

Tasting Table.

12 Can't-Miss Chicago Restaurants For Mediterranean Cuisine

By Mona Bassil Nov. 16, 2024



The word "Mediterranean" conjures up images of a scintillating blue sea, mountains studded with pine trees, and fragrant citrus groves. In addition to a shared mild climate, many of the 22 countries located in the Mediterranean Basin also have similar traditional gastronomies. From olives, chickpeas, lentils, thyme, oregano, rosemary, basil, and mint (among many others), it's not uncommon to find the same ingredients used across the region. Unsurprisingly, these colorful, flavorful, and mostly healthy cuisines have achieved international acclaim, with renowned Mediterranean restaurants located seemingly everywhere — including the city of Chicago.

There are numerous Mediterranean-based establishments to be found among the thousands of restaurants in the Windy City, with options for Greek, Turkish, Lebanese, Italian, Provençal, and other regional cuisines. Of course, given so many restaurants offer top-notch versions of Mediterranean staple dishes you should try — such as tabbouleh, moussaka, pasta alla Norma, and zarzuela de mariscos (or Ibiza shellfish stew) — you may not know where to go.

As a Lebanese with Cretan roots — who's visited numerous other Levantine and Mediterranean countries on multiple occasions — I'm extremely familiar with the region's dishes and cooking methods. Through my personal knowledge of the cuisine, along with research of consumer ratings, customer feedback, and the menus at various establishments, I was able to curate the following list of authentic eateries for you to try. Here are 12 restaurants to visit in Chicago for Mediterranean cuisine.

Seville



Seville is a trendy, intimate, and refined venue perched on the rooftop of the Hilton Canopy. It's operated by celebrity chef and cookbook author Fabio Viviani, which makes it a coveted establishment in the Chicago area. The house knows how to keep its clientele happy, as well, thanks to its appetizing house-made pastas, Neapolitan-style pizzas, quality bourbons, and award-winning wines.

Given its many standout menu items — which includes a wagyu Bolognese pasta, paella-style risotto, and spiced flourless chocolate torte — it's no wonder Seville has found itself with so many enthusiastic fans among its various patrons. Previous customers have gushed about Seville for being a great sunset spot overlooking the city, and mention every dish is both impeccably plated and bursting with flavor.

As for its drink selections, the gin and vodka cocktails are crafted with particular care, and complement the relaxed and chic vibe. The staff at Seville is reportedly courteous and prompt, too, and go out of their way to accommodate allergies and dietary restrictions as needed.

sevillechicago.com