

SO MUST GO! fashionable hotspot



IF YOU GO:

Mondrian Hotel
Scottsdale

Breakfast: 6:30-11:30 a.m.
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Dinner Sun.-Thurs., 5:30-11 p.m.;
Fri. and Sat., 5:30 p.m.-midnight
7353 E. Indian School Road
480.308.1131

ASIA DE CUBA: GREAT FOOD, GREAT ATMOSPHERE

BY SUSAN LANIER-GRAHAM

When you step past the gauzy white curtains of the front walk and into the luxurious white surroundings of the Mondrian Hotel Scottsdale, the serenity embraces you. As you make your way through the hotel's foyer, past the blood red cave of the Red Bar, and descend downstairs to the shimmering white Asia de Cuba restaurant, you might think you've entered heaven. The atmosphere in Asia de Cuba, the new restaurant that just opened at the Mondrian, is heavenly, but the decadence of the specialty rum drinks and the elaborate desserts feels just a little sinful.

Asia de Cuba reflects a unique fusion of the Chino-Latino foods of old Havana, Asian cuisine and cooking techniques, and the fresh catches of the Caribbean Sea to create an unforgettable dining experience. Jeffrey Chodorow's restaurants, including the four other Asia de Cuba restaurants, are world-renowned for unparalleled innovative ideas in food. The new Scottsdale location doesn't disappoint.

There is a small bar area at the front, dominated by a large glass slab reflecting the bright whites of the surrounding restaurant. The specialty house drinks of rum and vodka reflect the tastes of the islands and will be just the right start to your evening out. Asia de Cuba has one of the best selections of mojitos in the

Valley—and the pineapple mojito has a luscious mix of mint, fruit and rum to help you settle into the mood. In addition to the mojitos, be sure to check out the vodka drinks and the wine list. The Mambo King, a blend of champagne and raspberry vodka, is the perfect drink for before-dinner sipping.

The menu at Asia de Cuba is unique and the waiters will remind you that the portions are big and best served family-style. One of the restaurant's specialties is the Miso Cured Alaskan Butterfish. This incredibly light fish is soaked in a marinade of miso paste, mirin, sugar and sake for four days. Be sure to try it.

But the food isn't the only reason to visit Asia de Cuba. The restaurant is busy every night and the crowd, tends towards an older age bracket at the beginning of the evening, adds a younger mix as the evening progresses. Wear something light and breezy and you'll feel right at home in the angelic restaurant as you slide into the luxurious white leather seats. While club dress is welcome, Asia de Cuba is not a place for jeans and T-shirts.

Be sure to make reservations, watch for a familiar face or two tucked into one of the booths set in alcoves along the walls, and leave time to visit the Mondrian's Red Bar with its red crushed velvet sofas after dinner. ✨