

Dine on the roof at Panorama and don't forget the champagne

By DAVID PELUCHETTE

Though we recently mentioned Panorama in the article on "outdoor eats," I decided the place was worth a more detailed review. It's location was of interest to me because it's on a rooftop found outside the city center, besides it was close to my apartment, so why not? On top of that I was leaving for a two-week vacation to Italy and France and I wanted to try someplace whose cuisine did not resemble Italian or French. To call Panorama a fusion restaurant would be a little misleading, but I think it does a pretty good job of expanding on what you can normally find on local menus with a tasteful twist.

I was feeling quite drained after another long hot day pounding the city's streets, fighting with cars for my little piece of the sidewalk, breathing exhaust fumes and horns pounding in my head. I desperately wanted a break, but couldn't get out of the city, so what can you do if you can't get out? Go up! Located on the 6th floor of a modern office complex off Prospect Peremohy, what first strikes you is that this is actually an office building, complete with a receptionist greeting you at the front desk. I felt as if I was going to a business meeting instead of escaping the grind of city life for a few hours of leisurely dining. When the elevator reached the 6th floor and let me off, all those notions of being at work quickly disappeared, as a matter of fact, when I arrived shortly after 6pm the place seemed deserted. Maybe they were closed or only open during business hours, I thought.

I was soon greeted by a member of the wait staff and was given my choice of tables, inside or outside on the terrace. Of course I had to choose the terrace, why sit inside on a rooftop establishment when you can go outside? The interior was nothing to sneeze at however, with its walls adorned with works of modern art and long drapes lightly stirring with the summer breeze coming in off the open balcony. A long aquarium lined one of the interior walls filled with exotic fish. I was lead outside and picked my spot. The waitress brought over the menu, but I didn't need to open it right then. I just

needed a moment to take in the view. The sky was a little gray from the light summer shower earlier in the afternoon along with splashes of red and yellow painting it's canvass, there was a soft cool breeze and the quiet, that's what I noticed most of all, the peace and quiet. I was a bit surprised that none of the office workers in the building had taken advantage of at least popping in for a few drinks before heading home after a long day. Well, their loss was my gain.

Being the only patron in an eatery, as good as it may sound, can be quite unnerving. Thoughts start running through your head like "What's up with this place? Is the food any good?" Yadda, yadda, yadda... Well if good service is any indicator, then I was in for a real treat. After looking over the menu, which was, unfortunately for me, only in Russian, I consulted my waitress, who also unfortunately only spoke Russian. She was thankfully quite patient, standing there listening to me and answering my questions while I was painfully butchering the Russian language trying to be understood.

Now, I consider myself to be mayonnaise intolerant, so sometimes eating in Ukraine can be a bit of a challenge. I decided to start off with the Summer Salad (Hr 22) accompanied by the lemon yogurt dressing. Excellent choice I must say, the creamy citrus taste of the lemon yogurt livened up the assortment of fresh cucumbers, tomatoes and red peppers, and there was even a hint of cilantro, mmmmm. Since only Georgian wines were sold by the glass, I had chosen the Merani (Hr 21), which is a semi-sweet white wine and although I don't fancy myself to be a sweet wine connoisseur. I always find the semi-sweet, especially the whites a dry enough alternative. The wine was served refreshingly chilled and went well with the salad on this balmy summer evening.

Not being familiar with the specialties of the house, I could have and often do opt for the shashlik, which you can get almost anywhere. This being a review however, I couldn't wimp out, I had to push my culinary comfort zone. With a recommendation from my trusted waitress, who couldn't



The summer terrace of Panorama provides fresh air, a fabulous view and a tasty fusion European menu – what more is needed for a friendly or even romantic dinner on the roof? (Andriy Porokhnenko)

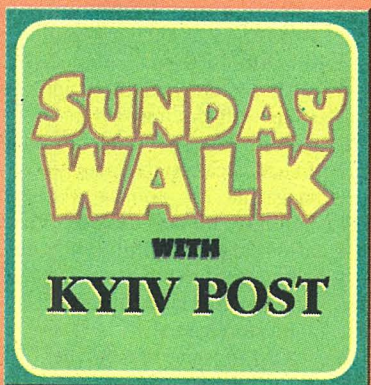
have gone wrong after suggesting that delicious lemon yogurt dressing, I went for the Pork with Pitsaiolo sauce (Hr 43) accompanied by young potatoes cooked in butter and sprinkled with parsley (Hr 10). My entree arrived – tender cuts of pork file, juicy and so tender in fact that I could've simply used my fork to cut them. The delightful piquant sauce was full of sliced black and green olives. On the side was a beautiful red basil leaf, which brought out a wonderful freshness from the pork file. The Saperavi

(Hr 21), which is one of my favorite Georgian Reds, whose rich blackberry and blackcurrant flavors balanced by a subtleness of oak, rounded out the meal delightfully. Finally for dessert I sampled the chocolate cake of the day (Hr 20) and an espresso.

After sitting there pleased at my find, making a mental note to come back, I saw an attractive young couple walk in. They were seated not far behind me and had ordered a bottle of champagne. As I was leaving I couldn't help but turn back and take a second

look at that young couple. At that moment their champagne glasses clicked, and with that stunning sky as their romantic backdrop, I couldn't help but feel a little envious, but in a nice way. Yes, next time definitely.

PANORAMA
3 Sholudenko, 6th floor,
230-4792
Open daily from noon till the last customer
English Speaking Staff: No
English Menu: No



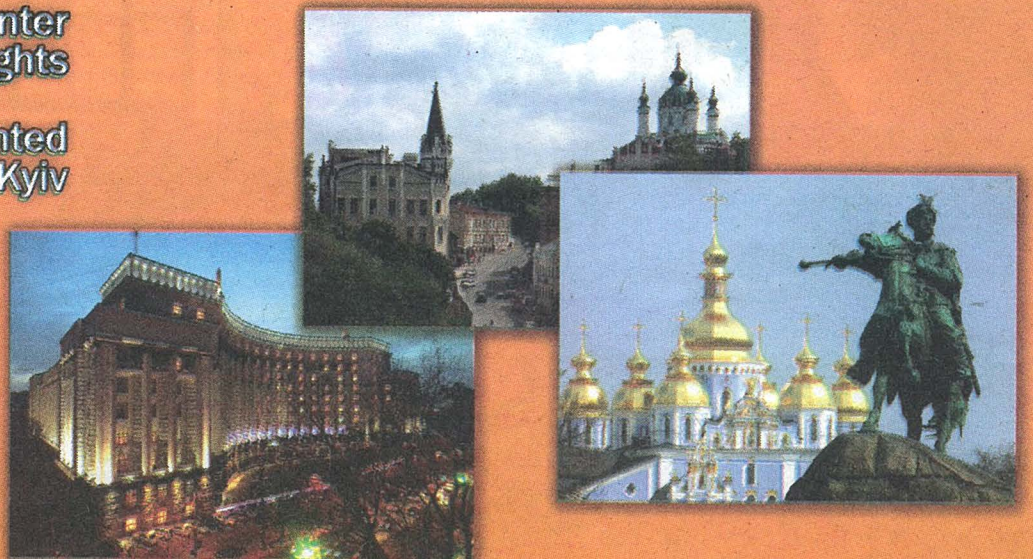
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