

Seafood rediscovered at the Manhattan Fish Market



Garlic herb rice with flamed tiger prawns

Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Oman and now Sri Lanka! The Manhattan Fish Market, the specialty seafood restaurant, offering the promise of the best fish in town is making ripples through the foodies in Colombo with their debut outlet in Deal Place, Colpetty.

Words Dilshan Senaratne

The Fulton Fish Market is the source of inspiration from which comes one of the finest international seafood franchises; The Manhattan Fish Market. With a taste for serving high quality specialty dishes, composed to succulent perfection, MFM is best described as a casual diner with premium cuisine. The debut MFM outlet in Colombo comes in the form of a subsidiary of Bright Group of Companies.

The Manhattan Fish Market prides itself in serving absolutely anyone. Reasonably priced, intended to serve the best to everyone, the food is completely trans-fat free, appealing to health conscious food lovers. The meals are generously sized with great consideration to nutrition. Protein-rich fish is coupled with sources of carbohydrate, either in the form of rice or French fries and garnished with a

vitamin rich salad.

In stark contrast to the food on offer, the air about the restaurant is one of hustle and bustle, reminiscent of a fish market, much like the one it draws its inspiration from. “We sometimes have guests who complain about the noise and I always tell them, it’s a fish market sir, we can’t be quiet,” comments M Shafraz Anees, MD – MFM Sri Lanka.

Contrary however to being likened to a fish market, the interior lacks any such quality with pearly white cut cement walls and sleek lighting. The two-storey structure carries a clean cut outlook. The lower storey is arranged as a typical diner with snug seating arrangements and bright lights. The second storey in contrast is compartmentalised to three areas which include a similar setup to the lower storey but with fewer seatings, a private room for corporate meetings and intimate meals along with a third outdoor area resembling a balcony setup. Each of the three compartments possess a unique ambience with varying degrees of privacy.

“Consistency is a major concern for the MFM brand and they’re very particular when it comes to quality. The food, the service and the ingredients are all in line with any other MFM outlet across the world.” Attention to detail is an obvious attribute at the restaurant. All ingredients are less than a day old and this rule applies even to the sauces. Food is prepared in one of five ways (poached, grilled, baked, fried or flamed) only upon request.

To say the finest seafood from the world over is served at MFM is an understatement, considering that the ingredients, right down to the most minute ones are of premium quality. A special highlight among this remarkable lineup is the Dory (fish) which features in many of the MFM dishes.

The Dory fish is a rare treat in Sri Lanka and at MFM Dory is an indulgence. “People always try to describe what it tastes like but no, nothing tastes like Dory,” is the prelude to the fish as given by Shafraz Anees. The fish said to melt in your mouth is served alongside other equally appetising treats such as oyster, mussels, tiger prawns, lobster and scallops. The menu itself is a dabbling affair with a diverse range of dishes which besides seafood also consists of favourites such as chicken, rice and French fries, all with a special MFM touch.

Preparation methods are unique as are the delectable dishes. The tiger prawns

for example are flamed for the customer at the table with the use of a flame gun and have a sweet texture in contrast to the spicy preparation found more commonly.

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The gastronomical delights far from ending at the food continue into drinks and desserts, all of which boast of a signature twist. The range of tantalising drinks occupy a colourful page in the comprehensive menu and come in varying flavours and colours. The Oreo Kaboom and Citrus Mint are marked favourites among the guests and do justice to their names. The Citrus Mint is a mix of mint and lemon instead of the more common lime and the Oreo Kaboom is exactly that. The drinks are closely followed by a signature range of desserts including the all-popular mud cake, a bestseller in every MFM outlet.

As a parting sentiment a smiling Shafraz Anees adds, "at MFM we're all having fun and that's the kind of experience we want our guests to share in. We're not a formal restaurant even though our menu is as good as a five-star hotel restaurant, we're serving the best seafood to everyone and we're going to have fun doing it."

The Manhattan Fish Market

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