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The Final Word on Kosher Food



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REVIEW OF ABAITA

written by Frayda | August 31, 2021



Abaita is an Italian-style dairy cafe located in Midtown Manhattan. The Kosher Cactus visited Abaita in June of 2021. This review was written in July of 2021.

- Where is Abaita located?
- What is the vibe at Abaita?
- What kind of food do they serve at Abaita?
- Kosher Certification
- Is Abaita kid-friendly?
- Is Abaita wheelchair accessible?
- Final Thoughts

Where is Abaita located?

Abaita is located at 145 E 49th Street, between 3rd and Lexington Avenues. Abaita is easily recognizable by the iconic blue doors that lead into the restaurant.

You can get to the cafe by car, but parking is typically a nightmare in the city.

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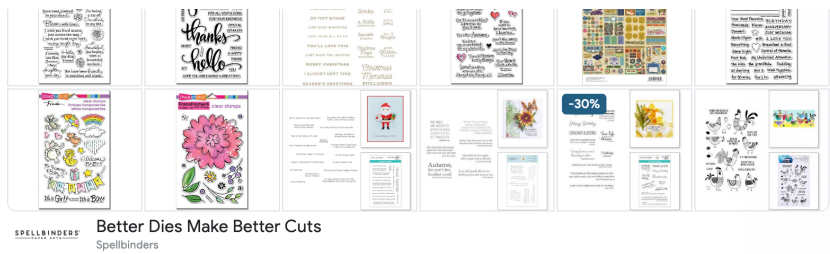
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Midtown is a huge crossover for public transportation, so there are subway stations and bus stops for virtually all lines very close to the restaurant. The M50, M101, M102, and M103 bus lines are just steps away. The 4, 6, E and M all have stations within one-minute walking distance, and Grand Central Station is a 7-minute walk.

Car service options, like Uber and Lyft, are typically just a minute or 2 wait.

What time is Abaita open?

The cafe is open from 12PM to 9PM, Sundays through Thursdays, 11:45AM to 2:45PM on Fridays, and is closed on Saturdays.


What is the vibe at Abaita?




What more could you possibly want in a dish of pasta?

Abaita is a modern cafe with all the favorite Italian dishes, done with an elegant flair.

The food is delicious, and the service is fantastic. The staff were incredibly relaxed, and the entire restaurant had a friendly, happy and calm atmosphere. I know that working in the food industry can be very stressful, but you would never know it at Abaita.





Ka'Chava

Kachava

Open

The blue doors theme color works its way into the restaurant in little touches, giving the whole cafe a Mediterranean feeling. There are hardwood tables and comfortable chairs. The entire restaurant is inviting and bright. Currently (July 2021), there are indoor and outdoor seating options available.

Abaita means 'homecoming' in Israeli slang, and honestly, that is exactly what this restaurant feels like. (Also, if you read/ speak Hebrew, did you see the Nekudot underneath the letters in the logo? How cute?)

Do I need to make a reservation?

Yes, but you can also walk in. If you do walk in, you may have to wait for a table (especially during peak lunch and supper hours).

I'd recommend making a reservation, or at least calling ahead if you are making a spontaneous trip in. To reserve, you can google search 'Abaita reservations' and follow the prompts.

What kind of food do they serve at Abaita?



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What kind of food do they serve at Abaita?



Margherita Pizza, done the right way

Abaita serves traditional Italian cafe fare. They are particularly well-known for their brick oven pizza and house-made pastas. There are also fresh salad options, soups of the day and a very, very comprehensive wine list.

The cafe's to-go menu is slightly different than their in-house dining menu- personally, I'd vote for eating in because firstly, there are no dishes, and secondly, the cafe options are incredible and so fresh.

What is on the menu at Abaita?

These are some of my favorite options at the Cafe:

Margherita Pizza.

Technically, margherita is good ol' plain pizza, but Abaita has such a unique take on it that it tastes remarkably new. The crust is thick, crispy, and full of air pockets that provide maximum crunch. The sauce is fresh basil and tomatoes, and is made in-house. The pizza is topped with fresh mozzarella. The entire pie is a work of art. From what I am told, authentic Italian pizza was not made with heavy cheese- that is an American invention. This pizza feels so real! It tastes homemade, healthy, and light.

Wood Oven Roasted Halibut.

This fish dish is mouthwatering. The name really says it all- the halibut is wood-fire roasted, and topped off with eggplant scapece (that's sauteed vegetable strips, FYI). The entire dish is served on a gorgeous bed of toasted farrow and celery, and sprinkled with micro-greens. It is beautiful to look at, and incredible to taste.

Roasted Baby Beet Salad.

I am a sucker for Bethel Creamery Yogurt (which tastes like good English yogurt, not like the sucky American stuff) and a salad that uses it as a base? Um, where do I sign up? This phenomenal starter also features savory roasted beets, a fig marmalade dressing and micro-arugula. The entire dish comes together perfectly.

Tunisian Olives.

To be fair, I did not taste this dish. In fact, I forgot all about the many recommendations I had received about it until we were already long gone. And that, alas, is a sad story. These olives are breaded and fried, and then placed in a little mountain of creamy labneh yogurt. Then the dish is finished off with garlic confit and fresh dill. It sounds sensational, and every person I spoke to raved on about the taste. I am definitely going back to get this.

Tagliatelle Pasta.

This pasta dish is stunning. The sauce is a mushroom based cream, with garlic confit and fresh herbs drizzled on top. It smells absolutely unbelievable. The pasta is also plated magnificently, with long ribbons twirled into a pretty knot on the plate. There is a ton of shredded parmigiana cheese shredded on top. One day, I'm going to visit Le Marche, in Italy. In my dreams, it smells like this dish. (This goes great with a glass of merlot, by the way.)

What else is on the menu?





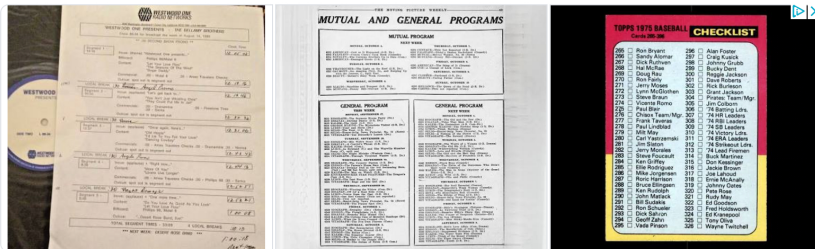
Abaita's Roasted Baby Beet Salad, with its distinctive yogurt base

- Appetizers
- Pizza
- Pasta
- Fish
- Desserts
- Non-Alcoholic Drinks
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What is the best dish at Abaita?

According to the chef, the fastest selling item on the menu is Mafaldine, and I can absolutely believe him.

Pasta (of your choice) with tomato confit, Calabrian chili and pecorino romano cheese. If you are unfamiliar, pecorino romano is the parmigiano of goat cheese.



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Although we didn't try this, after he pointed it out to us, I noticed waiters carrying dishes of Mafaldine past our table too many times to count.

How do I go off-menu at Abaita?

Ask about the specials! Abaita is always coming up with creative ways to use the fresh fish while it is still at its best. The best question you can ask is, "What dish do you have with fresh fish today?"

I guarantee that the answer will be something spectacular.

What Hashgacha are they under?



See that, on top of the fish? That's an eggplant scapece on the Roasted Halibut

Abaita is under the Kosher supervision of the OK. All food is Chalav Yisrael, all wines are Mevushal.

Does Abaita serve drinks?

Yes, the restaurant serves amazing drinks. As well as a selection of beers, there are also custom cocktails, and you can also request a standard cocktail.

Abaita has an incredible wine menu- extremely extensive for a dairy cafe, but a thoughtful and exciting change for any wine connoisseur.

Is Abaita kid-friendly?

Abaita is a family restaurant, but there are no highchairs in the Cafe. You can bring in a stroller, or, if you are worried about navigation between tables, you can eat outside (the outdoor seating is protected from the elements).

The menu also has some kid-friendly options: The Margherita Pizza is always a winner, and you can adapt some of the other dishes to your child's taste.

Is Abaita wheelchair accessible?



A Mediterranean blue theme runs through the entire restaurant

The Cafe is wheelchair accessible, and there are accessible restrooms as well.

Does Abaita serve desserts?

Yes, Abaita has desserts! Get the Apple Cake. I know, *apple cake*? But this is just mouthwatering.

It's crispy on the outside, hot on the inside; just the right amount of sweet to be dessert, but not too sweet that it'll make you sick. It has a honey syrup drizzle, and the most enticing dollop of creme fraise right on top. It is outstanding.

Final Thoughts



The best Apple Cake ever.

Have you ever wandered down a random side street in Jerusalem, and found the perfect lunch spot? That is what Abaita feels like. It's modern, it's clean and bright and it's delicious.

The food is magnificent, but even more than that, the ambience is wonderful, and the service is 5-star. If I lived closer, I'd visit Abaita every day. As it is, I definitely plan to return soon.



For our brunch of 3 apps, 2 drinks, 2 mains and a dessert to share, we paid \$125.

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FRAYDA

I write reviews mainly for the gratitude I have for Kosher restaurants everywhere, for the entrepreneurs that keep them running, and for the patrons that keep them in business. If you love the reviews, or you want to support your neighbors, cousins, best friends brother (who just opened a fast food place) – feel free to share.

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