

Sea Salt Seminyak

Yakker Sarah Douglas experiences coastal dining at Alila Seminyak.



YOU'RE never far from the sea at Alila Seminyak's latest dining adventure, Sea Salt. Perched on a stretch of absolute beachfront, waves rolling in endlessly, Sea Salt combines elements of the sea with one of the world's oldest culinary traditions and presents it as one of Bali's freshest, modern dining concepts.



Salt plays a large part in every dish and for opening night each guest was presented with a range of their flavoured salts, a treasure for home cooks and a fitting introduction to this subtle and evocative Seminyak restaurant.

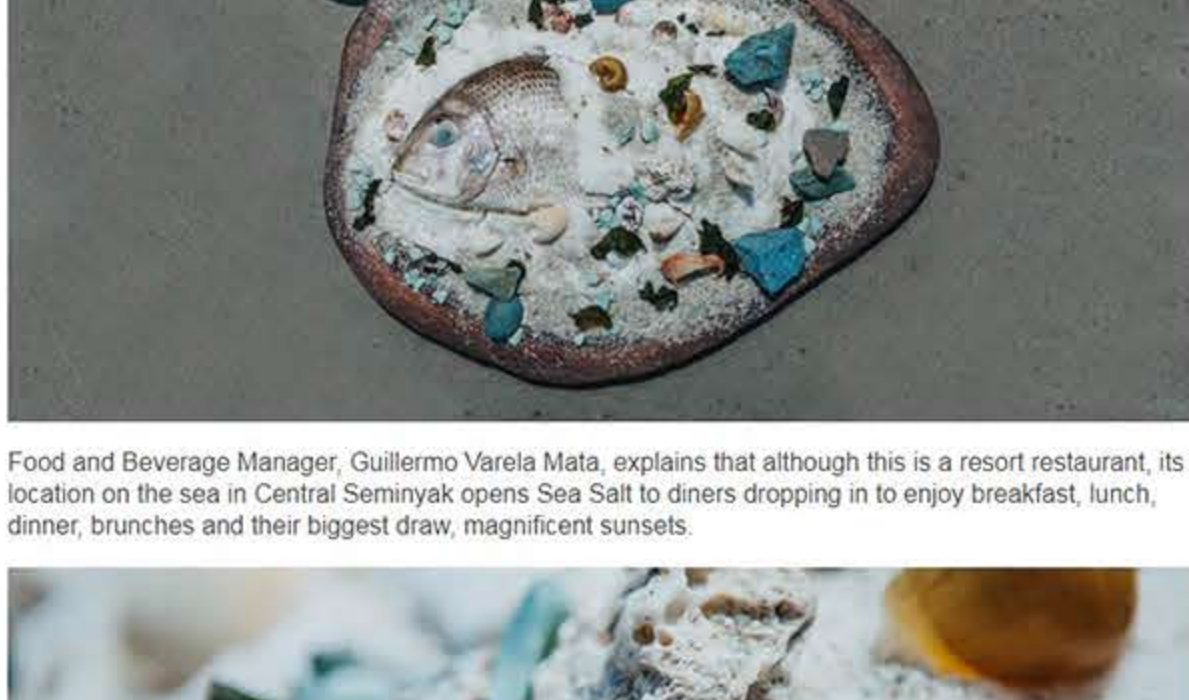


Alila opened its doors over a year ago to great applause. The minimalist design, the spaces opening on beautiful seafront views and an upmarket urban sensibility. Five swimming pools cater to guests and visitors and their beach bar is often standing room only for sunset.

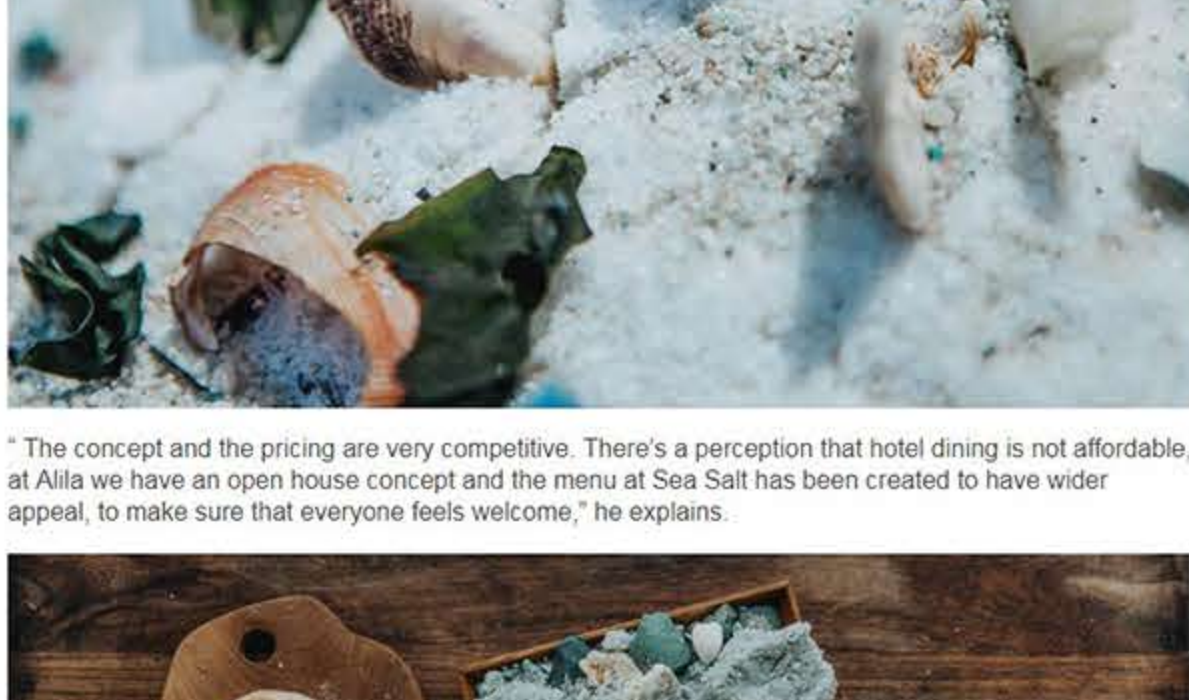


The restaurant took a little longer to find its feel, however, manicured toes in the sand, beautiful spaces made warm by a stunning redesign, it has found its deserved place in the sun. The menu focuses on seafood, but offers a whole lot more. Besides salt, they also turned to Japan for its inspiration, propelling the concept of umami, the fifth flavour profile, into dishes as refined as the resort.

Chef Vivien, the resort's Chef, has taken a world of ingredients, including those closest to source and created dishes that play their part in enhancing the beautiful dining room, with its impressive open kitchen concept, into a destination for dining as fine, or as simple, as the diner requires.



Food and Beverage Manager, Guillermo Varela Mata, explains that although this is a resort restaurant, its location on the sea in Central Seminyak opens Sea Salt to diners dropping in to enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner, brunches and their biggest draw, magnificent sunsets.



"The concept and the pricing are very competitive. There's a perception that hotel dining is not affordable, at Alila we have an open house concept and the menu at Sea Salt has been created to have wider appeal, to make sure that everyone feels welcome," he explains.



"Sea Salt is very much about sharing, meals, conversation and cocktails. The dishes are inspired by the sea with a magical sprinkling of flavoured sea salts mingling with Japanese ingredients and culinary traditions."



Taking our turn through the new menu offers a chance to savour the flavours coming out of this impressive kitchen. The extensive brunch on Sunday offers the chance to graze through the menus for a set price, add an alcohol package and this becomes a meal to celebrate.



Sunday brunch lends itself to coastal dining. From 12 to 4pm, the waves roll in as freshly shucked oysters, fresh prawns and seafood cured salmon arrives at the table. Helping yourself to seconds, and thirds even, is bliss for seafood lovers.

The menu doesn't end there however and one of the highlights of the brunch is their tiny samples of almost everything that appears on the à la carte menu. This means that you can truly peruse the menu at your leisure.



There are some really delicious vegetable dishes on this menu as well, and with small portions you can order them all without filling up, or feeling guilty about the leftovers. A mushroom dish is among my favourites, the Japanese influence is front and centre in the vegetable dishes.



Seafood too gets its turn with a delicious blue swimmer crab chawanmushi a highlight on the menu and a nod to the fineness of this kitchen. A jewel-like butterfly fish with roasted carrot and carrot puree is another example, finished simply with a spray of sesame seeds.



This is a brunch created in the great tradition. The price at Rp485,000++ includes a welcome glass of bubbles and the chance to linger over a delicious meal served by the sea. A quick dip in the pool is the perfect intermission for a meal like this.

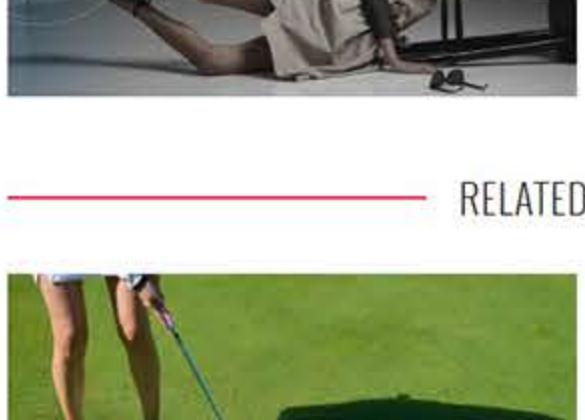
Cocktails at Alila are a highlight with flavoured margaritas, mojitos, manhattans and some signature cocktails that play on the ingredients from the kitchen creating perfect pairings. The brunch menu also offers wine and champagne alongside 2 for 1 specials on selected cocktails.



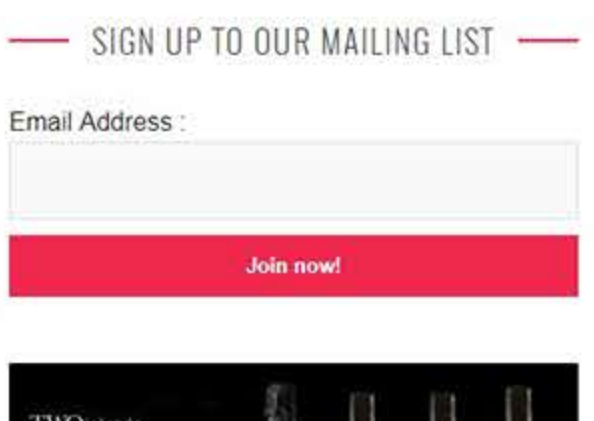
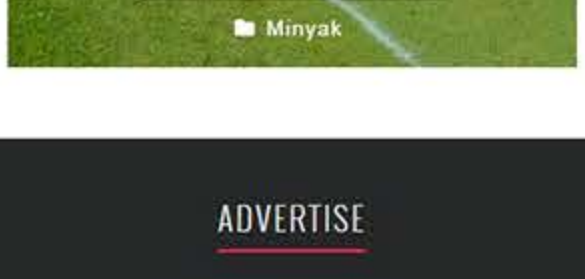
Dining at Sea Salt anytime of the day, or night offers the chance to watch a finely tuned, creative kitchen playing to its strengths. It's dynamic, delicious and thoughtful and the location is a joy. The coastal brunch is like a showcase of all the things they do so well. Drink up and order again, it's so easy to do. S.D.

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