

## Review

### Shawafel

Martha Davies tucks into traditional Lebanese cuisine with a fast-food twist at Atlantis The Palm



After dodging packs of tourists and navigating the labyrinth of stores that make up The Avenues in Atlantis The Palm, we found Shawafel: a small, dimly lit diner boasting a combination of Lebanese shawarmas accompanied by (or stuffed with) portions of falafel.

Despite its efforts, the glittering sign above the doorway could not distract from the bustling hallway in front of it. Inside, huge skewers of meat turn almost hypnotically behind the counter and although it all looked rather appetizing, we went for a table just outside the entrance, choosing the noisy atmosphere outside over the somewhat pokey (if quieter) interior.

#### 'Shawafel offers tasty Lebanese street food with a fast-food-store vibe'

We picked a falafel fattoush salad, a falafel halloumi shawafel and a side of chicken hummus, placing our order at the counter and making a request for some extra halloumi (because who doesn't love extra halloumi?) on the side. In no more than ten minutes our meal arrived. Speedy service and the sheer amount of food in front of us left us momentarily stunned, but it didn't take long for us to dive into the fattoush. A generous (and extremely crunchy) portion of chopped falafel sat atop radishes, pickles, turnips and a quantity of dressing that was not far off the amount of water in the

nearby Ambassador Lagoon. It was exactly what our growling stomachs had been craving.

The shawafel, a wrap about as tall as the Burj

Khalifa (and probably as wide due to its enormous amount of fillings) was equally as delicious. It was surprisingly easy to snap up the dish and its sides of fries and bread, despite its huge size.

Although we loved that Shawafel had kept with tradition and brought all the food out together, in our case, this didn't actually mean all the food: our extra portion of halloumi had not arrived. Feeling rather lonely without our favourite salty snack, we brought this to the attention of the waiter, who came back with two slices for us. But we couldn't taste it: despite having the texture of halloumi cheese, it wasn't salty at all. The meagre portion we had been given suddenly seemed like a blessing in disguise.

Overall, Shawafel offers tasty Lebanese street food with a casual dining, fast-food-store sort of vibe. It's big, it's flavoursome and it's filling, but you might want to pass on the halloumi.

Open Sat-Wed 11am-10pm, Thu-Fri 11am-11pm. Unlicensed. Credit cards accepted. The Avenues, Atlantis The Palm, Palm Jumeirah (04 426 2626).

#### The bill (for two)

1x Falafel halloumi	Dhs35
1x Falafel salad	Dhs25
1x Chicken hummus	Dhs20
1x Fries	Dhs12
1x Mango lime drink	Dhs25
1x Soft drink	Dhs8
<b>Total (including service)</b>	<b>Dhs125</b>