although most of the dishes mentioned may sound foreign to many, after pleasuring your palates to the toothsome morsels, you'll want to remember the names of these Mediterranean treats.

To whet the appetite with the perfect appetizers, the mixed platter of cold meats and cheese (*Tabla de Don Quijote*)—a party of Salami, Bratwurst pieces, and Parma ham, served with a rocket salad with a side of goat, cow and sheep cheese—worked like a dream. The Spanish diet consists of seafood as a staple, which brings me to one of the most remarkable shelled entrees I have ever savoured. The clams in onion and white-wine sauce (*Almejas a la Marinera*) offered a lip-smacking combination, bringing out the sweetness from the *Almejas* clams. However, the battered and fried calamari (*Calamares Fritos*) and Spanish meatballs (*Albondigas*) were the most popular entrees at the table. Not overly battered the calamari was tender and juicy, delightfully complementing the meal. The Spanish meatballs were a real surprise. Holding its shape perfectly, the meatballs offered a bouncy texture as each bite was a *melt in the mouth* experience. These were our entrees, a tantalising array of aromatic spices and flavours.

For those who contain their urge to fill their tummies on the appetiser menu, the main course offers more indulgent dishes. My favourite and also the *crème de la crème* of Spanish cuisines, the *Paella Don Quijote Special*, is a concoction of Spanish style seafood rice, cooked in a pan. It may sound simple but the dish is simply irresistible. Exuding authenticity from Spain the sweet embrace from the seafood flavours, infused during cooking, enhances the silken smooth rice. The other flavoursome fare savoured includes the *Oxtail Stew (Rabo de Toro)*, which offered a tender touch to the meal. The meat is stewed to sweet perfection, so soft it falls off the bone. Its exceptional delectability took our dining experience to a higher level of contentment. Also a big hit around the table was the *Angel-hair pasta cooked in squid ink (Fideua Negra)*. A must-have for seafood lovers, the flavours worked well together with the ink providing a salty, somewhat sweet, flavour as an ingredient and colouring to the pasta.

Your Spanish feast cannot end at the main course. If you do settle for a cocktail, the *Sangria* comes highly recommended. A mysterious concoction of Cava (sparkling white wine) and some other ingredients that Ken, owner of Don Quijote, refuses to divulge is simply to die for—tangy, fruity and bubbly with a tinge of spice. For dessert, the *Bread and Butter Pudding* is simply luscious. So smooth and so creamy, this sweet treat is a traditional homemade dessert.

There is certain solidarity to the restaurant; it has an almost library-like serene quality, where people seem to talk quietly among themselves rather than being raucous. In reality, the superbly created acoustics facilitate the feeling of peace and quiet. Don Quijote is the sum of a number intricate intangibles. It's not just fantastic food or the brilliant service; it's somehow the way that the experience goes together that makes a restaurant great.

Don Quijote is located on a quiet road off Upper Bukit Timah road. There is a nearby sizeable carpark lot that caters to diners patronising the eateries along Chun Tin road.



On The Menu

Tortilla Espanola

Spanish style Potato Omelette

Tabla de Don Quijote

A Platter of Mixed Cold Meats

Rollitos de Repollo con Arroz

Cooked Rice, Bacon and Nuts,

Rolled into Cabbage Leaves

Almejas a la Marinera

Clams in Onion and White-Wine Sauce

Calamares Fritos

Battered and Fried Calamari

Albondigas

Spanish Meatballs

Rabo de Toro

Oxtail Stew

Fideua Negra

Angel-hair Pasta cooked in Squid Ink

Paella Don Quijote Special

a concoction of Spanish style seafood rice,

cooked in a pan

Sangria

Concoction of Cava

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