



## *L'Ultimo*

*The last addition to the Espaces Saveurs group*

**T**he Espaces Saveurs group now has six restaurants in total: Saponi, Mirabelle, Goethe Stuff, Mercedes Café, Come Prima, and finally, L'Ultimo. L'Ultimo, meaning the last one in Italian, as the name suggests, is going to be the final addition to complete the Espaces Saveurs family. L'Ultimo opened on 6 March 2010 and is the first of the group to be located outside of Luxembourg City, though is only a short 10-15 minute drive away.

The building underwent eight months of renovation work before opening to the public last month. "Everything was changed, from the ceiling to the floor!" Head Waiter Raphaël Arcidiacono tells us. It is now a spacious dining area with a sleek, designer interior, bar and open kitchen, though it used to be an old inn, called La Calèche (the carriage), and so called because it was an old carriage station between Belgium and Luxembourg. Mamer has a number of restaurants, the usual Chinese and pizzerias, but L'Ultimo's rather more gastronomic Italian food adds

a new dimension to the culinary offerings in the area.

Everything started with the Mirabelle restaurant when it opened 18 years ago. It grew over the years and a number of restaurants were grouped together under the name "Espaces Saveurs" because they all have the same quality chart. That is to say, they all meet a certain standard of quality in terms of food and service. "They are committed to greet customers properly, to serve them properly, to serve fresh products, to offer suggestions.



Under these quality standards a restaurant becomes part of the Espaces Saveurs group," says Raphaël Acidiacono.

L'Ultimo is the last restaurant to join the group, as they wanted to branch out of the capital. The name perhaps gives it away, but Raphaël clarifies, "The cuisine is called Italian, though it is actually Mediterranean, as there are Spanish influences in the food, such as Pata negra ham. The chef, Cosimo Minoia, is Italian, so the food is predominantly Italian, but he uses flavours and products from all over southern Europe." At lunchtime you can have a starter and main course or choose from the Suggestions menu. The Suggestions menu includes meals based around fresh seasonal products and products that are fresh that day. "At the moment, we have a variety of dishes based around asparagus and cod," says Raphaël.

Aside from the wide selection of daily and weekly suggestions, does the chef have a speciality, a signature dish? "I would say pasta or risotto. Cosimo is particularly talented at making fresh pasta and combining interesting flavours and combinations to go with them. It is above all the pasta and risotto dishes that are proving to be very popular with our clientele," says Raphaël. Indeed, the menu that day boasted Risotto with leak and cod, Colcette pasta with saliccia and fresh mushrooms and Asparagus ravioli with duo of tomatoes (fresh and sundried), which puts it in a different

league to the classic carbonara and arrabiata, delicious though they may be.

Where there is good food, there is usually good wine, and so our attention turns to the wine selection. "The majority of the wines are Italian and there are currently 120 wine references. 99 per cent are Italian, as we have one French wine, one Californian and one from New Zealand," Raphaël goes on. "In addition to bottled wine, we offer a selection of ten wines by the glass. This gives people the possibility to have a glass of white wine that goes with their starter followed by red or a different white with their main course. We try to meet people's needs as much as possible."

What makes Espaces Saveurs restaurants stand out is the high standard of the service. High standard doesn't necessarily have to mean oozing, gushing waiters, nor cold, formal ones. A step up from sleazy "ciao bellas" and a step down from lavish formalities where everything is almost uncomfortably perfect. "The principle is that we want to serve people, how we would like to be served," explains Raphaël. "When I go to a restaurant I like the waiter to suggest a glass of wine that will go with the dish that I have ordered, for the service to come with a smile, for the waiters to be attentive and listen to me and make me feel welcome. That's what we aim to do here and is the principle of all of the Espaces Saveurs restaurants."

**Lunchtime formula:** 19,50 euros for a starter and main course (choice of 3 starters and 3 main courses) as well as five Suggestions of the day. This changes daily.

**Dinnertime:** A la carte menu, as well as Suggestions menu.



**352** suggests: The Antipasto starter - delicious selection of seven different specialties selected from different regions in Italy: chunk of parmesan, roasted vegetables, cold tuna salad, smoked salmon and ship, all centred by a rocket and soya bean salad. Needless to say this dish is ideal for sampling different Mediterranean specialties and the flavours are delicious. Excellent, fresh, tasty.

## L'Ultimo

83, route d'Arlon Mamer

Opening hours: open 7 days/7  
lunch and dinner.

Private room available (capacity 10-30)  
with multimedia

Terrace, Private parking

[www.espaces-saveurs.lu](http://www.espaces-saveurs.lu)