

10 Jul 2009

Over the past months, Jerry Dicecco Junior has taken over more and more from his father, who created the restaurant, described as a 'seaside clam bar and grill', some sixteen years ago. Jerry Junior is an internationally, classically trained chef and it was very interesting to see how he has integrated his cooking style into the well-established menu format. This is a casual, riverside restaurant that sets out to offer very well cooked food at very reasonable prices.

We started with a salad that has almost become a signature dish here. Beautiful fresh greens with a plentiful addition of gorgonzola cheese, cranberries, and almonds expertly dressed with top quality olive oil and a balsamic reduction, were a great start and we continued with another top seller at Jerry's, their 'sandbar combo' of jumbo shrimp, clams and oysters. The restaurant has a great reputation for the quality and freshness of their seafood and Jerry explained that they obtain these from local fishermen and clam diggers. Our next dish was one of Jerry's new dishes. Escargots in mushroom caps were succulent and tasty with lots of garlic and we loved the deep tastes. Jerry also sent out some artichoke hearts that has been lightly coated and sautéed in a white wine and lemon sauce. The artichokes were very tender and the sauce very light. Mussels and steamers are also dishes in great demand here and we thoroughly enjoyed our sampling again because of their freshness and tasty light sauces.

For our main courses we chose one fish and one meat. The fish was one of the day's specials and it turned out to be very special. Black sea bass came as perfectly cooked, incredibly white cutlets with a crispy skin served over bok choy. It was wonderful because it was so simple. All you were conscious of was the super fresh taste and the incredibly white flakiness of the flesh. If you love fish and this is on the menu - go for it. Although fish and shellfish are so important here, carnivores are never neglected. Our choice was the char grilled marinated pork chop that was served sliced on a plate with crispy onions and a selection of well cooked fresh vegetables that really complemented the dish. Other meat dishes on the menu included a flat iron steak that we had very much enjoyed on a previous visit, several chicken dishes and a selection of hamburgers.

By this time, there was no way that we could even manage a taste of dessert, but we can report that they included a selection of cheesecakes, some interesting looking ice cream crepes and a chocolate mousse cake. We settled for a cup of strong espresso as we relaxed after tasting lots of excellent food.

This is a restaurant that has worked very hard to build its reputation and it is easy to see why it has become so popular to locals and to visitors, many of whom come by boat to the adjacent marina, They open during the season from 11:30 a.m. until very late and on Friday and Saturday you can indulge your karaoke 'talents' from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., during which time the kitchen is open for the full menu service. Appetizers range from \$6.50 to \$12.95; Main courses from \$15.95 to \$26.95.

Portions are generous to say the least and main dishes come with vegetables, starch and side salad. Kids under 12 have a special menu including perennial favorites such as pasta, hot dogs, chicken fingers and burgers from \$4 to \$6, including vegetables or salad. Their wine list is just undergoing some revisions. Wine prices, again are very reasonable starting at around \$6 for a glass. It goes without saying that Jerry and the Mermaid has only survived and prospered for so many years under the ownership of Jerry Senior and now Junior, because they find out what people want and set out to give it to them - and more.

Roy Bradbrook - Dan's Paper