

Mediterranean Vibes Arrive on the SF Peninsula with Today's Grand Opening of Amara

Restaurateurs Reena Miglani and Ajay Walia, the visionaries behind Saffron and Rasa, introduce a Mediterranean dining experience to Belmont

BELMONT, CA, UNITED STATES, January 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The warm Mediterranean breeze beckons guests to [Amara](#), the newest dining experience from Reena Miglani and Ajay Walia, founders of the successful Saffron Restaurant Group. Opening today at 1015 Alameda de las Pulgas, Amara is inspired by the cultures and landscapes of the Mediterranean basin and their memorable travels throughout the region.



Amara's Azure Alcove. The Mediterranean-inspired restaurant by Reena Miglani and Ajay Walia opened on January 21, 2025 in Belmont, CA. (Image by Kristen Loken)

The Cuisine

Amara is a love letter from Miglani and Walia, a celebration of their memorable travels across the region. The menu is designed in the convivial spirit of the region, perfect for sharing. Chef Bret Tullis leads the kitchen, having extensive experience at Michelin-starred Campton Place in the Bay Area, as well as Orla and the eponymous Michael Mina in Las Vegas. Tullis has crafted interpretations of dishes infused with bold flavors from the Spice Route and the southernmost coasts.

The menu starts with shareable bites, spreads, and smaller plates (\$9-\$26). Focusing on the freshest ingredients, meals can start with warm olives marinated in citrus and spices; luscious oysters with oro blanco granita; and a rotating selection of charcuterie and cheese. Spreads include both white and black hummus and mirza ghasemi, a flavorful, rustic tomato and eggplant dip with the decadence of a soft-poached hen's egg atop. Braised octopus with papas bravas and crispy sunchokes; lobster with house made harissa and grape relish; BBQ lamb spareribs with garlic tahini sauce; and quail with marinated beans and basmati rice round out a selection of small plates.

With vegetables being the basis of Mediterranean cuisine, guests can enjoy mushroom kibbeh with pine nuts and garlic yogurt; parsnip soup brightened with pomegranate; and roasted cauliflower with smoked dates, marinated golden raisins, and dukkah. Sides will feature roasted fennel with herbs; za'atar-spiced baked fingerling potatoes; and roasted winter root vegetables. Larger plates (starting at \$36) include tender lamb shoulder slow cooked in an earthenware tagine adorned with apricots and toasted almonds, as well as sustainable, line-caught branzino from the Pacific basin flavored simply and grilled whole, served with roasted lemon chermoula. The meal can be concluded with Labneh cheesecake with pomegranate molasses and olive oil ganache or a baklava sundae with rose, saffron, pistachio, walnut, and honeycomb ice cream from Pastry Chef Linda Ho.



Reena Miglani and Ajay Walia opened Mediterranean-inspired Amara on January 21, 2025 in Belmont, CA. (Image by Kristen Loken)

“The Mediterranean has a deep history, rich traditions, and a generosity of spirit,” says Tullis.

“

“We want Amara to transport our guests through a sensorial journey to the idyllic Mediterranean. We've curated an experience...that we hope sparks joy and where guests will gather and linger.”

Reena Miglani

“We want to honor that ethos through a playful menu utilizing the best of seasonal products.”

The Beverage Program

The journey continues through the beverage program at Amara. The wine list spotlights varietals native to the Mediterranean, as well as curated selections from closer-to-home California vineyards. Jonathan Adler, of Noda and Shinji's in New York City, has spearheaded the innovative cocktail program with the intention for all guests to enjoy a sense of place and showcase the vast regionality of the area.

The list boasts ten signature cocktails and four non-alcoholic beverages, well-suited to be paired with the Amara menu or enjoyed on their own. Each is named after an ingredient or word in the native languages of countries in the region. Fresh juices, house made infusions and fresh herbs used throughout the menu are reminiscent of days spent by the Mediterranean Sea. Zero proofs include Figure Fais, made with seasonal fruit juiced to order and mixed with a house-made fig leaf soda; and Kummathraa, with acid-adjusted pear juice, Seedlip Garden 108, and house-made thyme syrup, finished with fresh thyme. Cocktails are often playful reimagination

of classics, such as a savory martini named Dolma utilizing preserved grape leaves, gin, and a rice-based vodka; the citrusy Gran Especia featuring reposado tequila and a Spanish spice blend; and a lighter negroni variation called Finocchio Rosa with roasted fennel infused gin, light rum, sherry, fennel, and rose.

The Setting

Amara's interiors are the vision of Miglani, who was inspired by the sun-soaked shores of the Greek islands and the dynamic streets of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, and brought to life by the team from [The Right Touch Designs](#). Amara welcomes guests through its nicely appointed lobby adorned with hand-painted frescoes. Filled with natural light from floor-to-ceiling windows, light and airy walls complement the green marble and furnishings sourced from the region. Private dining spaces offer more seclusion from the lively main dining room. Come Spring, lush greenery, along with a small creek and fountain, will be the centerpieces of the tranquil outdoor dining space.

"We want Amara to transport our guests through a sensorial journey to the idyllic Mediterranean," commented Miglani. "We have thoughtfully curated an experience led by our flavorful menu that we hope sparks joy through a relaxing, warm and soothing atmosphere where guests will gather and linger; evoked through carefully planned taste, sound, scent, and color."

Amara is located at 1015 Alameda de las Pulgas in Belmont and is now accepting reservations for dinner Tuesday-Sunday from 5pm - 10pm through SevenRooms.

Zach Jorin

Suited Hospitality

z.jorin@suitedhospitality.com



Amara's "Soft Poached Lobster, Harissa, grape relish." The Mediterranean-inspired restaurant by Reena and Ajay Walia opened on January 21, 2025. (Image by Kristen Loken)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/778997973>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.