

Saó - A Delectable Gastronomic Concept Off the Radar

OCTOBER 3, 2018

In a quiet residential neighbourhood just above Gracia, among a line of anonymous houses, there in a corner you see spelled out the words [Saó](#). This new restaurant is the wonder child of Juanen Benavent, a Michelin-star studded chef who has spent his recent years in Paris.



The word Saó means seasoning in Catalan, and that perfectly rounds up the concept here, together with the fact that the ingredients are all locally sourced. The three tasting menus (one for weekday lunches, 19€, and two longer menus 34€ and 45€ respectively) are based on what is currently in season. We went for a 10-course menu that took us for quite a ride, starting with "Crujiente de arroz con ajoaceite y limón".



Crujiente de arroz negro con ajoaceite y limón, Sao Barcelona

Photo © Barcelona Food Experience



Freshly baked bread at Sao, Barcelona
Photo © Barcelona Food Experience

There were plenty of surprises, both visual and palate wise. I was intrigued by the presentation of the false egg with corn cream, with fried corn and cilantro, and the fun dessert with pineapple and cardamom ice cream (I am such a fan of cardamom!) with Sichuan pepper, that makes your mouth go numb (literally, if you haven't tried it you must! You can get the pepper at the Boqueria if you want to try it. It's not spicy, it just makes your mouth numb).



Arroz meloso de champiñones y judías verdes. Sao Barcelona
Photo © Barcelona Food Experience



Bacalao confitado con pimiento rojo a la llama y mousse de ajo, Sao Barcelona
Photo © Barcelona Food Experience



Magret de pato con brevas al vino tinto, Sao Barcelona

Photo © Barcelona Food Experience

The space itself is wonderfully calm, just the way I like it. I'm a big fan of spacious round tables for two, and that is exactly what we got. The staff was lovely, and guided us through the experience. Make sure you check out the wine list and the wine pairings that are on offer to go with the menu you choose. You will be asked in the beginning if there is something you dislike or cannot eat because of allergies, so you don't have to worry even though it is tasting menus only.



Melocoton con base de dacquoise, crema pastelera y helado de vainilla, Sao Barcelona

Photo © Barcelona Food Experience



Piña con helado de cardamomo y pimienta de Sichuan, y granizado de menta, Sao Barcelona

Photo © Barcelona Food Experience

Sao is a truly well-kept secret, and delightfully humble despite the level of sophistication of the dishes and the service. A must visit!