

# EPICUREAN EPISODES

## LATITUDE

### Fine Dining in Rohnert Park

There's a new upbeat feeling in Rohnert Park with the addition of fine dining at Latitude! Latitude towers over the local landscape with giant tropical palm trees overlooking Roberts Lake and the Sonoma Hills. It is in the former Wine & Visitors Center Building that has been totally renovated in a South Seas tropical atmosphere. The giant palm trees greet you as you arrive and Roberts Lake provides wonderful ambiance with the lake view from the bar, café and the plantation style dining room. The décor is stunning and we found the



cascading water on the wall behind the bar very inviting and relaxing. Outdoor dining will be fantastic with fire pits and entertainment.

We began our Latitude experience with a drink at the bar. We had a lively discussion



Chocolate "Lava" Torte

with Frank the Bartender, a man who stands behind his Vodka selections, who was thrilled with the early local response to Latitude. He told us that they have a full bar and also feature exotic tropical signature cocktails like the Latitude Lemon Drop which is made with Skyy Citrus, fresh squeezed lemon, a splash of Chambord, served with a



Pan Seared Beef tenderloin

sugar rim. For those who want a cocktail without the alcohol try a virgin Margarita.

Managing Partner, Dave Keegan stopped by and told us how proud he was of his newest dining establishment. He was very happy to attract Executive Chef Christophe Vessaire who hails from the Loire Valley in France and has achieved accolades including First Prize in the National Chef de Cuisine Competition in France and the Ivy Award of Distinction (Washington, DC.) His New American Cuisine is perfect for Latitude complimenting the tropical setting, cascading waterfall bar, sunburst glass ceiling and sophisticated tropical dining

room.

We were escorted to our table in the main dining room and soon cordially greeted by Jason, our waiter. Delicious bread from the Artesian Bakery, bottles of Sparkling San Pellegrino and Still Fiji Water were brought to us and we were about to see what Latitude had to offer. The tropical setting made us feel like we

were on vacation.

The most impressive of the Starters was the Goat Cheese Fritters with "Andate" Goat Cheese, Phyllo, Watercress and Pistachio Dressing. The presentation and flavors were superior, so we knew this was just the beginning of a Fine Dining experience. Next we tried the Crispy Monterey Calamari that was quite tender, as they cut their own on site and add a spicy Chipotle Dipping Sauce on the side. The Duck Spring Rolls with Honey Plum Sauce and Herb Salad had a lovely presentation but was our third choice. Since each of our Starters included greens we didn't feel the need for a salad, however The Caesar Salad looked good as it arrived at the adjacent table. It was soon devoured, so we must ascertain that it was worth trying. Soup was our next course and we loved the Butternut Squash Soup with Roasted Bosc Pear and Walnut Oil Vinaigrette.

The Entrees that we tried were all very tasty. We particularly enjoyed the

Pan Seared Beef Tenderloin served with roasted root vegetables, Yukon potatoes and red wine reduction. It had it all from lovely presentation to right sized portion to premium meat flavors. We also enjoyed the Sonoma Liberty Duck, a Pan Seared Breast accompanied by Israeli Couscous and Persimmon Com-

## Carol & Joe Davis

### FINE DINING DETECTIVES

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pote. We loved the Couscous a dish that is not easy to find on menus in the area. The Ahi Tuna Steak Seared on Baby Bokchoy with a soy-ginger sauce and rice stick was our favorite Entrée overall. The Ahi was fresh, prepared rare as we like it and was presented pleasingly with the flair of the added Rice Stick.

The Wine List features a nice selection of local Sonoma and Napa Wines. We enjoyed the 2002 Kunde, Kenwood, Sonoma Valley Sauvignon Blanc It paired well with the Ahi. The 2000 Cloverdale Ranch, Alexander Valley Cabernet paired well with the Filet Mignon and Duck.

Save room for dessert! The Dessert Menu is small yet focused. If you love Chocolate ... you must have The Chocolate "Lava" Torte served HOT with Vanilla Ice Cream. Melted Chocolate is a direct hit to your senses. It was simply fabulous. For those looking for something a bit lighter, try the House Made Sorbets and Ice Creams. We loved the Mango and Pineapple Sorbet. It was so refreshing. Crème Brule fans won't be disappointed since this rendition was very very Vanilla. It's always good to have a little something with dessert. We loved our Espressos. They also have a great selection of after dinner drinks. Latitude has



Sonoma Liberty Duck

Single Malt Scotch, Brandy, Cognac and Port including flights of Port or Dessert Wines featuring three 1.5 oz. pours. The Lava Torte goes well with the Port Flight. It includes Smith Woodhouse 1990 Late Bottled Vintage Estate from Portugal, Guenoc 1999 Petite Sirah Port, Gue-

noc Valley and Fonseca Bin # 27 Portugal. This is a great way to top off your meal.

Latitude brings fine dining to Rohnert Park in a very lovely tropical setting. Executive Chef Vessaire fits right in to The Sonoma Fine Dining scene with his New American Cuisine theme offering something for everyone with lovely presentation and perfectly sized portions. The bar has a warm and friendly feeling and is calming with the pleasant water wall. Dinner, Lunch or Brunch will make both locals and the most discerning out of town diners happy. We



Frank the Bartender

can't wait to return on a sunny spring day and experience the outdoor seating overlooking the lake.

#### Post Notes:

Latitude  
5000 Roberts Lake Rd.  
Rohnert Park, Ca. 94928  
707-588-1800  
LatitudeGrill.com

Lunch:  
Monday - Sunday  
11:15 AM - 2:00 PM

Dinner:  
Sunday- Thursday  
4:30 PM- 9:00 PM  
Friday and Saturday  
4:30 PM -9:30 PM

Sunday Brunch Buffet:  
10:00 AM- 2:00 PM

Café and Bar Menu:  
11:15 AM- Closing  
Reservations Accepted  
Major Credit Cards

Free Parking  
Patio Dining  
Private Parties/ Banquets in the  
Cabana & Red Rooms