



Xcaret Dinner and Show: great food and an extravagant show rolled into one evening.

Part 2:

Okay let's see where we left off....

Oh yea we were heading back to meet the Swedish crew and head to the dinner show. We all met up at the entrance of the park and took the quick trek to the amphitheater where the show was to take place. On the 10 minute walk to the theater the pathway was sprinkled with performers from the show dressed in their festive and historical garb playing music and giving people a chance to take photos with some of the performers. It was quite a spectacular sight with intricate costumes and torches lit as drums resonated throughout the park.

Once we arrived we were escorted to a separate entrance for the guests who chose to include the dinner with the show. I must say that I would certainly suggest this, due to the fact that you get spectacular seating as well as an incredible dinner. Keep in mind there were 35 of us and we were seated immediately all at the same table, and we definitely had some of the best seats in the house. Once we were seated I was able to take in my surroundings, and what a sight it was! The theater, Gran Tlachco, has a seating capacity of 6,000, and the lighting and building's architecture was tremendous. As we got settled our drink orders were taken, menus were handed out, and I was getting excited like little kid waiting to see what was next.

The dinner:

The menu was a set menu, of an appetizer, starter, entrée and dessert, but you did have a few choices from each category. Also included with dinner were 2 glasses of house red or white wine or soft drinks; beer and cocktails were extra. Being such a large group we all decided to go with the same menu so as not to be disturbed throughout the show. First to arrive at the table was a canapé platter for two.

There were quail eggs, sesame encrusted goat cheese, cucumber slices topped with a zesty seafood salad, small romaine leaves filled with sashimi tuna, and a spiced cream cheese, all were delicious but the tuna and romaine stood out for me. Next to arrive was a trio of empanadas; cheese, mushroom, and spinach served with fresh guacamole, and they were hot and not too greasy which was a definite plus.

The entrée came with 2 generous kabob skewers of mixed seafood and beef and chicken. My favorite was the chicken, and the mushrooms that were added intermittently throughout. The beef was a little too rare for my taste, and the fish was a tad overcooked, but overall was definitely enjoyable. The side of spicy baby potatoes I could have had a whole plate full they were so good! When dessert came it was 3 small scoops of homemade sorbet; mango, banana, and pineapple, and they were all tangy and full of flavor. Overall the service was impeccable the food was delicious, and I would certainly recommend spending the money to add the dinner experience to the show.

The Show:

I wasn't quite sure what to expect from the show, but I had heard from friends that it was a show depicting local history of the Mayans as well as Mexico. Keep in mind that the show is entirely in Spanish so if you are not Spanish speaker it may be helpful to read up on a bit of Mayan and Mexican history, and you will get more of a complete experience. Overall it is a sensory experience that surpasses language so it certainly isn't required.

The opening of the show was a little girl singing, and talking to the spirits of the elders about how Mexico came to be and the history of the area. Then a mass of Mayan dignitaries dressed in their lavishly designed costumes strutted onto the stage to prime the audience for what

many believe is the stand out performance of the show, the Mayan ball game, or Pok ta' pok. I have been to many area ruins and seen many ball courts, but nothing compares to actually seeing it live! It was high spirited and looked to be a real challenge for the participants, and they were spectacular. The audience got involved taking sides and cheering when a team would get the ball through the small hoop, and it was fast paced and exciting like you were at a soccer match.

After the ball game the Spanish arrived with their large crosses depicting the arrival of Christianity. Then of course the Spanish and Mayan go to battle, with the Spaniards prevailing. This is the only part of the show where I was not convinced of the outcome, after the battle it was insinuated that everyone was happy and friendly and created a new world with the fusion of the Mayan and Spaniard cultures creating a "new" Mexico. I certainly don't think that was the case, but ahhh I digress. Then came the representations of various states of Mexico with each state dressed elaborately in their costumes with their regional music pouring through the amphitheatre.

Each time a new state was introduced the crowd would cheer and get involved singing and clapping to the music; Oaxaca, Yucatan, Michoacán, Veracruz, Ciudad de Mexico, Tabasco, and Jalisco were all represented giving you a peek into the culture and background of each state. The conclusion to the show had all of the performers pouring onto the stage for a raucous grand finale. The evening was quite a treat; having a delicious dinner while experiencing an extravagant and magnificent show. The entire production was flawless in its timing, and the sound, lighting, and costuming, were absolutely amazing. You could tell that time, thought, detailed design, and meticulous direction that were put into the production, and I would certainly suggest checking it out!







