

Medium: Metropole

Datum: 28.05.2018

METROPOLE

VIENNA IN ENGLISH

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A Delightful Dinner by the Danube

By [Claudia Pascoal](#) · 28 May 2018
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The Marina Restaurant combines Austrian culinary variations and Mediterranean flavors with an unbeatable view and a refreshing breeze

As the days grow longer and the nights warmer, Vienna residents traditionally flock to the water. There are dozens of cocktail bars and taverns serving snacks on the Donaukanal, and the Donauiinsel has more than its fair share of

seasonal restaurants, offering everything from salsa nights to water pipes and Asian fusion. But none of them can match the elegance and ambiance of the Marina Restaurant, just a few steps from the U2 station Donaumarina. Wedged among office buildings between the Prater and the Donauiinsel, its terrace right by the Danube seats 200, making it ideal for business lunches during the week, after-work drinks or a romantic dinner as the sun sets behind the DC tower.

Quiet and breezy with three flags waving by the pier, it's easy to forget the rat race while enjoying a spritzer or a glass of wine from Austria, France or Italy; the teak lounge furniture makes it almost feel like a sailing club. In winter, the deck chairs are covered with lambskins and guests can stay warm by drinking punch around an open fire, far from crowded Christmas markets.

LOCAL FARE WITH A TWIST

The best time to start your summer dinner is around 19:30, just as the sun starts dyeing the sky orange. The menu is a mixture of the exotic and the traditional: the seasonal asparagus soup is enhanced with Bärlauch (wild garlic) and pumpernickel croutons while the smoked salmon comes with avocado, a spicy wasabi cottage cheese and colored nashi pears. Mario Schneider, formerly of Motto am Fluss and the Griechenbeisl among others, presents fish and meat from Bresaola to tuna steak along with some extravagant dishes like octopus risotto and papaya wild herb salad (vegan option also available) but insists on retaining four "classics" – familiar dishes with a fresh twist. The Backhendl (fried chicken), a popular dish from Styria, is marinated in yogurt for a fresher flavor before it's breaded and fried, accompanied by potato salad sweetened with pumpkin seed oil as an additional nod to its heritage. Sadly, not all of the experiments quite work: the mussel pot uses a tomato-and-leek stock that absorbs all the moisture, leaving the mollusks dry and rubbery. The traditional white wine would have been a far better choice.

But with a view like this, the food is almost secondary. Finish your evening gazing over the water as the light changes minute by minute, until the sky burns red just before the sun disappears behind the dark skyscrapers. As the stars come out over the Danube, hardly visible elsewhere in the city, sip a Riesling from Dürnstein as the breeze ruffles your hair – and don't forget to order apple strudel with vanilla sauce, just to remind you that you're still in Leopoldstadt and not far away at some exotic retreat.