

Food > Features**Holiday Time****Altitude with Attitude****Horizon restaurant and bar high above Pattaya bay combines brilliant views with consummate cuisine and the coolest vibe east of BKK**Published: [12/12/2012](#) at 12:00 AM
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Horizon is a bar/restaurant with star quality. Its restaurant serves some of the tastiest cuisine in the Kingdom and with its breathtaking open air bar it's a destination that you haven't 'done' Pattaya yet if you haven't at least chilled out there over a 5-star cocktail.

**Most Viewed****Quintessentially Gallic**

Not all of us are born into a mountain of cash, sometimes we must settle for what is considered second best. At Chez Pape, as the name suggests, you can take it easy with French food in the warm and cosy setting of grandpa's home.



Out-of-the-closet foodies have no hesitation in single mindedly making for Pattaya's most spectacularly situated, not to mention fashionable, restaurant where the fabulously talented Shaun Venter imposes his perepetically-acquired influences on a menu that transports the taste buds to epicurean ecstasies.

Sundowner devotees make the al fresco, directly west-facing Infinity Bar and Sky Bar in front and to the side of the restaurant the figurative and literal high point of their day. And just as they're shuffling off to their suppers, the night birds flock in for their fixes of mixology, discology, viewing and vogueing in an ambience where they will appreciate being able to stay fresher longer thanks to the ion-rich breezes blowing in off the wide inky-blue yonder.

Some 34 floors above the beach and affording something like 270o views of the Gulf of Thailand, three bays (Jomtien, Pattaya, Wong Amat) and sprawling 24-hour Pattaya city, Horizon at Hilton Pattaya is altogether an extraordinary venue.

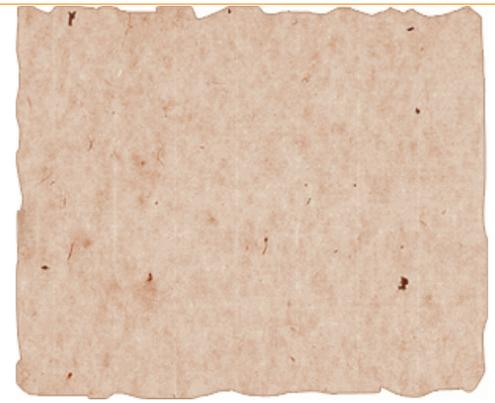
As you exit the high-speed lift into a 1,390 sq m world of penthouse prestige, mood lighting propelling you along a boarding passage to the stellar venue itself, the sheer stylishness of it all makes the discretely positioned 'smart casual' dress code sign completely redundant.

At its celebrity-stoked grand opening party in late May, all the hype was about 'raising the bar', 'icing the cake' and 'taking it to the next level of chill', and there is indeed nothing quite like it the length of the Eastern Seaboard.

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Drinks first, dine after, or vice-versa, the buzz is on. It's a designer world for designer people, from the twinkling star points in the restaurant ceiling to the clam shell beds on which you can disport Cleopatra-fashion while gazing into the actual heavens.

Hat's off to DWP architects but also to the Hilton Pattaya team for getting the concept just right - if only after kicking six ideas around in endless brainstorming meetings.

The midnight blue and charcoal hued al fresco area isn't entirely open to the sky. Above the space dubbed Stargazer Lounge, there's a high slung roof with a giant hole in the middle, rendering it useless as a sunshade or umbrella, but inviting nerdy astronomer-types to witness the relative movement of the stars like latter-day Ptolemies. Meanwhile, the flooring is deck concept so you can fancy yourself Jack or Rose on the prow of the Titanic after one of the bar's signature blends of vodka, rum, citrus and berries, or one of the also signature trees of canonical martini glasses arranged in spiralling silver trees.

Music features crank up around 7pm and range from an Austrian DJ spinning house beats to South American chillout to cameos by the likes of Austrian jazz singer Simone Kopmajer who played the opening. Meanwhile, an LCD projector beams old school movies and concerts onto a cinema-size screening wall just to make sure no multimedia stone is left unturned.

But for my money, the glass-walled, designer decorated restaurant is the real draw. Ringside view seats are in three private rooms that can be merged into one for larger parties where light on the subject is shed by arty assemblies of inverted glass candle holders that emit a fisherman's lantern glow.

Here South African Venter works alongside the hotel's Executive Chef Supoj Suwanwong and F&B Director Simon Bender, in a combination of over 45 years of culinary experience. And it shows.

Venter uses original and authentic dishes as a base and then adds contemporary techniques and flair. Choice cuts and luxury seafood, globally inspired flavours and fused influences are to the fore, with an accent on light and refreshing, so stonking steaks come in snow fish form and only lamb shank and beef cheeks are what you might call robust.

Elegantly swathed in black tops, green culottes and orange belts, the upbeat team members keeps the mood light and sophisticated and know the back stories on what they are serving.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Our meal starts with Focaccia from the restaurant's own baking oven served with roasted garlic, Dukah, a north-African powder of cumin, coriander, sesame and hazelnut, and extra virgin olive oil. Dip chunks of the bread in the oil then the powder and garnish with the garlic and drop in the mouth as you might at a Roman orgy. Heaven.

For appetizers we indulge in Blackened Hokkaido Scallops (650), with green onion vinaigrette and smoky tomato relish, at once smoky, subtle and sumptuous. The Roast Snowfish (1,050) is a magnificent maw of pearl-white steak enhanced with delicious chermoula, butternut pumpkin, chorizo, scallops. A little Spanish chorizo sausage adds a delectable bitter contrast and savoury succulence. Also sublime is our Moulard Duck Breast (1,100), a hybrid domestic duck from France produced by crossing a female Peking with a male Muscovy Duck resulting in a much celebrated gastro-duck. With vanilla & thyme risotto, baby bok choy, shitake mushroom jus, this too is irresistible. We enhance with Kipfer potato, stir-fried with butter, sour cream and onion and more of the Dukah stuff for which we are developing quite a taste. We conclude a profoundly satisfying meal with Chocolate Sphere (450), a dark chocolate bowl stuffed with lime sponge and garnished with contrastingly slightly sour cranberry, raspberries, strawberries, redcurrants and creamy ricotta cheese. A separate cup of warm white honey is poured over the chocolate making it melt into a divine chocolaty, fruity ooze.

Other temptations that will ensure that we return again include Edamame Veloute(aac) (550) with vanilla cured Atlantic



salmon, crispy leeks & coconut air; the curiously titled Indecisive Chicken (750), corn-fed chicken breast, confit leg, whipped polenta, Parma crumbs, tarragon emulsion; Maine lobster 3 ways (2,400), linguine legs, tail thermadore, curried claws, lemongrass emulsion, 48 Hour Lamb Shank (2,200); Herb falafel, edamame & feta salsa, roast garlic aioli (advance ordering required) and; Honey & Thyme Brulee(aac) (450) with baked custard with strawberry & orange salad.

The excellent cellar features new and old world wines with an emphasis on light, fresh flavours like Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Merlot.

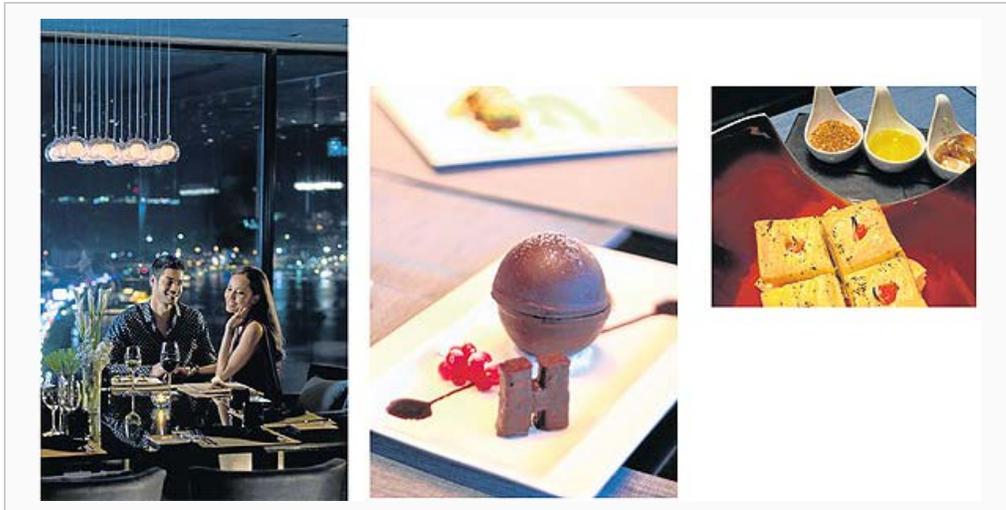
Horizon is a place to make your own, to impress, delight and reward. Private events here redefine expectations and reignite concepts of entertainment. For parties, receptions and product launches, it offers the ultimate backdrop, sure to stun, surprise and delight.

Meanwhile its catering concepts are constantly evolving according to Simon and you might soon find a raw bar established soon serving the likes of cerviche, oysters and beef tartar with sparkling white and rose wines. "We're not afraid to try new things and maybe burn our fingers a little sometimes in the interests of keeping the dynamic going," he says boldly. They even used it to stage a 1 million baht party that went down a treat.

In short, Horizon is a class apart. Chic, sleek and glamorous, Horizon has more than enough chutzpah to satisfy the zeitgeist that is rapidly becoming the new Pattaya.

HORIZON. Hilton Pattaya

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