

BOWLED OVER BY BLANCOS

Blancos Lounge and Grill (Timau Plaza, off Argwings Kodhek Road)

BY BERTHA KANG'ONG'OI

If you'll remember only one thing from your visit at Blancos, it is the elegant African simplicity. The theme is consistent, from the décor and to the food! The place is warm, with vibrant colours and steel interiors done by the famous artist Kioko Mwitii.

The service, as well, is something to write home about. The smiling waitresses will almost give you a tour of the restaurant if you're unsure of the best place to sit. There is space on the balcony that faces the busy Argwings Kodhek road, in the main dining area and at the lounge, which would be the main attraction for those seeking a relaxed mood. But on the evening we

are here, Blancos is hosting an Afro Jazz night. So we opt for the main dining area to catch some of the jazz.

Again, once settled in our seats, waitresses are there, pronto, to spread the napkin on our laps and take our orders.

The menu, done in Kiswahili and set on banana fibre, is simple. From supu ya malenge, sambusa and mshikaki for starters to matumbo ya kukaangwa, char grilled, deep fried or baked fish and chicken tikka for main dishes, this is the closest you can get to classy African cuisine.

I decide on the chicken tikka with coconut rice and have no regrets. The chicken is tender and the rice would probably impress our Swahili experts

It's a great experience. The glass of dry white wine and the Riverside Drive Band playing soft jazz using violins and a saxophone make it a great experience.

For a full-course meal, you would be comfortable with about Sh2,000 – if you are taking wine by the glass, that is. Each glass goes for Sh230. Blancos also has a website, www.blancos.co.ke, from where you can preview the menu and find out what's happening every last Wednesday of the month. A staff member tells me that the action changes every month. But of course, the artistes always play African music.

The space is small, but Blancos is the perfect place to unwind and enjoy a great meal.

Star rating: ★★★★★