

Carol & Joe Davis

FINE DINING DETECTIVES

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EPICUREAN EPISODES

Marin Joe's Restaurant Great Steaks, Pasta and Late Night Dining



Paul Della Santina



Antipasto



New York Cut Steak with Tortellini Quattro Formaggi



Filet Mignon with mushrooms, red potatoes and fresh vegetables

There's something special about Marin Joe's in Corte Madera that keeps regulars coming back and new customers streaming in. The Della Santina family, originally from Lucca in Tuscany, has owned and operated the restaurant for half a century, serving great steaks, pasta and Italian specialties in a pleasing upbeat atmosphere. We last reviewed Marin Joe's about six years ago and have been back many times. This is still a great place to dine!

Paul Della Santina warmly greeted us and escorted us to a table at the end of the dining room that was surrounded by built-in wine racks. He told us about the history of Marin Joe's and how things have evolved over their 52-year history. But it's the old traditions of quality, consistency and service that keep Marin Joe's going strong. As the founder, Paul's uncle Adolph Della Santina, said: "Just put good food on the plate".

The restaurant has three rooms for dining. The main room has both booths and counter seating where you can watch the cooks in action. Marin Joe's was one of the first restaurants to feature this type of "Exhibition Kitchen". The Bar area is always fun to dine in as there is a piano player on some nights.

We started out by ordering some Appetizers. The Antipasto was a generous serving of thinly sliced prociutto and marinated vegetables including delicious marinated yellow, red, orange, and green bell peppers. The Smoked Trout & Peperonata Appetizer was also excellent. We also tried the traditional Minestrone Soup, which had a rich consistency, with plenty of vegetables and a little pasta. The soup is delicious, but it's best to only have a cup so you can enjoy your entrée and save

room for dessert.

Each entrée allows you to choose from several side dishes -- pastas, potatoes and vegetables. We suggest that you definitely have pasta. The pastas are all freshly prepared and include Maccheroni, Fettuccine, Ravioli, Panzotti, Tortellini, Gnocchi, Linguini, Rigatoni, Penne, Capellini, and Spaghetti. The sauces include Meat Sauce, Napoletana, Pomarola, Pesto Sauce Cream Sauce, Quattro Formaggi, and Bordelaise Sauce.

There are entrées for everyone on the regular and specials menus. We loved the New York Cut Steak cooked on the Mesquite Broiler. It was prepared perfectly, crisp on the outside, pink on the inside -- and a large 15-ounce portion to boot. A better Steak would be hard to find. It was one of the best we've eaten in a long time. We had a side of Tortellini Quattro Formaggi that may have been the surprise hit of the evening. It was incredible. The Filet Mignon was also terrific. It was also a huge portion weighing in at 15 ounces. We ordered it rare and topped with mushrooms. We opted for the red potatoes and fresh vegetables as our sides. The vegetables were so tasty that if your mother told you to eat your vegetables you'd be happy to do it. We also loved the Roast Veal, which is a weekend special.

Just when we thought that we couldn't eat another bite, the dessert menu was presented. You must try the Tiramisu. It is not your standard presentation. It was ladyfingers dipped in Grand Marnier and espresso covered with Mascarpone cheese and chocolate. It was definitely better than your average tiramisu and well worth saving room for. If that wasn't decadent enough, try the Zabaglione -- the yolk of an egg, sugar, lemon juice, Sherry,

and Marsala wine whipped to a creamy froth.

Wines are always an important part of any meal. Paul told us that half bottles have become very popular for diners who want more than one glass but not a full bottle. We, however, enjoyed a full bottle of the 2002 Gennaio Sangiovese from the Dry Creek Valley Region in Healdsburg. It paired perfectly with the Steaks.

Marin Joe's has stood the test of time. Paul Della Santina continues the tradition of being a gracious host. The lively waiters who have been there for many years add to the charm. The traditional classic Italian cuisine, great steaks, friendly atmosphere, and late night dining keep customers coming back for more. We'll certainly be back again soon!

Post Notes:

Marin Joe's Restaurant
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Phone
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www.marinjoesrestaurant.com

Hours Monday- Friday
Lunch Menu

11:00 AM-3:00 PM

Dinner Menu

3:00 PM - 12:30 AM

Saturday Dinner Only

5 PM-12:30 AM

Sunday Dinner Only

4 PM-11:30PM

Reservations for 8 or

more only

Free Valet Parking

Full Cocktail Lounge

Piano Bar

Open Singing

Sunday Night

Banquet Facilities for 45