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Review: Maison Dali plates up the curious and the quirky



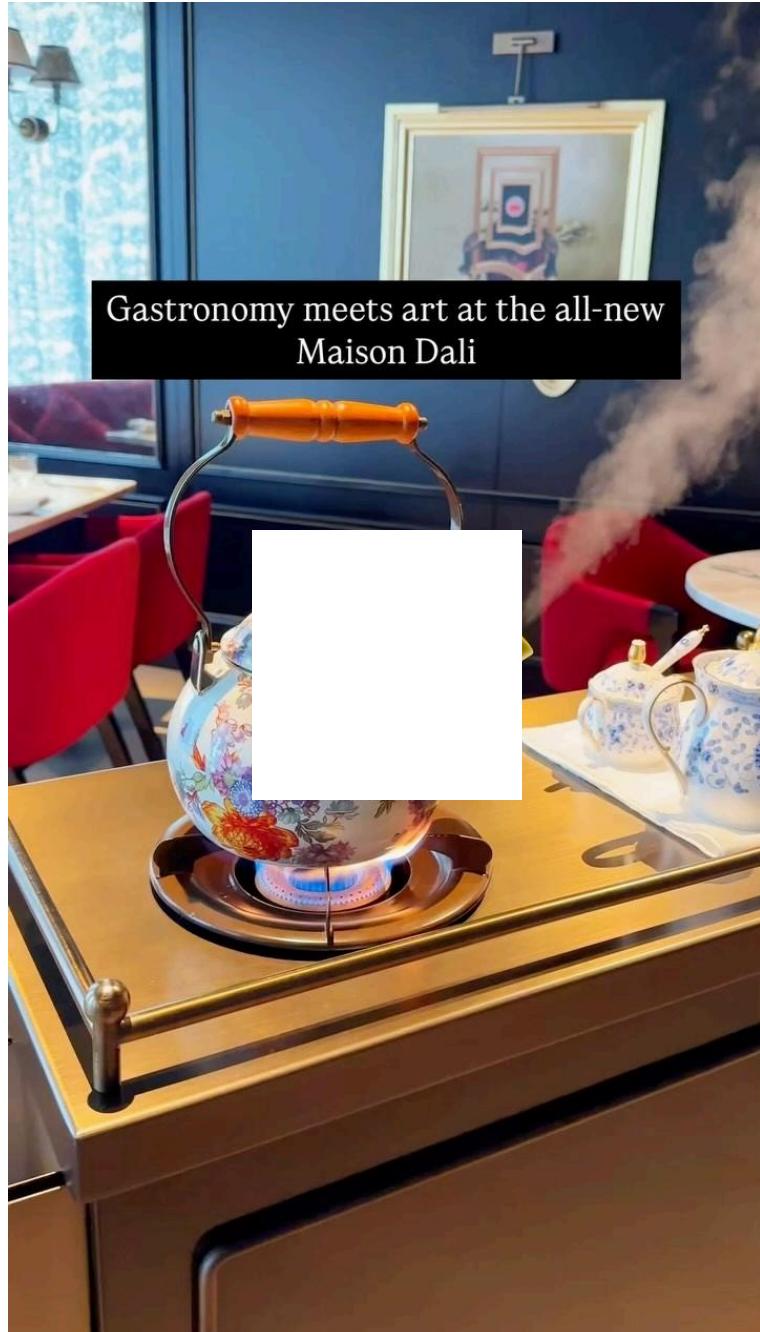
Written by:
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One Spanish surrealist and one Scottish chef join forces for Maison Dali...

New in The Opus by Omniyat – Maison Dali is the latest from the mind of Chef Tristin Farmer, having made his way around Michelin-starred kitchens in Singapore and Dubai. Back in the city, he's set up shop once again, this time in the heart of Business Bay, borrowing a little flavour and wonder from Slavador Dali's colourful life and times, and a whole lot from the giant that is Japanese cooking.

Ambiance

As soon as you step in, you're greeted by a cavernous space, draped almost entirely, in red. From the heavy, velvet curtains to the chairs, cushions and the lip-shaped couches, everything is crimson, and the crimson talks, because the rest of the interiors are done up in neutral shades, with marble tables, ivory tiled floors and lampshades, and one wall decked out like a disco ball.

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Surrealist artworks dot the walls here and there, complemented by a kitsch fake fireplace and a

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Maison Dali's feel is that of a polished bizarre, aspiring to be truly unrestrained but glossed over with shiny floors, smooth velvet chairs and an army of staff milling about on the floor, providing constant, near-and-far attention. It's packaged quite nicely, made pleasantly palatable for the typical Dubai diner.

Food

The start of our meal is strong – shokupan, or Japanese milk bread, steaming and gloriously soft, salty, with a melt-in-your-mouth malt, which we devour with butter. Next comes the Dali shellfish platter (Dhs395). This selection contains four crudos, of which the highlights are the French oysters boudeuse, a zesty, spicy and sweet, welcome burst of flavours with the yuzu mignonette and yellow pepper hot sauce; and the Japanese hamaguri clams, offering a sort of green freshness with cucumber, shiso and wasabi.

For the small plates, the potato mochi (Dhs110) is the star, a chewy gnocchi, served cacio e pepe style, topped with a shocking amount of truffle, which the server shaves fresh on the table. It's cheesy, it's creamy and it offers a pointed bite in all that depth with the pepper. Incredibly moreish. The squid pil pil (Dhs95) is juicy, with sharp flavours from the kanzuri, garlic and salsa verde – overall, a bright, light dish.

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The mains come as the miso turbot (Dhs245) – aromatic, citrus-y fish, with yuzu, ginger and star anise, and stuffed morel. The fish is delicious; the morel is a textural pass and an acquired taste – one I

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MUCH FLAVOUR TO THE SMOKY, MEATY DUCK.

As we end with the gariguette strawberries (Dhs50) – sweet, tart and creamy in all the right ways – and the dark chocolate s'mores (Dhs45) – rich chocolate given body with the nutty sesame – we come to a number of conclusions.

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could polish the experience into what it can be best. The food, invoking Japan with on-site soy ageing, fermented ingredients and umami flavours, should perhaps capitalise on this very complexity, rather than a claim of simplicity. The food is delicious, but still experimental and not as affordable for the volume of regulars they are hoping to create. You will be told this is your next neighbourhood haunt – we're not sure we agree, but it's a solid choice for your next special occasion.

What's On Verdict: We're here for what Maison Dali is serving.

Maison Dali, The Opus by OMNIYAT, Mon to Fri, 12pm to 2.30pm, 6pm to 12am, Sat and Sun, 6pm to 1am, Tel: (0) 4 257 9554, [@maisondali_dubai](#)

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