



As we pulled up to Cibo Wine Bar in Coral Gables, the rain was falling hard enough to be confused for a category two hurricane. Worried that we would not find parking and would get drenched as we made our way to the restaurant, my wife and I were relieved to see the port in the storm – the friendly valet out front. In a uniquely Miami fashion, we went from wildly rainy rush hour traffic to the comfort of Cibo Wine Bar in a matter of minutes.

As we shook off from the torrential downpour, we were shocked and relieved to find that we were standing in what appeared to be the hottest happy hour spot in Coral Gables. People were pouring in the door joining clusters of friends who were gathered throughout the bar and restaurant. Conversations were flowing as fluidly as the wine from the bottles. We stood for a moment and soaked in the atmosphere – it was very much alive.

A quick tour revealed a restaurant that is well-designed to entertain and delight its guests, no matter how large or small the party. There are several rooms available for patrons to host special occasions, as well as quiet corners designed for intimate dinners.

As we were seated for dinner and began sipping our wine, the lights and music dimmed, adjusting the atmospheric temperature in the room ever so slightly. Conversations, while still lively, took on a softer tone as the tension from a long day's work and the rush of happy hour faded.

The food was incredible, or more accurately, phenomenal! Our meal began with several appetizers. Our favorite was the fried zucchini flowers stuffed with ricotta, closely followed by the Polenta Fries with gorgonzola dipping sauce – the sauce was heavenly.



For our main course, we were served Pappardelle with lamb ragu and a beef short rib, which is cooked in a Chianti reduction for four and a half hours! The Pappardelle is made onsite from scratch every day, as are the pastas and breads found throughout the menu. The use of a knife was not necessary for eating the short ribs – I could easily brush the meat from the bone with a light stroke of my fork. Where most chefs would simply accompany ribs with a simple potato, Executive Chef Massimo Giannattasio creatively served a creamy gorgonzola polenta topped with finely sliced crispy onions. This dish has forever changed my perception of the onion.

My memory of our assorted desserts is fond. In fact, I ate it so quickly that I forgot to savor what I was eating. The mini cannolis were decadent.

Our desert was followed by a pair of signature

Limmoncello Granitas and espresso Kahlua Granitas, fresh from the bar. Let's just say that when you go to Cibo Wine Bar for dinner, save some room for the after-dinner treats!

The service at Cibo Wine Bar was top-notch. We were assisted by several staff members who all worked together as a team to meet our every need and want. Next time you are on Miracle Mile, stop by Cibo Wine Bar for a drink, a glass or bottle of wine, dinner, dessert or all of the above. You should not miss out on experiencing this fantastic South Florida gem.

Oh, and did I mention that when you order a bottle of wine from the enormous glass wine cellar, there is an acrobatic wine angel named Amy who flips, twists and soars 20 feet in the air to grab your bottle before hand-delivering it to your table? She also speaks four languages and plays the violin for special guests on special occasions. It's true; I've seen it with my own two eyes.

For more information on Cibo Wine Bar, located at 45 Miracle Mile in Coral Gables, call 305-442-4925 or visit www.cibowinebar.com.