Cultural Daily

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Bresca Restaurant in Washington DC

Hoyt Hilsman · Sunday, July 16th, 2023

Washington DC has an increasingly sophisticated dining scene, and one of the best restaurants is the Michelin-starred Bresca, founded by Chef Ryan Ratino. Bresca is a fine example of the neo-bistro movement which originated in France and combines traditional cuisine sourced with local ingredients and featuring a more accessible, informal dining style.



Located on busy 14th Street Northwest, Bresca is an intimate, convivial hideaway with a modest number of tables and a bistro-style bar. The menu features a variety of tasting menus, which can be paired with several wine pairings. Bresca also offers a tantalizing cocktail experience called “Ethos,” which is offered twice a week.



On a recent visit, we were seated at the counter bar and began with the “Ethos” menu of cocktails, curated by Sara Chaudhuri, the lively and creative lead bartender. Chaudhuri has designed five cocktails that “evoke a state of mind, the character of a place, or a moment in time.” These are essentially flights of imagination, storytelling through the mixture of flavors and sensations conjured through drink and a delightful introduction to the themes and flavors of Bresca.



As we sipped our cocktails, we ordered from the a la carte menu, which included selected items from the tasting menus. Some of the highlights were the Madai Crudo, which was combined with green tomato, avocado, green strawberry and chartreuse, as well as the Duck a La Presse, a chef specialty with endive and mustard sauce a la royale. An interesting and delicate appetizer was the English Snow Pea Tart topped with trout roe and hollandaise. Japanese Cheesecake was a delightful dessert, along with a selection of sweet treats.



Since the cocktail flight and a la carte dishes, along with several appetizers were enough food and drink to satisfy, we were not able to sample several of the other tantalizing dishes on the menu. They included Australian Wagyu served with nasturtium and black trumpet mushrooms, Short Rid Cavatelli with mustard greens and Foie Gras with rhubarb and white negroni.



Bresca is increasingly popular among the food crowd in DC, apparently drawing admiring chefs and staff from other restaurants, as well as discerning Washingtonians. The combination of imaginative and delicate dining with the cocktail flight, as well as attentive, informal service make Bresca well worth the visit.

1906 14th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 518-7926. www.brescadc.com

(Photos by Nancy Kay Turner)

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