

Love at first sight and bite

Welcome to the world of Haute Dolci, where desserts take centre stage and sugar cravings meet Hijab or Barbie Glamour, creating a dessert haven in the heart of Edinburgh's St James Quarter.

If you're a true cognoscenti and dessert enthusiast, you'll likely refer to it as HD – a place where indulgence knows no bounds.

Ascending to the first floor, you're greeted by an opulent and welcoming interior design that reflects the love and attention poured into this dessert paradise. Brought to you by the masterminds behind Shish, a dry Turkish restaurant on Potterrow, and a new favourite of mine, their commitment to excellence is evident throughout HD.

Seating 90 in elegant seats, if you're lucky enough to bag a window seat or one of the light-pink, plush semi-circular velvet booths, it's a great people watching place through the large circular windows, which overlook the top of Leith Street and the bustling traffic heading onto Princes Street.

Now, let's talk about the menu – a cornucopia of dessert delights and savoury treats that will leave you spoilt for choice. From mocktails to milkshakes, sundaes to lattes, macarons to pancakes, waffles and croffles, and everything in

between, the menu is a treasure trove of mouthwatering options.

As my dining partner Aimee and I settle in, we decided to start with some of their mocktails, beautifully presented and bursting with flavours. I must admit, as someone who doesn't have an overly sweet tooth, Aimee's Pucker Up won me over with its exotic guava and passion fruit crushed with lime and ice. Although my Apple Berry Blitz was on the sweeter side, it still refreshed my palate.

With my savoury inclination, I couldn't resist the Sandos Marvellous Melt (£9.80) served with a bowl of vegetable crisps – a true sharing delight. Two portions of juicy grilled chicken, with smoky roasted peppers and onions, red pepper chutney, and melted cheddar cheese, all snugly nestled between two slices of white bread, will ignite your taste buds, before the sweet onslaught.

I was tempted to build my own sundae, which is an option, but it turned out that my Croffle choice, a Lotus Biscoff, was already one of their signature creations. There's an option to choose from a petite and a grande – and I'd recommend a petite as the portions are generous. A croissant-waffle hybrid, infused with warm Lotus Biscoff drip, topped with caramelised Lotus Biscoff biscuits, and a scoop of salted caramel gelato, sent my taste buds and blood sugars into overdrive in the most delightful way.

Aimee opted for the Eggspllosion – a soft, gooey brownie crowned with half a milk-chocolate Easter egg, and a biscuit crumb, which egg-splodes into a glorious mess as a small jug of milk-chocolate sauce is poured over the egg. It was pure chocolate heaven.

Feeling adventurous, we were also persuaded to try the pistachio pancakes, a favourite of the General Manager but our eyes were definitely bigger than our bellies and I'm not sure

we did this dessert justice. Five fluffy pistachio pancakes with a portion of pistachio ice-cream, with a vibrant, green pouring sauce of white chocolate flavoured with pistachios, with raspberries adorning the plate was pretty as a picture.

In conclusion, Haute Dolci is more than just a dessert destination – it's an experience. Don't settle for mediocre sweets: treat yourself and indulge in the sheer bliss offered by HD. Taste, Indulge, Capture, Share, Repeat but do ensure you go with a hungry belly. Haute Dolci awaits, so go ahead and let your taste buds dance.

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