



Restaurant Review

# Vino Mio

Its always great to make a new discovery, and Lifetimes found something special in the heart of Malaga, situated between the Teatro Cervantes and the Plaza de Merced, where Picasso was born and the Museo Picasso is just around the corner as well. Unlike other cities, Malaga is walkable, but after a hard day doing the shops (El Corte Ingles and the Larios Centre are within 20 minutes) or the cultural sights and galleries, you need somewhere to rest your feet and recharge your batteries, and Vino Mio is very much of a find.

In the restaurant trade, as in many aspects of life first impressions are important and we instinctively new that we were to in for a great time. You enter through the bar area, which has stools and high tables for you to enjoy a little glass of something before your meal, and the main dinning area is on a raised balconied platform area towards the rear. If you're a fan of the demon weed you won't be shunned either, a Vino Mio has a separate room for smokers, attractively cordoned off from the main eating area through

shuttered windows (of which more later). And at the very rear of the restaurant is the open plan kitchen, so there are is no dark culinary skulduggery going on here – you can see your dishes being cooked in front of you. There is also a small summer terrace with four tables that I suspect get quickly filled up. Vino Mio's decoration is very much "boho chic" with frequent art exhibitions and the clientele when we were there ranged from a Dutch couple who were walking Europe, to some trendy flamenco fans as well as some tourists who were obviously all shopped, or galleried, out. We started our meal with the house salad (surprisingly enough called the Vino Mio) which featured a tasty selection of cheeses. Accompanying this we plumped for some fantastic King Prawns wrapped in Filo Pastry.

**You don't get the chance to eat crocodile everyday!**

At this point we were joined by Vino Mio's owner, Helene Mosterman. This young and enthusiastic Dutchwoman spent years travelling the world before deciding to put down roots in Malaga – her beautiful daughter

was sitting next to us in full flamenco dress. As she poured an excellent Chilean Red Frontera, Helene explained that everything on the menu used the freshest ingredients and was home made. We then chose our main courses, and, purely in the interests of investigative dinning, we had to go for the Crocodile Dundee, a crocodile steak served with apple, lychee and calvados.

At €18 it is one of the most expensive items on the menu, and tasted similar to swordfish and tuna, but you don't get the chance to eat crocodile everyday! As well as this we tried a succulent Tokyo Duck and a wonderful Mousaka. Desert was a refreshing sorbet, which was slightly heavy on the alcohol, so be warned if you are driving back! And then we settled back and watched the live

show. As well as the art exhibitions, Vino Mio has live music event throughout the week, including live guitar performance and sax, and on the night we were there had a great flamenco performance that soon had most of the packed restaurant on their feet. This wasn't the only entertainment of the evening, however. As I went to thank the incredibly friendly staff as we were leaving, I bumped into one of the shuttered windows and knocked over a waiter carrying some (thankfully empty) plates. It says volumes for Vino Mio's staff that they didn't make a fuss about it, and we will be going back!

*Vino Mio, Calle Alamos, 11, Malaga Tel. 952 609 093 www.restaurantevinomio.com*