

Lifestyle & Culture

2024 RESTAURANTS AWARDS CEREMONY



24 years of The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo

De Mondion top survey rated best overall restaurant in Malta.

The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants awards ceremony, sponsored by the Malta Tourism Authority, Global Payments and The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries & Animal Rights with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Fisheries, Aquaculture & Animal Rights, held its annual restaurant awards ceremony on 4 December at The Grand Hotel Excelsior. The awards celebrated the outstanding achievement of Malta & Gozo's top survey rated restaurants as voted by diners who participated in the Malta & Gozo Restaurant online survey in September. Based on diner voting, only 150 restaurants make it to be included free in the *The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo* and on its official portal www.restaurantsmalta.com.

The team at de Mondion was rated top overall restaurant for 2024.

The results were revealed by Lisa Grech, managing director of the Definitive(ly) Good Guide Co. and presented by Carina Dimech for the MTA, Adrian Cachia from Global Payments, Alicia Bugeja Said, parliamentary secretary for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights and Mark Ciantar of Continental Purchasing on behalf of Schonwald, Germany who supplied the beautiful commemorative award plates for the occasion.

This year's Malta & Gozo restaurant survey returned a high number of responses, with 4,143 participants who dined out on average one to twice a week, equivalent to a total of 323,154 dining experiences in a year. The latest edition of the guide sees 45 new restaurants in the *The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo*, which was launched on the evening.

The information in the guide is also included in its portal www.restaurants-malta.com which was also launched on the evening.

The Top 40 award-winning restaurants were taken from the highest rated restaurants taking into account their overall rating, the number of people rating, comments and other data from the survey. The top 40 restaurants winning award plates in order from most highly rated were:



Official commemorative plate presented to Malta & Gozo's top survey rated 40 restaurants on the evening

- de Mondion
- The Phoenix
- Level Nine by Oliver Glowig
- La Mer
- Sole by Tarragon
- Dinner in the Sky
- The BoatHouse Gozo
- Scala
- One80 Valletta
- Don Royale
- Step 15
- Azar
- Caviar & Bull
- The Aft Galley
- Ta' Rozi
- Rebekah's
- Bastion Bar & Restaurant
- Beppe's
- Fernando's
- Bacchus
- L'Orangerie
- Onda Blu
- Venus

- MUZA
 - UnderGrain
 - Venturo
 - Ta' Tona
 - Da Luigi
 - Acqua Blu
 - Noni
 - Il-Bitha
 - Barbajeon
 - TemptAsian
 - Galea's Kitchen
 - The Rooftop at the Embassy
 - Root 81
 - Palazzo Preca
 - Maggie's
 - Grotto Tavernu
 - Lovage
- Additional awards in different categories were also made:
- Best Food [sponsored by American Express] – The Phoenix
 - Best Ambience [sponsored by Cesca's] – de Mondion

- Best Service [sponsored by Spiteri Catering] – de Mondion
- Restaurant Most Dedicated to Supporting Local, Best Local Fish Restaurant & Best Local Wine List [sponsored by The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights & Parliamentary Secretariat for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights] – Il-Kartell, La Mer and Al Sale respectively
- Best Restaurant in Gozo [sponsored by The Ministry for Gozo] – Level Nine by Oliver Glowig
- The Best Chef Award [sponsored by Pentole Agnelli represented exclusively by The Catering Centre] – Marvin Gauci
- Best Newcomer [sponsored by Bookia] – Level Nine by Oliver Glowig
- Most Children-Friendly Restaurant [sponsored by the Malta Baby & Kids Directory] – Don Royale
- Best Maltese Restaurant [sponsored by Malta Tourism Authority] – Diar il-Bniet
- Most Romantic Restaurant – Caviar & Bull
- Best Value for Money Restaurant – The Aft Galley
- Favourite Café [sponsored by Buondi, represented by Nestlé Malta] – Busy Bee
- Restaurant with Liveliest Atmosphere – Aki

The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in association with Abraham's Supplies Co. Ltd Wine Awards were as follows:

- The People's Choice Wine List (taken from the results of the surveys): Caviar & Bull
- Best Overall Wine List: Fernando's
- Best Presented & Designed Wine List: Hammett's Monastik
- Best Wine by the glass selection: Fernando's
- Best Champagne Wine List: Gracy's
- Best Italian Selection Wine List: de Mondion
- Best Port Wine List: Country Terrace

The results of the Restaurant Survey can be found in the 2024 edition of *The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta and Gozo* which is now available to purchase online for €8 via www.restaurantsmalta.com. It is also available at leading stationers and bookshops in Malta and Gozo.

CLASSIFIED NEWS

Mdina's De Mondion rated best overall restaurant in Malta in annual survey

Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants awards ceremony held on December 4

Fine dining restaurant De Mondion was rated top overall restaurant for 2024 at The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants awards ceremony held on December 4 at The Grand Hotel Excelsior.

The awards celebrated the achievements of Malta and Gozo's top survey rated restaurants as voted by diners out who participated in the Malta & Gozo Restaurant Survey online at www.restaurantsmalta.com in September. Based on diner voting, only 150 restaurants make it to be included free in the The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo and on its official portal.

The results were revealed by Lisa Grech, managing director of the Definitive(ly) Good Guide Co. and presented by Carina Dimech for the Malta Tourism Authority, Adrian Cachia from Global Payments, Anton Refalo, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights, Alicia Bugeja Said, Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights, and Mark Ciantar of Continental Purchasing on behalf of Schonwald, Germany, who supplied the commemorative award plates for the occasion.



Representatives of De Mondion restaurant with Alicia Bugeja Said (second from left), Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights.



45 new restaurants are included in the latest edition of the guide

This year's Malta & Gozo Restaurant Survey returned a high number of responses, with 4,143 participants who dined out on average one to two times a week, equivalent to a total of 323,154 dining experiences in a year.

Forty-five new restaurants are included in the latest edition of The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo, which was launched during the evening. The information in the guide is also included on its portal www.restaurantsmalta.com.

The top 40 award winning restaurants were taken from the highest rated restaurants taking into account their overall rating, the number of people rating, comments and other data

from the survey. The top 40 restaurants winning award plates in order from most highly rated were: de Mondion, The Phoenix, Level Nine by Oliver Glowig, La Mer, Sole by Taragon, Dinner in the Sky, The BoatHouse Gozo, Scala, One80 Valletta, Don Royale, Step 15, Azar, Caviar & Bull, The Aft Galley, Ta' Rozi, Rebekah's, Bastion Bar & Restaurant, Beppe's, Fernando's, Bacchus, L'Orangerie, Onda Blu, Venus, MUZA, Under Grain, Ventuno, Ta' Tona, Da Luigi, Acqua Blu, Noni, Il Bitha, Barbajeau, TemptAsian, Galea's Kitchen, The Rooftop at the Embassy, Root 81, Palazzo Preca, Maggie's, Grotto Tavern and Lovage.

Additional awards in different categories were made:

- Best food (sponsored by American Express: The Phoenix;
- Best ambience (sponsored by Cesca's): de Mondion;
- Best service (sponsored by Spiteri Catering): de Mondion;
- Restaurant most dedicated to supporting local, best local fish restaurant and best local wine list (sponsored by The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights & Parliamentary Secretariat for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights): Il Kartell, La Mer and Al Sale respectively;

- Best restaurant in Gozo (sponsored by The Ministry for Gozo): Level Nine by Oliver Glowig;

- The best chef award (sponsored by Pentole Agnelli represented exclusively by The Catering Centre): Marvin Gauci;
- Best newcomer (sponsored by Bookia): Level Nine by Oliver Glowig;

- Most children friendly Restaurant (sponsored by the Malta Baby & Kids Directory): Don Royale;

- Best Maltese restaurant (sponsored by Malta Tourism Authority): Diar il Bniet;

- Most romantic restaurant: Caviar & Bull;

- Best value for money restaurant: The Aft Galley;

- Favourite café (sponsored by Buondi represented by Nestle Malta): Busy Bee;

- Restaurant with liveliest atmosphere: Aki.

The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in association with Abraham's Supplies Co. Ltd wine awards were as follows:

- The people's choice wine list (taken from the results of the surveys): Caviar & Bull;

- Best overall wine list: Fernando's;

- Best presented and designed wine list: Hammett's Monastik;

- Best wine by the glass selection: Fernando's;

- Best champagne wine list: Gracy's;

- Best Italian selection wine list: de Mondion;

- Best port wine list: Country Terrace.

All the results of the restaurant survey can be found in the 2024 edition of The Definitive(ly) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta and Gozo which is now available to

purchase online at www.restaurantsmalta.com. It is also available at leading stationers and bookshops in Malta & Gozo.

The awards ceremony was sponsored by the Malta Tourism Authority, Global Payments and The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights.



Lifestyle & Culture



Marie D.

Diary



A Feast of Talent

There are over 3,000 restaurants in Malta and Gozo. This is an official figure. Goodness. It is certainly a great deal of eateries for such a small space. As we know, some are good, some are bad, many indifferent. Some are a Pizza and Pasta outfit for a quick meal. It looks as if most have raised their prices thus discouraging middle income patrons from eating out too often. Everyone is making all kinds of excuses for raising prices and not only restaurateurs. It's the war in Ukraine... in the Middle East... Brexit... the government, Joseph Muscat even... The main reason is Greed and trying to make up for losses during the Covid years. The public retaliates by eating out less.

Many restaurants have put tables and chairs on pavements (eg. in Marsaxlokk and Marsascala, Sliema, Valletta) with chairs right on the edge of the pavement, endangering the life of patrons while swallowing polluted air with their drink. I avoid such places and those where music is loud.

I have also dined in a couple of excellent restaurants which have not been given an award. Perhaps they will be next year.

When the late Colin Best and Lisa Grech had the brilliant idea of setting up the *Definitive(y) Good Guide to Restaurants*, some 24 years ago, who would have thought that it would become so popular and its awards so sought after.

After drinks and speeches dinner started being served at around 8.30pm followed by the Presentation of Awards.

All wines served were from the Meerendal Wine Estate, South Africa. This was set up in 1702. I have visited South Africa several times as I had friends there with whom I stayed on my way to some conference in Botswana, Zimbabwe and others. It is such a beautiful country. The South Africans are relaxed and love their tippie and have well equipped bars in their homes.

The restaurant guide involves you in the selection process. It is the only sole survey-based, objective restaurant guide exclusively covering the Maltese islands. It showcases the top 150 restaurants across Malta and Gozo, spanning a wide range of



Dr Philp Manduca, Margaret Bozzino and Amelia Saint George

culinary experiences, from beloved cafés to upscale fine dining establishments, each catering to various price categories.

For the latest guide over 4,000 surveys were submitted by regular diners who typically enjoy one to two dining experiences per week, totalling an impressive 323, 154 dining occasions. These surveys assessed food quality, service, ambience, and featured comments on restaurants visited over the past year.

The yearly Gala Dinner is the culmination of a year of hard work both on the part of restaurant staff and the Guide's team who have to gather and process an enormous amount of data apart from all the other work involved.

Most guests rose to the occasion, the men turning up in dinner jacket and the women in some splendid long dresses.

The *Definitive(y) Good Guide to Restaurants Awards Ceremony* is sponsored by the Malta Tourism Authority, Global Payments and The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries & Animal Rights with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Fisheries, Aquaculture & Animal Welfare. The Parliamentary secretary, Alicia Bugeja Said was present and presented some awards.

Based on diner voting, only 150 restaurants make it to be included free in the *The Definitive(y) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo* and on its official portal www.restaurantsmalta.com.

Congratulations go to the team at de Mondion who were rated Top Overall restaurant for 2024.

The top 40 restaurants winning award plates for most highly rated were:

de Mondion, The Phoenix, Level



Denise Briffa and Lisa Grech, The Definitive(y) Good Guide to Restaurants in Malta & Gozo

Nine by Oliver Glowig, La Mer, Sole by Tarragon, Dinner in the Sky, The BoatHouse Gozo, Scala, One80 Valletta, Don Royale, Step 15, Azar, Caviar & Bull, The Aft Galley, Ta' Rozi, Rebekah's, Bastion Bar & Restaurant, Beppe's, Fernando's, Bacchus, L'Orangerie, Onda Blu, Venus, MUZA, UnderGrain, Ventuno, Ta' Tona, Da Luigi, Acqua Blu, Noni, Il-Bitha, Barbajeon, TemptAsian, Galea's Kitchen, The Rooftop at the Embassy, Root BI, Palazzo Preca, Maggie's, Grotto Tavern, Lovage. For other awardees and further information go to the official portal above.

Here are some comments:

FROM LISA GRECH, PUBLISHER OF THE GUIDE

"It was a wonderful evening with the best of the restaurants gathered under one roof. I felt honoured to be able together with my team to present the top 40 survey rated restaurants in Malta and Gozo with commemorative plates as well as the special awards to Malta and Gozo top restaurants.

It's ultimately thanks to regular diners out who rate their favourite restaurants that the restaurants get to be included in the latest 2024 Guide which we launched on the evening. So, many thanks to them."

MANAGING DIRECTOR, XARA COLLECTION, JUSTIN ZAMMIT TABONA

"I am very proud of de Mondion and their fantastic achievements. It is such a wonderful feeling, knowing that we were awarded for such prestigious honours following patrons' feedback through the *Definitive(y) Good Guide* survey. At Xara Collection, cuisine has always been at the forefront of our values. We are



Nicola Paris and Julia Grech Ehrentraut (Xara Collection)



Your Diarest, (fearing the cold), Amelia St George, Lea Hogg, Dr Philp Manduca, Jans Gristi, Louisa Cutajar and Denise Briffa

continuously pushing gastronomic boundaries and creating moments. With the introduction of our sustainability project, Xara Gardens, our farming experts and chefs work together to forge new dishes with our homegrown crops to create cuisine for sustainable development.

I would like to take this opportunity in congratulating the de Mondion team once again and thanking our patrons for their continuous support."

ROBYN PRATT, GENERAL MANAGER, PHOENICIA HOTEL MALTA

"The Phoenicia Malta culinary and management team attended The Malta Restaurants Awards night proud that this year we did not have just one restaurant represented but two. Both our Phoenix (now rebranded to Contessa) and Bastion Restaurants made it to top 40 and considering that this is the first year we opened Bastion Restaurant for dinner as well as lunch we were extremely proud to have been nominated and made it to number 17.

We have been working hard behind the scenes with our culinary teams to fine-tune our culinary experiences and to win Best Food Award, the cherry on the cake for us as it made all the hard work and extra hours worthwhile. The culinary team led by our Executive Chef Daniel Debatista are a fantastic team of young professionals all wanting to deliver the best and we are extremely proud of them.

Contessa (formerly Phoenix) came in second place in Overall Best Restaurant with a 50/50 for food which is just fantastic.

We scored 49 in both ambience and service so overall we scored 49 which is an outstanding testimonial for all the team.

We now look forward to taking Contessa to the next level so that we can ensure the team will again be standing on the stage next year for more awards."

SIMONE CASSAGO, MANAGER, LEVEL NINE, GOZO

"We are thrilled to have won three awards, including recognition as third best restaurant in Malta and first place in Gozo. The Gala was an extraordinary opportunity to introduce ourselves and our culinary excellence. Thank you for your support and look forward to participating again in the future."

We had a lovely table, good company. But I have just one complaint, the music was simply too loud. How often are people going to complain about loud music in all kinds of places including restaurants? There was a good violinist. He would have been enough but he was accompanied by recorded music. Just too loud. Music should be kept in the background and not be allowed to take over. Otherwise it was a most enjoyable and beautifully organised evening.

The organisers deserve some sort of award as well.

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Press

<https://lovinmalta.com/food/malta-and-gozos-top-40-restaurants-of-the-year-announced-at-2023-definitively-good-guide-awards/>

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<https://blog.bookia.eu/entertainment/bookia-sponsors-best-newcomer-award-2024/>

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Media



Business News: The Definitive(ly) Good Guide Co Awards 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXv3bfQpQeo>