

DINING DIVAS

The Dining Divas are a group of fun loving metro Detroit area women who love to eat, drink and be merry. The divas are Nancy, Gloria, Wendy and new addition Tracy.

The Dining Divas were out on the town recently on a very chilly night looking for some inner warmth – we collectively agreed that wine was the answer and the obvious choice was a visit to centrally located Vinoteca in downtown Royal Oak. Vinoteca is an elegant yet coolly comfortable wine bar that is part of the Bastone Complex under the direction of Executive Chef Robert Young who has recently made significant changes to the menu. It was the perfect place for the dining divas to, as per Vinoteca's motto, "eat, drink, talk".

We started the evening off with wine, of course. With over 200 wine options representing every wine-producing country in the world, the wine list may have been a bit intimidating if it had not been for our amazingly knowledgeable server with a great smile - David Egres, who also happens to be a sommelier. How serendipitous for us! Diva-licious wine favorites were: Mt. Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon (a big, sexy delicious cab), Petit Verdot De Bortli Vat 8 (rich quality, smooth taste and not too woody), Elk Cove Oregon Pinot Gris (sweet fruity flavors and low acidity). The wine wall behind the bar did not disappoint and we were warmed up quickly.

The Dining Divas were certainly not just there to enjoy the ambience, chat endlessly and sip wine, we were also very hungry. The menu offers a lot of great appetizer/small plate options and our favorites were the red



pepper and feta (so YUM!) and the cheeses: Boursin, Red Spruce 4 year cheddar and Vintage Van Gogh. We shared a group of main dishes including delicious Pizza Margherita (marinated Roma tomatoes, fresh mozzarella and basil), rich and glorious Vino Lobster Macaroni and Cheese (yes, mac and cheese with saffron cream sauce and lobster together at last!) and our favorite Salmon Jubilee (grilled salmon filet served on a delicious crab cake with saffron cream sauce and green beans). Of course, we could not leave the restaurant without a few bites of dessert, so we shared a slice of Warm Chocolate Truffle Cake that totally delivered with its to-die-for decadence, highly recommended by the Dining Divas to conclude a fabulous meal!

Vinoteca is definitely a special spot to meet friends for drinks and appetizers or a meal and a great place for a date night with your sweetie. It would also make a wonderful environment for an elegantly cool engagement party or bridal shower. They do have music and two flat screen televisions in the background but they are kept at a volume to allow for conversation which is really nice. Vinoteca is a warm, welcoming sophisticated place to visit again – especially if you are a wine lover or a Dining Diva.

*Tracy Donohue
Metro You Magazine*



Not pictured: Tracy Donohue



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