

DA VITTORIO SAIGON JUST OPENED AND IT'S THE MOST

TRAVEL+
LEISURE

just opened. Their famed paccheri will have you seeing stars, too.



PACCHERI ALLA VITTORIO, COURTESY OF DA VITTORIO SAIGON

By [Chris Dwyer](#)

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VIETNAM IS HARDLY short of fabulous dishes to get stuck into, but the fine dining bar has just been raised—and then some—with the opening of Da Vittorio Saigon at [The Reverie](#) hotel, that blingtastic temple to Italian luxury.

For the uninitiated, there are few more storied names in Italian gastronomy than the Lombardy-based [maestros](#) who have been crafting classic deliciousness for more than half a century—winning a remarkable eight Michelin stars in the process across their restaurants in Italy, St. Moritz and Shanghai (their flagship in Brusaporto has three).

This true Italian family affair was founded in 1966 by Vittorio Cerea and his wife Bruna, before their four children joined the business. Da Vittorio Saigon's chef Matteo Fontana worked for the family for years and now, working alongside manager Fabrizio Bosco, they are aiming for success in Vietnam's largest city.



Chico and Bobo Cerea



Chef Matteo Fontana

We got an exclusive sneak preview of what is set to be the hottest table in town—if you can get a seat, that is.

The moodily lit—and yes, sexy—interiors of the 1,000-square-meter space are nothing short of remarkable, with a veritable gallery of mosaics from Milan, all laid piece-by-piece. In fact, much like the design hotel in which DaVittorio Saigon is situated, they've done the Italian luxury industry no harm at all by importing pretty much everything from the source, be it furniture or lamps, beautiful tableware, or glassware.

Initially opening for dinner, with lunch set to follow, up to 80 diners can be accommodated across the main dining room and five elegant private dining rooms. While the design is one thing, we're all about the eats, natch—and happily Da Vittorio delivers in real style.

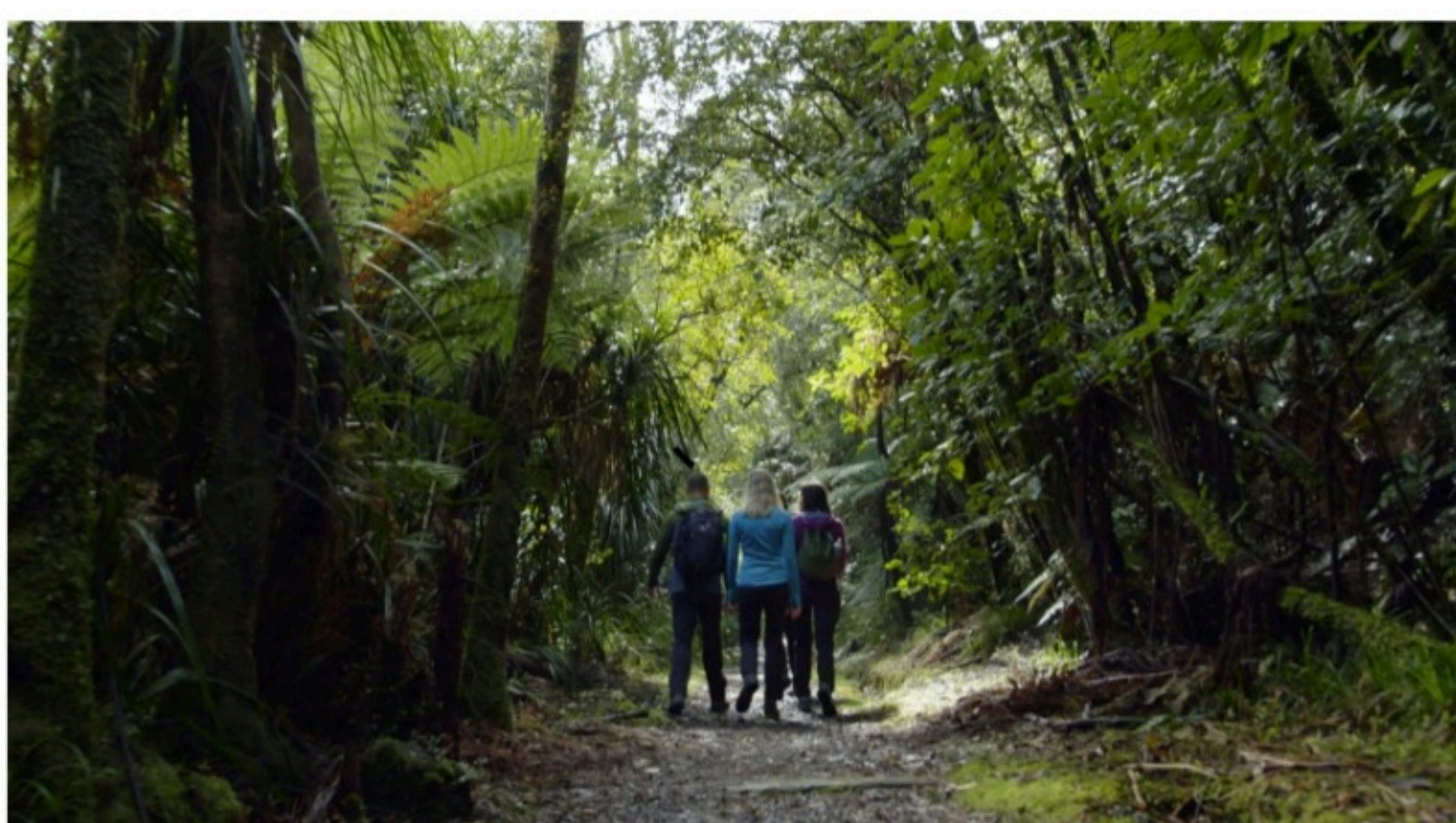
Da Vittorio Saigon are kicking off with a comparatively compact opening menu, but it features classic dishes that fans will recognize and that have made Da Vittorio such a byword for Italian culinary excellence.



Paccheri alla Vittorio

None more enticingly so than the simple, sensational paccheri alla Vittorio that chef Fontana promises us: “Will be exactly as you see and taste in Bergamo”

While the original uses San Marzano, *pachino datterini* and ox heart tomatoes, in Saigon they use red and yellow cherry tomatoes from an organic farm in Dalat, in the hills of central Vietnam, and preserved Italian tomatoes.



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This perfect signature took us straight back to our experience eating it in sunny Positano on the Ligurian Coast, a ray of Mediterranean sunshine in what was that day a humid and rainy Ho Chi Minh City. Culinary theater is also assured with table side service as chef stirs the vast copper pot in front of you, adding parmigiano and fresh basil in a final flourish.

The best part? Taking warm bread to swirl and soak up every last drop of the sauce, or as the Italians call it, *scarpetta*. Why? A *scarpetta* is a little shoe that drags along the floor—as does your bread.



'egg à la egg' or uovo all'uovo. Photo by Fabrizio Donati/Courtesy of Da Vittorio Saigon

Much more complex is 'egg à la egg' or *uovo all'uovo*, a stunningly creamy wonder that somehow remains light. A Martini glass holds the ultimate cocktail of scrambled egg, poached quail egg, salmon roe and Beluga caviar, layered with creme fraiche and potato foam. Think of the [When Harry Met Sally](#) lobster moment... you're close.

While most ingredients are imported from you-know-where, Fontana is also keen to integrate some from local sources such as Vietnamese lotus flower, something he likens to *puntarelle*, the famed Italian chicory with pleasant bitter notes. He serves it with burrata and a langoustine that has been lacquered in beetroot, to stunning effect.

While the price point is yet to be confirmed, it's safe to say it represents the very top end of the country's fine dining scene—and you can pretty much bet that many guests will make it rain with [white truffle from Alba](#) when in season.



Cappuccino of potatoes and mushrooms



Risotto with crispy scampi and foie gras

Wine pairings are well on point from a sommelier who educates without pretension, elevating the dining experience with Italian labels to set the heart racing.

With rumors swirling of Michelin launching a guide to Vietnam, it's a safe bet that the Da Vittorio family will be among the front runners when it comes to adding more accolades to their existing galaxy.

[instagram.com/davittoriosaigon](#)

All photos courtesy of Da Vittorio Saigon.

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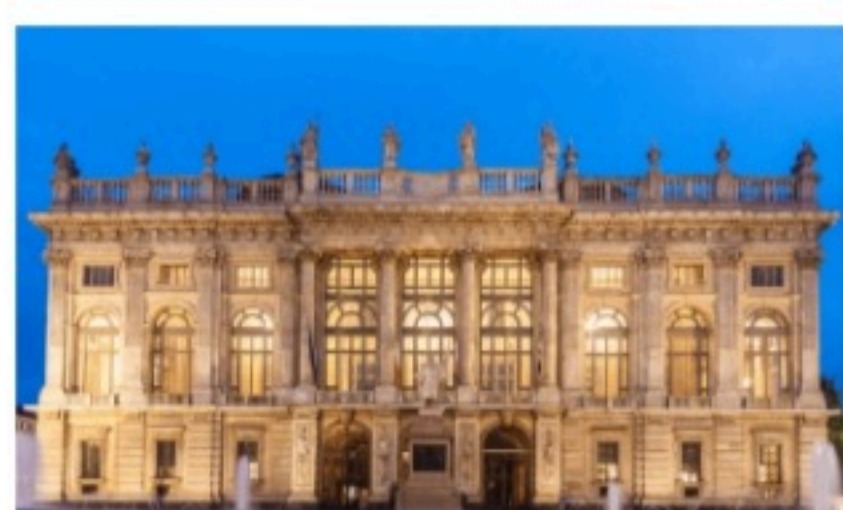
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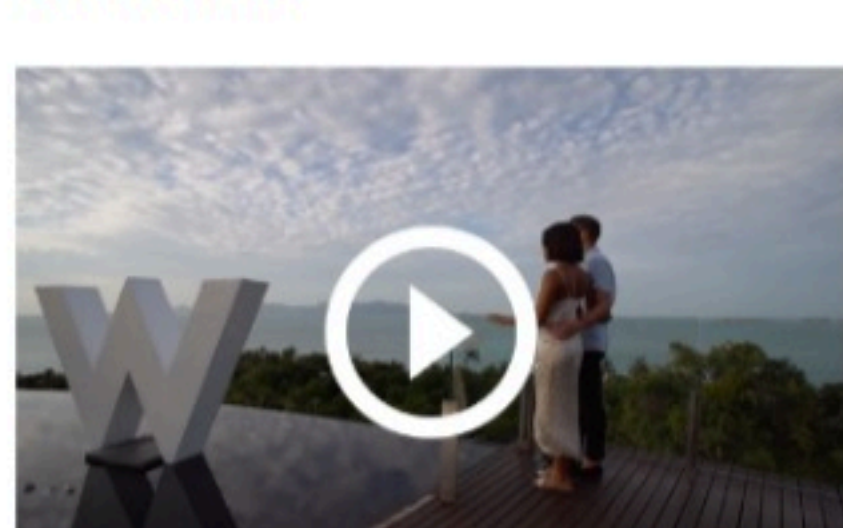


FOOD & DRINK

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