

EPICUREAN EPISODES

Jellyfish Grille Fresh and Flavorful Fare At The Sheraton Petaluma



Pan Seared Sonoma Valley Duck Breast

The Dining Detectives decided to try the Jellyfish Grille at The Sheraton Petaluma. Dining overlooking the marina and protected wetlands is a good start, then enter Executive Chef Wayne Van Akin with a new menu and prices which are very "local friendly" creating a winning combination. His cuisine has a Hawaiian influence with fantastic presentation. It was Saturday night and the Jellyfish Grille was packed!

The Jellyfish Grille and Jellyfish Lounge are in the rear of the hotel lobby overlooking the pool. The décor has an Asian influence enhanced by a water feature in the form of a metal wall sculpture of two Jellyfish. Bamboo accents,

blonde wood chairs and bamboo tables all lend to a comfortable but crisp atmosphere. We were warmly greeted by



Jay Jones, Assistant Restaurant Manager and Octavio Diaz, Food and Beverage Manager and escorted to our table by the window. Brad, our knowledgeable, personable and professional waiter, was soon at our table with menus and took our drink orders. We ordered Long Island Ice Teas



Hog Island Kumomoto Oysters

and some Wines by the Glass to get started. We appreciated that the noise level was low so we could talk and enjoy our dinner.

There is a varied list of Appetizers and small plates to begin your meal.

We started out with Hog Island Kumomoto Oysters topped with Wasabi Tobiko



Seared Flank Steak

and a cucumber mignonette. We loved the Caviar topping and the freshness of these oysters. They are a great way to start your meal and a good indicator of what was to come. Another favorite was the Liberty Duck and Petaluma Mushroom Spring Rolls that are seasoned with honey, soy and come with sweet chile dipping sauce. We also enjoyed the Seared Flank Steak Poke with Crispy Corn basket, fresh Ogo and Wasabi Aioli. The overall favorite was the Wild Rice and Fresh Corn Rosti with watercress and Jicama Slaw and roasted Tomatillo Coulis. This was truly a special appetizer that you must try as it wowed us. All of the starters were quickly consumed and were excellent. The Soup of the day was Cream of Spinach which was rich yet subtle and definitely worth trying.

The Main Courses had

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California Halibut served with Sesame Whipped Sweet Potato, Napa Cabbage and soy with fresh ginger. Steaming the fish made it very tender and it truly melted in your mouth. The Sesame Whipped Sweet potatoes looked as good as they tasted. Another favorite with its Hawaiian influence was the Sesame Crusted Ahi with Ginger Butter, Jasmine Rice and Exotic Fruit Relish. This was excellent and was extremely fresh and tasty. The Pan Seared Sonoma Valley Duck Breast with candied orange and port wine reduction, fresh watercress and Jasmine Rice Timbale was prepared slightly pink which

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and Meat dishes and are reasonably priced. Our favorite was the Steamed Northern

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Jellyfish Grille

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was perfect. The Apple Wood Smoked Spring Lamb Chops with Watermelon BBQ sauce, warm potato and green apple salad, fresh mint and English peas was a hearty meal perfect for the meat eaters.

Jellyfish Grille has a small yet focused Wine List. Sonoma and Napa Valley wines are featured. Both Wines by the Glass and full bottles will please even the pickiest of wine drinkers. White wine enthusiasts will love the 2000 Kistler Les Noisetiers Sonoma County Chardonnay and those with a red nose will adore the Kosta Brown, Cohn Vineyards Russian River Pinot Noir. For the more modest budgets try the 2001 Chateau Souverain, Alexander Valley Sauvignon Blanc which pairs well with the fish dishes or the 2001 Simi, Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon with the lamb or pork dishes.

Pastry Chef Scott Giblin creates the Dessert Menu daily. Again there was something for everyone and all that we tried were delicious and moderately priced. The overall favorites were the Warm, Molten Chocolate Flourless Torte with peanut sauce and Crème Anglaise and the Peach Crisp with Cinnamon, pecan and brown sugar crumble topped with house-made vanilla ice cream. Our Dining Assistants also appreciated the Meyer Lemon Crème Brulee, which comes with a chocolate dipped Biscotti candied lemon zest. Try a Dessert Wine or Port like W & J Grahams 1980 Vintage Port or the Andrew Rich, Les Vigneaux Gewurztraminer.

We had an excellent din-

ner at the Jellyfish Grille. The atmosphere was pleasant, the service was friendly and the meal was well paced. Executive Chef Wayne Van Akins's new menu brings Jellyfish Grille to a higher level. The presentation was lovely and the cuisine's tastes were just as pleasing. His Hawaiian influenced menu prepared with the freshest Sonoma County produce, meats, fish and dairy make Jellyfish an excellent dining destination.

Carol & Joe Davis

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