



Kosher and cordial near the Kinneret

*Roberg in Moshav Livnim
is the ideal place to have a
delightfully long and leisurely meal*

• By YIFTAH BERLIN

You don't just drop in to Roberg on the way to somewhere else. In fact, you don't just happen to be in Moshav Livnim, the small community in the Galilee where Roberg is located, on the way to somewhere else. You either go there to stay at one of the beautiful guest houses or to eat at Roberg – or both.

Roberg is not just another restaurant but a place to have a long, leisurely dinner or lunch, a break from the daily rush. We spent a good three and a half hours there before realizing it was getting very late.

You may call it an educational establishment (which it really is at times when the chef conducts cooking classes there). The owners aim not only to feed their hungry clients but to feed with love. They very happily show their love for the guests and for the art of gourmet cooking, aiming to surprise and excite their clients, pampering them and treating with the utmost attention to their every desire.

Every little detail is planned – from the warm, familiar welcome to the presentation of the food and, of course, the ingredients and the

preparation.

Ilan Roberg, an experienced chef, has enlisted his sons to help in the kitchen and the running of the restaurant. And, doting over the diners, he is eager to share his knowledge with whoever is interested, giving away secrets and recipes, disclosing names and addresses of suppliers and educating the diners about the dishes.

So confident is he, that he broadcasts live from the kitchen onto large plasma screens in the dining area, showing diners how the dishes are being made before they reach the tables. Needless to say, the kitchen is spotless, and the cooks looked as if they were on a cooking show rather than in a hot and busy kitchen.

Diners can choose to order from the rich menu (NIS 140 per person) or have the tasting menu and surrender to the chef completely. We chose the tasting menu (NIS 184 per person) and were very happy we did. Roberg and his sons turned out to be no less than virtuoso cooks.

The wine of choice was Roberg's wine of the month. This month it was the Barkan Fusion Merlot.

Very shortly after making our

decision, small saucers started landing on our table – served by lovely waitresses all. As we soon found out, they were local girls from Livnim.

There were freshly baked buns, fried eggplant in cherry tomato relish, mushroom in carrot relish, delicious kohlrabi carpaccio, roasted eggplant stuffed with tiny lamb kebabs, cabbage salad with an Asian dressing and a great egg salad, tuna pate, liver pate and a large plate of antipasti.

The lovely waitress offered to refill the little saucers again and again, but we declined as we knew there was much more to come.

The meal continued with a fillet of tilapia in tempura with cherry sauce and wasabi. Next came two soups – a green fennel soup and an orange soup with ginger.

To cleanse our palates, a refreshing passion fruit sorbet was served next and, with a sip of the wine, we were getting ready for the main dishes.

There was a plate of chicken thighs off the bone (pargiot), served over white rice with silan sauce, sesame and a hint of ginger; a small bowl made from kadaif noodles that held chopped liver laced with rose-leaf jam; and smoked chicken breast, seared and served with peanut and coconut sauce. And it didn't end there. The beef dish was comprised of mini-burgers and an entrecote steak.

The kosher restaurant seems to be very popular. When we were there, it was full of young and happy diners and the sounds of laughter, dishes and serious eating.

Very full, we waited before tasting the dessert platter – a long dish with homemade ice cream, dark chocolate cake, Malabi pudding based on coconut cream and seasonal fruit.

The tasting menu has limitless refills and cold drinks included. Another option is a meal from the menu. Breakfasts are served upon reservations. The restaurant can host groups of up to 80 people.

Note: During the Bein Hakramim Festival, August 1-3, the restaurant will be open longer hours, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner and offering many specials and reduced-price deals. For reservations and directions, call (04) 671-5656.

The writer was a guest of the restaurant.

*Roberg
Kosher
Moshav Livnim
(situated above the Sea of Galilee, on
the western side)*