

ECUADOR NEWS - DINING OUT

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ADVERTORIAL

La Viña




PERUVIAN KNOW HOW Mario Muro is La Viña's Executive Chef.



Staying On Top

LA VIÑA RESTAURANT Recognitions such as the Star Diamond Award, Cena de la Rosa, and Wine Spectator have been obtained by only a few restaurants in Quito, but none with the same track record for longevity and service as La Viña.

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Today one finds a lot of fine dining restaurants in Quito offering diverse menus and exquisite dining experiences. But if you take a closer look at the restaurants which have been around more than a dozen years, the list shrinks dramatically. In fact, you can probably count them on one hand.

Longevity in hospitality sends a message in Quito that something

has been and continues to be done correctly. After 15 years La Viña Restaurant still stands out as one of the top dining experiences in Quito.

IN THE BEGINNING

Pablo Marcel and Carmen Chiriboga started La Viña in 1997. In those days, though Quito's restaurant scene was yet to be born, there was a place where gastronomy was taking off: Peru.

Although Peruvian gastronomy was gaining world-wide acclaim, what Marcel and Chiriboga wanted to import was not Peruvian food, but their know-how.

They turned to Gonzalo Angosto, a highly recognized chef from Peru, among whose many accomplishments was the creation of La Gloria, a restaurant that would go on to be named Peru's best Mediterranean restaurant and best all-round restaurant in the first

decade of this century.

Angosto, La Gloria's first executive chef, was behind the creation of La Viña's menu, which is also Mediterranean, and helped take La Viña to the top of Quito's restaurant list. It is a menu which was cared for and managed successfully by Chiriboga for more than a dozen years and is now in the hands of some new, young talent.

STAYING ON TOP

A couple of years ago La Viña changed hands. Marcel and Chiriboga left, and young, energetic owner, Carlos Hervas, stepped in.

Familiar with La Viña's success, Hervas came at a time when the restaurant scene in Quito was transforming and becoming ever more competitive. Not wanting to lose any ground he flew to Peru and met with Angosto.

Together Angosto and Hervas decided on a few adjustments, the most critical of which was the hiring of executive chef, Peruvian,

THE MENU

La Viña's menu has had a Mediterranean focus from the start - traditions from Europe's three most southern countries, Spain, Italy, and France, all of which border the Mediterranean Sea. But La Viña has figured out how to sprinkle a few other worldly influences, a la carte.

Italy is to be found in the pastas and risottos of La Viña, the most popular of which is the black risotto with seafood, a risotto tinted with calamari and

mixed with octopus, shrimps, and vegetables. This is only the start of their array of seafood options.

La Viña offers a Mediterranean octopus - a hot appetizer of octopus, potatoes, paprika, garlic, and olive oil. Their "chaos of fish and seafood," is a filet of fish in a lightly seasoned sauce with leeks and carrots. And for a seafood option which borrows from another gastronomic tradition, the "Langostinos Thai" are large prawns in a Thai sauce served with potato puree and crunchy vegetables.

La Viña knows that many of their clients are meat eaters and therefore offers steak filets and a rack of lamb, some of the best cuts of imported meat to be found in Quito. Or clients can opt for a white meat dish, Mediterranean stuffed chicken with grilled peppers and cheese served with a creamy garlic sauce.

As a restaurant located in Latin America, with a Latin American chef, La Viña occasionally reaches beyond the old world to offer some regional dishes.

Their ceviche de pescado is prepared Peruvian style with a fresh fish base marinated in lemon and accompanied by comote and corn. And to honor Ecuadorian heritage, aguado de camarones and loco de papas are there for the choosing.

But one of La Viña's most sought after dishes is one that is not on the menu: cochinito, also known as lechón, or in English, suckling pig. A dish common in Ecuador but with Spanish roots, La Viña's cochinito is served with salad, fried potatoes, and two different sauces.

None of this, however, is complete without a bottle of wine. Diners at La Viña can now choose from among their many labels on an iPad wine list brought to the table, one more indication that La Viña maintains a cutting edge over the others who are trying to keep up.

RESERVATIONS

La Viña is open Monday through Friday, 12:30-4pm and 7-11pm. Soon they will be opening on Sundays for Family Lunch Day, 12-4pm with a children's menu and, due to being one of the few restaurants in Quito with a yard, playground equipment.

La Viña is located near the corner of Isabel La Católica and Cordero in the Floresta district. Starter plates average \$8 and main entrees, \$15 (not including taxes). For more information contact La Viña at 256-6033. Visit their website at www.lavinaquito.com

Restaurant Guide of Quito

AMERICAN
Mulligan's Pub & Grill
Calama E5-44 & Juan Leon Mera
Ph: 254-0876 / 223-6844

ARGENTINIAN
San Telmo Steak House
Portugal 440 & Francisco Casanova
Ph: 333-1943 / www.santelmorestaurant.com

ASIAN
Pekin Restaurant
Whymper 300 & Av. Orellana
Ph: 250-4984 / 223-5273

Zao
Av. Eloy Alfaro N10-16 & San Salvador
Ph: 252-3496 / 250-5203

Kanpai Thai & Japanese Food
Plaza de las Americas (NNUU & Republica)
Ph: 331-7806 / 331-7825

Tanoshii Restaurant / Swissôtel
12 de Octubre 18-20 y Luis Cordero
Ph: 256-7600, ext. 2615 / www.swissotel.com

BARBEQUE GRILL
Bondiola Grill
Coruña E11-252 & Isabel La Católica
Ph: 252-0595

BISTROS
Neu Bistro & Skybar (Hotel Le Parc)
Av. República del Salvador & Irlanda
Ph: 227-6800 / www.leparc.com.ec

BRAZILIAN
Rodizio Botafogo (diagonal to Swissôtel)
Av. 12 de Octubre & B. Moreno
Ph: 222-4776 / 084-630-600 / 092-529-773

ECUADORIAN
Rincon de Cantuña
www.hotelpatioandaluz.com
Ph: 228-0830 / Garcia Moreno & Olmedo

Mi Cocina
Megamaxi Shopping Center
Ph: 224-1210 / 6 de Diciembre & Aleman

FRENCH
Chez Jerome
Whymper N30-96 & Coruña
Ph: 223-4067 / www.chezjeromeresaurante.com

Le Petit Pigalle
Carrión y 9 de Octubre (corner)
Ph: 252-0867 / www.lepetitpigallerestaurant.com

HAWAIIAN
Aloha Ohana
Coruña N31-83 & Whymper
Ph: 290-3690 / www.alohaohanarestaurant.com

INTERNATIONAL
Alma Cocina
El Monitor 188 & Quiteño Libre, El Batán
Ph: 225-2248 / www.alma.com.ec

Zazu
Mariano Aguilera 331 & Pradera
Ph: 254-3559 / www.zazuquito.com

ITALIAN
Pavarotti Ristorante Italiano
12 de Octubre N24-551 & Cordero
Ph: 256-6668 / www.pavarottiquito.com

MEDITERRANEAN
La Viña
Isabel La Católica & Cordero
Ph: 256-6033 / www.lavinaquito.com

La Cava el Claustro / Hotel Plaza Grande
Calle García Moreno N5-16 y Chile (corner)
Ph: 251-0777 / www.plazagrandequito.com

MEXICAN
La Casa de Eduardo
Reina Victoria N21-238 & Jerónimo Carrión
Ph: 222-5023 (Sector Mariscal)
Isla Isabela N42-92 y Tomás de Berlanga
Ph: 245-4743 (Sector Plaza de Toros)
www.lacasadeeduardo.com

Mezcalito
Plaza de las Americas (NNUU & Republica)
Ph: 331-7863 / 095-440-049

PERUVIAN
Segundo Muelle
Isabel La Católica & Gangotena
Ph: 222-6548 / www.segundomuelle.com

PIZZA
Al Forno Pizzeria
Baquerizo Moreno y Almagro/252-7145
Bélgica E9-35 y Av. De los Shyris/333-0681
Brasil N39-52 y Granda Centeno/246-8369
Cumbayá, Parque del Paseo/289-4020
1-800-ALFORNO
www.alfornopizzeriaitaliana.com

Fortunato's Pizzeria Trattoria
Av. Republica de El Salvador & Moscu (corner)
Ph: 1-700-FORTUNATOS / 244-3304

SEAFOOD - ECUADORIAN
El Esmeraldas
Av. Isabel La Católica N24-560 & Cordero
Ph: 222-6616 / www.elesmeraldas.com

El Arrecife de las Conchas / Kendo Plaza
República del Salvador & Portugal (FREE parking)
Ph: 246-0060 / elarrecife2010@hotmail.com

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WINE ONLINE Ordering a bottle of wine at La Viña just became high tech. iPad wine lists are delivered to diners' tables.



COCHINITO La Viña's most sought after dish is one that is not on the menu: cochinito, also known as lechón, or in English, suckling pig.