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## THE DISH: Here's Where You'll Find One Of The Best Pasta Dishes In Dublin

Gourmet snacks and deliciously creamy pastas

Sarah Clayton-Lea  
3 months ago

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The hot and balmy weather had a lot to do with choosing this week's dining haven, [Piglet Winebar](#). Nestled away in an area of Temple Bar world's apart from the cobblestone tourist traps, you'll find an authentic Italian winebar with great wine and even greater food.



## What's the vibes?

Stroll down Cow's Lane in Temple Bar on any warm evening and you'll be guaranteed to see a horde of people sitting outside Piglet, glass of wine in hand and mini bruschetta in mouth, catching up in a chill way not often seen in Dublin.

Piglet, easily one of the city's cutest wine bars, is the results of a makeover of where La Dolce Vita wine bar used to be - a spot I would go to on the reg to sip on Aperol Spritzes and pretend I spoke Italian.

Opened last summer by wine importer Enrico Fantasia (from the yum Sheridan's Cheesemongers) and Thibaud Harang, this is the kind of place where you'll meet a friend for just one glass, and end up staying long after the sky has darkened. The glass turns into a bottle, and before you know it you're looking at the menu and drooling over every single morsel.

Views of Smock Alley Theatre from your wooden perch outside, and an inside mezzanine osteria-style restaurant combine to create an artsy, laidback vibe.

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## What's on the menu?

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The yummy little tapas are Le Levain sourdough slices with a choice of mouthwatering toppings such as fresh oyster with anchovy foam, pork cheek with salsa verde or confit duck gizzard with garlic butter.

We went with one lardo (a delicious, warm pork fat) with bitter honey, and a crisp bread sliver topped with cured goat bacon, sultanas and capers.

The mix of the salty lardo and sweet honey was SO good - I could have eaten an entire board of these. A prawns al Pil-Pil with garlicky butter in a rich tomato and Esplette chilli sauce was gobbled off the plate, wiping up every last atom of the sauce with the hunk of bread the yummy sea creatures were served upon.

So far, so yum.

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Bigger plates we pounced on were one of the evening special's, a fresh crab pasta in a creamy tomato sauce and spring onions, and a Cacio e Pepe, my 'deathrow meal': a simple pasta of Pecorino Romano cheese and cracked black pepper.

I once worked in an Italian restaurant where the owner would hire chefs based purely on how good their Cacio e Pepe was, and lemme tell you, whoever cooked this dreamy dish would have been hired on the spot.

The crab special was nice, but "nice" is not the most exciting of adjectives, and neither was the pasta. Some extra pepper went a long way but the tomato sauce slightly overpowered the flavour of the crab, a lighter base would have worked.

Piglet gets bonus points for the perfectly al dente pasta for both dishes, however.

Our waitress is quick and smiley, and even though we got *slightly* forgotten about in between finishing our mains and ordering dessert, the weather was so nice - Italian, even- that we were more than happy to keep drinking our vino and people watch.

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## What's the damage?

With a deliriously rich flourless chocolate cake (flourless means no carbs right?!) smothered in raisins and fruity syrup to finish things off, as well as two glasses of wine - a Pinot Grigio and a fab zesty Rose, the bill came to a decent enough €72.25.

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## Score: 7.5

Eating al fresco here, you would never know you're in Dublin - a real bonus on days you've just had enough. Charcuterie and small plates are utterly faultless, and I might just have to order from here for my last ever meal on earth.

It just won't be the crab.

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