

REVIEWS

Bella Napoli Pizzeria | Italian | Rating: 7.8



Open Sun-Thu 18:00-24:00, Fri-Sat 17:00-24:00

Tel: 0 2259 0405 |

Sukhumvit Soi 31, 150 m from Sukhumvit Rd | BTS Prom Phong Exit 5: 10 min

Bella Napoli is a quintessential 1960s pizza parlour. All that's missing are the festoons of plastic grapes hanging from the ceiling and candles stuck in raffia covered Chianti bottles. But rather than repelling, the décor adds a sense of timelessness to the comfortable ambiance that permeates this popular dining spot.

Although the menu features a few other Italian dishes, pasta and pizza are what Bella Napoli is all about. An Italian pizza maker who knows what he's doing prepares the pizza. The ingredients are imported from Italy and the style is authentically Neapolitan. This means a thin and yeasty crust that is chewy, but not so crisp that it can't be folded without cracking. The rim will have risen and formed the wood-fired trademark bubbles that burst and burn slightly in the oven.

Traditional Neapolitan toppings are offered, plus others that have traced pizza's rise to international ubiquity. Of the traditional, I enjoy the classic, but simple B180 tomato, mozzarella and prosciutto. Its uncomplicated nature doesn't hide the taste of the delicious crust. For something untraditional, try the B240 Pizza Primavera with mozzarella, cherry tomatoes, olives, basil and rucola lettuce. My only complaint with Bella Napoli is that I find the sauces a bit watery and the crust in the middle of the pizzas sometimes undercooked, causing an annoying droop when a pizza wedge is taken in hand.

Pasta is cooked to order and will arrive at your table 'al dente', rather than mushy as is often the case in restaurants catering to Asians. I love the B220 Spaghetti with clams.

Bella Napoli is always packed, and since they don't take reservations, be prepared to wait a few minutes for a table. The wine list is limited; house wines are jug stuff and served by the glass (B100) or in carafes. The service is friendly and reasonably efficient, but the throngs of diners prevent personalized attention.

If you're a smoker, prepare to be relegated to a small and cramped balcony without air-conditioning. You're probably better off sitting in the regular dining room and stepping outside for a smoke.

Bella Napoli is a success because the owners have no delusions of grandeur. They recognize they're a pizza parlour that also serves pasta and don't bite off more than they can chew. The result: a restaurant of signal quality. The next time you're looking for pizza, forget the American chain stuff. Bella Napoli serves real McCoy and the pedigree shows.

