

Five Towns Restaurant Reviews

Eclectic, chic dining in the heart of Rockville Centre

Restaurateur George Korten has successfully catered to the discerning palates of dedicated customers in Rockville Centre for the last 13 years. Together with the managing partner, Linda Pirrone, the Executive Chef Joseph Loschiaro and the Chef/Partner Frank Greco, they have created a comfortable atmosphere for fine dining with a fun and eclectic menu.

Some of the basics include their famous steaks, hamburgers and veal chops. Recently the menu has expanded to feature more diverse and exotic selections including specialties like seared sea scallops over lobster ravioli with caramelized onions and portobello mushrooms in a truffle, lobster broth or the Seafood Bouillabaisse served in a saffron tomato broth with various fin fish, clams, shrimp, crostin and aioli. Exotic appetizers such as coconut crushed tempura shrimp, a spinach and artichoke quesadilla or hoison glazed chicken sate with hunan dipping sauce and sesame Napa slaw add new flavor to this exciting menu.

I arrived on a Monday night when they feature a Prix Fixe menu for \$24 which included a choice of appetizer: either Prince Edward Island mussels with green bell pepper, roasted garlic and grape tomato in a light curry fume or a cold antipasto with ham, salami, pepperoni, provolone, roasted peppers and pepperoncini. The mussels were absolutely delicious, delicately seasoned and very fresh.

For the next course, one may choose either a soup or salad. I selected the special salad of baby arugula and sliced fennel with red onion, carrot and segmented grapefruit with raspberry vinaigrette. It is an especially creative combination and is wonderfully light, yet pungent. My friend had the lobster chowder which he thoroughly enjoyed and described as a cross between lobster bisque and New England lobster chowder with pure lobster chunks and a few "unoffending" potato bits which was creamy, but not too thick. Other choices for this course included a classic Caesar salad, the George Martin house salad and a white bean with prosciutto salad.

The entrees arrived in full regalia and glory. I selected the crispy wasabi crusted salmon which was served over a summer vegetable orzo salad. This was truly excellent. There was just the right amount of spice and the delicate taste of the high quality salmon with the crispy wasabi together created a supremely balanced flavor and texture which was just right for my palate. I also sampled the crab stuffed filet of sole, which was a bit heavier, even though it is a lighter fish because it was served with a toasted basmati pilaf that was generously slathered with lemon butter. It, too was delicious, though, sole is not my fish of choice.

Among the other prix fixe entree selections was a slow roasted loin of pork with herb roasted potato, cranberry compote and port

wine demi and a seven layer vegetable lasagna with zucchini, carrot, spinach, in a marinara and basil oil sauce.

Peggy Magro, our lovely waitress brought us two of their outrageous indulgences for dessert. A brownie sundae with a rich, moist chocolate brownie topped with vanilla HaagenDaz ice cream with homemade whip cream, homemade chocolate, and Verona chocolate melted with heavy cream and topped off with M&M's arrived to taunt and tease the dieter in me. Of course, I indulged and tasted what proved to be a sweet tooth's fantasy which set off a chemical serotonin reaction, almost as good as the feeling of being in love. As if that wasn't enough, the deep fried banana in a spring roll wrapper with caramel sauce in a cinnamon gelato with whip cream and powdered sugar almost sent me into sugar shock. But, that is just me. Those of you with a healthier capacity for sugar may not find it too sweet.

To cleanse or restore more equilibrium to our palate, a bite of biscotti mellowed the sugar rush and complemented the large cup of coffee I ordered, a luxury to sip in the oversized cups, which are as good for the customer as they are for the waitress (as she explained, she doesn't have to make as many trips for refills).

Besides the spectacular prix fixe meal that I enjoyed, I might have to return to indulge in their newest concept in dining that just started, which they call "Simply Fish." This is designed to allow the customer to have a lighter meal at an incredible price - \$16.50 - \$18.00 - it is what it

George Martin
65 North Park Avenue
Rockville Centre
678 - 7272

Serving dinner:
Monday-Thursday from 5-11 p.m.;
Friday-Saturday from 5-midnight
and Sunday from 5-10 p.m.

is: a simply grilled fish with a baked or mashed potato, or basmati rice, or fresh vegetable and choice of salad. Choose from a Hawaiian Mahi Mahi, Tuna, West Coast Halibut, Atlantic Salmon, Montauk swordfish in two grilled choices - either with sea salt and herbs or Cajun seasoned. This is their interpretation of healthy, alternative fare appropriately timed for summer. Pair this with an exotic appetizer and you have a perfectly luscious meal that is light, yet satisfying.

Along with their sister restaurant bearing the same name in South Hampton, opened last year, they own and operate Nick di Angelos, a family style Italian restaurant on Sunrise Highway and Max's Grill and Tavern, also in Rockville Centre, which serves their interpretation of comfort food, like all time favorites such as meatloaf and chicken pot pies.

The owner has a theory: never to close. All the restaurants are open seven days a week with a dedicated staff who love working together and serving the customers.

Somewhere between trendy and familiar, George Martins is THE place to be in Rockville Centre.

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