

Lori's Picks

The Mine

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Wandering in from the pine bough and sparkling lit holiday themed streets of Saratoga Springs, I made the trek downstairs to the aptly named cavernous space containing The Mine restaurant. Musical notes drifted across the candlelit rooms, spreading cheer as they bounced from the hanging Christmas ornaments. My fellow diners sat enjoying delicious martini flights at the bar, while waiting for the chef's spice-enhanced scrumptious creations.

My table started with a golden platter of tapas style appetizers. Ajillo mushrooms donned thinly sliced pieces of a French baguette. A mixture of sherry, garlic, lemon, and parmesan accompanied the earthy flavors of the mushrooms. Asian inspired sausage wontons were the next item on the food-laden platter. The crispy texture of the wonton embraced the inner layers of mozzarella, sausage, and an eclectic mixture of spices, which left a flame burning on the tip of our tongues! The dipping sauce offered a cooling relief with an equally powerful punch of flavor. Appetizers finished with piquant sautéed chicken skewers. A decadent peanut sauce served as both dipping sauce and garnish. Flakes of red chili peppers decorated the perfectly sautéed chicken: the result was my companions' comical routine of alternating between dousing the chicken in the spicy (and equally delicious) peanut sauce and large gulps of water to cool-off their burning palates.

With cocktails refilled, my companions and I excitedly awaited the delivery of the main courses; and to our complete

satisfaction, three fantastic meals were promptly delivered. The white hot lasagna was a spicy take on the usually mild Italian classic. Between each layer of al dente cooked pasta were Italian sausage tidbits: just enough to excite the taste buds, but not enough heat to overwhelm your senses. The sherry cream chicken used the aroma and taste of Rosemary to create a fresh dining experience. The plate's plentiful serving of penne pasta made it a viable vegetarian option (which you know makes this meat-reducer very happy). The main course finished with a vegetarian risotto served with a side of steamed broccoli and carrots. If a person can become addicted to food, then check me into rehab because during my meal at The Mine I became addicted to the chef's

risotto. Made with mushrooms, lemon and leeks, the risotto was one of the best I have had in a very long time!

As our late night dining came to a close, we rounded out a wonderful meal with three very different desserts: a homemade cheesecake that melted in your mouth, a delightfully chewy dark chocolate brownie, and (my favorite) a deconstructed apple pie, made with an entire apple, cinnamon, and caramel all contained within a puff pastry! After sampling a vast array of appetizers, entrees and desserts, my companions and I were stuffed to the gills. All that was left to do was finish The Mine's specialty flight of martinis and call it a night. Emerging from downtown Saratoga Springs' underground restaurant to the brightly lit streets above, I came to realize that owner Catherine Harris' addition of a delicious food menu has helped The Mine to emerge as a great new up-and-coming dining experience for all who enter its doors!

~L. Parker~

