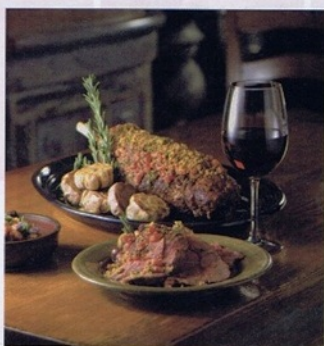


GREEK AS IT SHOULD BE By W.A. Muller



Located in the heart of Midtown Manhattan, Molyvos is an intrinsically bold, seriously inventive, yet authentically Greek restaurant. One block south of Carnegie Hall, it serves as perhaps the finest example of Greek cuisine in New York. Focusing on fresh, natural ingredients and featuring an array of sustainable seafood options, Molyvos is the ultimate Mediterranean-inspired experience. And with a large dining room and well-trained staff, there are few establishments in the city that can rival it in quality and deliciousness.

Today, Molyvos is pleasing more patrons than ever. People from around the world have discovered that it serves the true foods and wines of Greece, along with a large dose of the country's warm and lively spirit. A visit to Molyvos reminded me of all the pleasurable times I've had in Greece, and the wonderful thing is that it is so close to home. So, as you can imagine, when my friend and I had a meal here, we felt it represented the best that Greece could be; and with excellently prepared food, we understand instantly why it has become a mainstay of the area.

The menu is built upon the home-style cooking of Greece; with a combination of seafood and meat dishes, most assuredly lamb, the restaurant enlivens the soul with its rich, penetrating and satisfying dishes. Here each creation is elevated through the talents and expertise of executive chef James Botsacos. Having met Jim before, I knew we were in good hands. In fact, he prepares and guides each recipe and dish

using both Greek and modern techniques. Furthermore, he uses only the most superior of ingredients available in the city which serve to highlight each meal and elevate the whole experience.

The wine list, under the keen direction of Kamal Kouiri, is unique for its depth and breadth of interesting and diverse Greek labels, and small producers from the Mediterranean whose wines deserve to be enjoyed. Paired with the food they made for a most welcoming accompaniment. And talking about the food - everything was memorably good and we definitely felt nothing missed. We enjoyed it all!

Starting with a selection of Mezedes, or little bites, we worked our way through the meal. First came a dish with four varied spreads. These were Melintzanosalata (eggplant), Tzatziki (yogurt with cucumbers and garlic), Taramosalata (carp roe) and Hummus (chick peas). All were excellent, but we especially loved the silken goodness of the roe. Briny, smooth and with plenty of depth, it showcased the kitchen's talents perfectly. Other Mezedes included cured salmon, spinach pie and homemade sausage with lamb and pork.

Moving on to the appetizers we had both the citrus marinated day boat scallops and grilled baby octopus. As my readers know we are fanatics for ultra-fresh seafood and here Molyvos did not disappoint. And it should be noted, that if a Greek restaurant doesn't serve tender octopus then it's no good. But that wasn't the case here; it was perhaps the tenderest octopus I've ever

had and I could barely taste it, as my friend frankly tried to steal it from my plate.

A relatively new invention from the kitchen is something called a Tiganopsomo. Very similar to a focaccia or personal-sized pizza but with pita bread, we had it with caramelized onions, lamb and pork sausage, tomato, vlahotiri and manouri. It was flavorful and interesting. I could see how an American crowd would love this, but not because it was necessarily very Greek, which happens to be a hallmark of Jim and his kitchen. The reinvention of traditional dishes meant to make Greek food sophisticated and modern is something he is very well-known for. I believe this dish worked brilliantly and commend them for their effort in elevating this classic cuisine.

I could drone on forever, but suffice it to say we very much enjoyed our meal. With whole fish and an intense shrimp dish, which was served as the main course, by the time we had finished we could barely get up from our seats. Having eaten at all of the Livanos Group restaurants in the city, I can say that they prepare food with care and excellence. Molyvos is no exception. With bright flavors, modern interpretations of staid classics, convenient location and appealing atmosphere, I highly recommend this wonderful establishment. Whether you are in the neighborhood for a show or come here specifically for them, you will leave equally full and impressed.

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