

Restaurant Damsteeg

Restaurant Damsteeg, beautifully and centrally located in the '9 Streets' of the Jordaan in Amsterdam, exudes a warm, casual and at the same time elegant atmosphere. It has old wooden floors, the walls are dotted with pieces of art, and table lamps shed soft, cosy light throughout the restaurant and adjoining bar. It is the kind of ambiance that makes one want to stick around for hours.

The first surprise on entering the restaurant this particular evening is the extraordinary friendliness, attentiveness and modesty of owner and chef Bert Damsteeg and beautiful Uzbekistan waitress Katarina Velieva, who make the food all the more easy to enjoy.

The season-bound menu of Damsteeg offers a broad range of predominantly French cuisine. A deliciously flavoured oyster with a light chicken liver pâté topped with beetroot foam – a soft, salt and sweet, exciting combination – is among the delicacies. This highly promising introduction is followed by the grilled quail with la Ratte potato salad and avocado, pan fried quail eggs and a hazelnut dressing. The quail, crisp on the outside and tender on the inside, forms a beautiful, savory ensemble with the other fresh ingredients.

As a main course, one could choose braised cheek of calf with fluffy potato puree, spinach, shavings of foie gras and a truffle sauce, accompanied by a round flavoured, light Spanish Macabeo. Again, the meat is so tender that it almost falls apart before it reaches its destination. To conclude this culinary journey, guests may choose the freshly made puff pastry with cream filling and rhubarb, marzipan and tantalisingly fresh black currant sorbet ice, which leaves one stunned and delighted, or another exciting desert such as strawberries with whipped cream, crème de cassis, black pepper and honey ice cream.

Restaurant Damsteeg is currently participating in an art project together with other quality restaurants and hotels. Guests can order the special 'art menu', after which they receive a plate with a print of one of Amsterdam's local top artists' paintings as a present. Visitors who prefer another menu will get their share of art as well, however, as all the dishes that one feasts ones eyes upon are unique paintings in themselves.

(The Amsterdam/ Rotterdam/ The Hague Times, Friday 25 may 2007)