

Ristorante Mamma Gina
251 East Coast Highway
Newport Beach, CA
949-673-9500
www.mammaginas.com

Reviewed by Katie Zimmerman

If you're looking for a fun evening, stop into Ristorante Mamma Gina, where the food is fantastic and the wait staff is eager to serve and entertain. While attending a National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) meeting in the National Academy's Irvine facility, a few of us wandered over to Mamma Gina's. We were more than satisfied. Our waiter, Richard, had a wry sense of humor and interspersed it throughout the evening. The Rodney Strong cabernet undoubtedly made his jokes funnier as the evening went on!

The group tried a variety of salads and main courses. Everyone was pleased with their selections. I started with the Insalata Empolese; thinly sliced artichokes covered with just the right amount of "tang" to the salad. Others had the Insalata Mamma Gina or the Caesar Salad. For a main course, I chose the Risotto alla Principessa di Mare. The generous serving featured shrimp and fresh asparagus. I loved it. Others at the table enjoyed the rosemary lamb (rated "very good"), and the cannelloni florentini ("a very good dish for vegetarians"). This place is well worth the trip if you're in the area. We hear that reservations are needed on the weekend.

