

A carnivore's paradise – RIO Brazilian Steakhouse – review

Edinburgh's culinary scene has recently welcomed a vibrant addition with the opening of RIO Brazilian Steakhouse. Housed in the Assembly Rooms, where previously Jamie's Italian, then Insomnia Martini Bar and latterly Stack & Still have lived, it promises an authentic experience of Brazilian Churrasco.

RIO was always going to have to try very hard to live up to the reputation of my all-time favourite Edinburgh restaurant, another rodizio restaurant, just a hop, skip and a jump away, along the road on George Street.

The editor and I were keen to try out RIO, particularly with Brazilian family connections. On the night we visited, there was a steady stream of diners, drawn in for what promised to be a carnivorous feast. While the service might have had a few hiccups, possibly attributed to teething problems of a new establishment, the star of the show undoubtedly shone through – the meat.

The concept at RIO Brazilian Steakhouse is simple. Gauchos parade skewered meats, offering an array of choices controlled by a double-sided card. Opting for green signals the desire

for an uninterrupted flow of flavours, while red calls for a momentary pause – a necessity if you don't wish to be overwhelmed by too much food on your plate at any one time.

The carnivorous selection is impressive, boasting at least six different prime steaks alongside chicken, pork, and lamb cuts. Personal favourites included the succulent Picanha, a Brazilian delicacy carved from the best part of the rump steak, and the tender Corderiro, lamb marinated in a mint marinade. And not for the faint hearted but not to everyone's taste, I'd highly recommend going outside of your comfort zone and trying the Coracao de Galinha, aka chicken hearts, a true Brazilian delicacy.

And fear not, non-meat eaters, Rio Brazilian Steakhouse ensures everyone leaves satisfied. The diverse salad bar, featuring over 40 hot and cold items ranging from salad leaves to charcuteries, is an indulgence in itself. Additionally, a sushi section offers fresh creations prepared by skilled chefs.

Pricing options cater to various preferences and budgets, with lunchtime specials starting at £29.95 and evening indulgences at £44.95. Vegetarians, vegans, and pescatarians are not left out, with a dedicated selection priced at £22.95, plus of course, unlimited access to the salad bar.

For families, RIO Brazilian Steakhouse offers value, with children under five dining for free and older kids enjoying discounted rates.

While we stuck to a Malbec to accompany our food, RIO Brazilian Steakhouse has recently announced an exciting partnership with Forged Irish Stout, created by MMA fighter Conor McGregor. The partnership sees the restaurant, located within Edinburgh's Assembly Rooms, as the only venue in the city to offer the hand-crafted creamy stout, with hints of chocolate and coffee roasted notes.

In conclusion, Rio Brazilian Steakhouse promises an immersive experience in Brazilian cuisine, where carnivores and non-carnivores alike can indulge in a culinary adventure. Despite minor service setbacks, the quality of the meat makes this a dining experience not to be missed in Edinburgh's bustling food scene.

www.rio-steakhouse.co.uk



RIO is a meat-eater's paradise but vegetarians won't be disappointed either





The impressive salad bar takes centre stage