



Viva Cuba!

Annalise Cunild discovered a vibrant fiesta of flavours on Trippet Lane.

The buzz of conversation rises up from packed tables mixing with lively Latin music as a waitress shows us to our table and I start to realise it's not just warmth of the summer evening that has made me temporarily forget I am in England.

We have come to dine at Cubana on Trippet Lane but we feel more like we have stumbled upon a vibrant fiesta of the kind you find filling the streets of Spanish towns at weekends.

This place is clearly all about combining a fun and invigorating atmosphere with food made using authentic Spanish, Portuguese and South American recipes.

Despite servicing a fully booked restaurant, our energetic waitress is wonderfully friendly, patient and attentive and soon brings us drinks and offers some recommendations from the huge choice on the tapas menu.

Once we have chosen we sit back and enjoy the atmosphere – even the interior decoration is beguilingly authentic; faded ochre and blues combine with photos, prints and signs on the wall which all call to mind Spanish cultural heritage.

And it isn't long before our tapas arrives – we chose six dishes to share between two of us which, as the plates are set down, seems ample.

We are both quick to tuck in; I start with the garlic and white wine king prawns which are huge, and beautifully succulent and my partner tries a Cubana meatball which he tells me I must try next – 'delicious'.

DETAILS:

Tapas

Langostinos al ajillo
King prawns sautéed in olive oil, garlic and white wine, £5.95

Albondigas
Cubana's famous meatballs made with fresh mince beef, coriander and onion served in a tomato and red wine sauce, £4.85

Chorizo
Flavoursome pan fried Spanish chorizo sausage, £4.25

Res y cebolla
Thinly sliced tender sirloin steak sautéed with sweet caramelised red onions, £4.95

Sides

Patatas bravas
The Spanish old favourite – fried potatoes topped with a spicy tomato sauce, £2.75

Legumbres mixtas
Sundried cherry tomatoes, caper berries and mixed olives drizzled in extra virgin olive oil, £4.25

Pan Tostado
Toasted ciabatta bread, £2.45

Dessert

Organic chocolate brownie, £4.50
Selection of ice cream by Nonna's Cucina, £4.50

Wine

Nero d'Avola Allegro – Sicily £15.50

**Cubana Tapas Bar,
34 Trippet Lane, Sheffield
Tel: 0114 2760 475**

The only dilemma with tapas when all the food is excellent is choosing what to eat next, but in the end it is fun to dart around the different plates and mix up the flavours.

Next on my plate is the chorizo, I eat each piece with a bite of the toasted ciabatta which is an extremely pleasing combination and it is tempting to stick with it for the rest of the meal but try more I must.

The pièce de resistance for us both has to be the tender sirloin steak and as I eat it I can not help but let of a purr of satisfaction. The flavour is superb and the consistency is melt in the mouth.

Throughout the meal we both take regular servings from a generous mound of tasty patatas bravas – fried potatoes topped with tomato sauce for the uninitiated – which are a perfect accompaniment to all the dishes and dangerously moreish.

When our waitress returns to offer dessert menus I shoot a smile at my partner and we nod reluctantly, both stuffed after cleaning all our plates.

Luscious ice cream and a chocoholic's dream brownie are two reasons to add to a long list we will both be tango-ing our way back to Cubana very soon.

Westside verdict

Dining out here is an event in itself – you'll get swept away by the lively Latin atmosphere.