

# RestaurantNews

## Aqua an upscale option for downtown Kitchener

By Colleen Isherwood

KITCHENER, Ont. — The former Delta in downtown Kitchener has undergone a multimillion dollar transformation over the past two years. Deflagged as a Delta in May 2013, it operated as an independent brand for a year while undergoing the renovations required to reflag as an IHG Crowne Plaza in April 2014.

Now, the last of the renos, the icing on the cake, is Aqua Restaurant, which held its grand opening June 19.



Photo Credit: RestaurantNews Ontario

“There are not a lot of seafood restaurants in the area,” Yari Khan, Crowne Plaza general manager told CLN on a tour of the property. “We wanted to be a niche seafood restaurant - we even have a fish in our logo.” But Aqua serves continental items as well as seafood.

Just under 2,000 square feet with 90 seats, Aqua replaces the former Botanica Restaurant and Centre Point Lounge, a breakfast and lunch outlet. The space was completely gutted. Jolanta Lukas of Royal Design used vibrant, strong colour themes.

“You don’t get a sense of being in Kitchener,” said Khan. “This hotel belongs in the community because business is demanding an upscale brand.” Aqua is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Executive chef Dhruba Bastakoti came to Aqua from the Four Seasons Toronto. He was the sous chef at the hotel until his promotion earlier this year.

The restaurant serves continental and full breakfasts, and the buffet design showcases the menu items. “There are traditional eggs, egg wraps, egg quiches — not just your traditional scrambled eggs,” Khan said.

Lunch includes a build your own special for \$9.99, with tacos, soup and salad as options.

The clientele includes the local business community, as the Crowne Plaza is close to the court house, city hall and an array of other companies and corporations.

“One really popular item is red curry seafood soup,” Khan added.

The hotel has 15,000 square feet of conference facilities, including a ballroom for up to 450 people, and 201 rooms.

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