



Seafood At Seasalt

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After a gala opening last week, with all the A-listing Bali folk in attendance, FRV Bali had the chance to try the new Seasalt restaurant at Alila Seminyak straight out of the blocks.



Seasalt Signature White Snapper

Written by: DAVID TRAUTS

It was a quiet Tuesday evening when we walked in and sat at the new bar in the seaside-residential styled space that overlooks the Indian Ocean. We ordered a couple of Seasalt signature cocktails; a Spicy Cha Margarita and a Chocolate Blanc Martini to kick off proceedings. There are seven tasty Seasalt Margaritas to choose from.

The back part of the main dining area at Seasalt has been raised up so everyone now gets a view of the waves, and as the designer says, the whole restaurant now has the feel of being in a large boat sailing on the ocean. The back risen section has become a lounge and dining area, with new furnishings and timber dividers succeeding to give the space more intimacy.

Dining on the front terrace close to the ocean is still popular as many tables are occupied on the evening of our visit. An expansive, halogen lit, open kitchen takes up one side of the restaurant and is operated by the talented Chef Vivian Vitalis, originally from Kuala Lumpur. He and his staff have created a stunning and inventive seafood dining experience.



Comfort on the new, risen rear section of Seasalt

Having such a breathtaking beachside setting and the abundance of fresh seafood on the island, it's easy to imagine how the management of Seasalt decided on the seafood restaurant concept. Add to that the extensive use of locally harvested sea salts, a dash of Japanese inspiration coming from Chef Vivian's past position in one of Malaysia's best Japanese restaurants, and you get a picture of what the dining here is all about.

The five specially prepared sea salts are a principal part of the Seasalt restaurant experience. They are Seasalt Signature (a mix of sea salt, curry, leaf, lemongrass, cumin, coriander seed & leaf and cinnamon), Black Garlic Seasalt, Lemon and Thyme Seasalt, Lime and Chili Seasalt and Nori Seaweed Seasalt. These salts are used for garnishing margarita glass rims and as part of the ingredients of some dishes.



Fresh fish straight from the Indian Ocean and below, the Butterfish off the mains menu.

The dining at Seasalt starts with complimentary hors d'oeuvres including a plate of refreshing, compressed watermelon with a little curry powder and then, the Seasalt Ritual, which introduces guests to the sea salt concept of the restaurant. Home made mackerel spread is wrapped in Nori seaweed sheets and caked in the Seasalt Signature mix on a baking dish and then baked in the oven. When the hardened salt is chipped away by the waiter at the table, guests have the chance to try some very tasty mackerel with Nori which is a great opening to the dining to come. And as I said above, complimentary for all dinner guests.

The entrees side of the menu has two sections, Raw and Vegetable. The Raw section is mostly Japanese influenced raw and cured fish salad dishes. We tried the Spanish Mackerel with Yuzu cured and Ponzu dressing (90k) and Cured Bonito with dashi mayonnaise, green tomato and wasabi (90k). From Vegetable we went for Kyoto Hummus (90k) and Seasalt Roasted Roots with carrot, beetroot, sweet potato, red miso puree (90k).



Cured Bonito from the Raw selection

We began the mains with the Seasalt Signature (225k), which is a whole white snapper, again caked in the Seasalt Signature mix and baked in the oven and comes with four side dishes. It may well be the most surprising piece of snapper you have ever eaten, juicy, succulent, almost buttery in texture as the seemingly compressed white flesh melts in your mouth. This is a fish dish that you simply must try. We also had the Butterfish (125k) with miso-honey roasted and carrot puree, and the Blue Swimmer Crab (125k) that arrived with crab mayonnaise and chawanmushi - an egg custard dish found in Japan. Most of the seafood dishes at Seasalt are Japanese influenced, which means of course that they are very tasty and as healthy to match.

There are also a number of favorite meat dishes on the menu for those who aren't longing for seafood.



We finished off with a couple of delectable desserts. The Dulcey (90k), a 32% Valrhona dulcey parfait, milk solids and saked ivoire caramel, and the Matcha (90k), a green tea namelaka, green tea cake and red bean ice cream. Both were creamy and delicious.

The new Seasalt restaurant offers a fresh dining experience in an elegant, beachside setting and the dining on offer is new, creative and delicious, but the dishes remain healthy, fresh and just like Chef Vivian himself, always down to earth. Seasalt is a true dining experience from start to finish, reasonably priced and seafood has never tasted so good!



The sea salted Berry Margarita

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