

A Beautiful Taste of Maine

By *Michael Neely*

Robert's Maine Grill opened in June of this year after several challenges during construction. Owner Michael Landgarten did a fantastic job with his team of designers. The theme of the restaurant is consistent and complete.

Upon entering I was greeted quickly by the host. I sat initially at the bar and had a nice Allagash White, locally produced, and looked over their beer selection. I liked the way the bar was laid out. It was well designed and well maintained.

There were clean lines and smart white tiles. The bar was organized and flanked by a row of brushed aluminum stools. From the wall color to the signage overhead, every touch conveyed the feel of a clean, chic, seafood market in Maine.

In the dining room the tabletops were rustic style and thick, with butcher paper to catch the juice from messy shells. Another creative touch to the beach inspired theme was that silverware, napkins, and bread plates were delivered in a galvanized bucket.

Our server Meghan was spot-on, friendly, and reliable. While perusing the menu we snacked on a variety of crackers with an artichoke spread and honey butter. The menu was extensive and is supplemented by a special's menu. There were raw bar options, appetizers, sandwiches, lobsters, crabs, fish,

pastas, meatloaf, and sausage. They even had several vegetarian options and a children's menu. But I was in the mood for seafood.

I started with some yummy jumbo peel-and-eat shrimp that were actually jumbo and only \$1.50 a piece. They were nicely cooked and served with the traditional cocktail sauce and lemon wedge. My fiancée had the Fall Salad (\$9.95) with slightly over-dressed mixed greens, goat cheese, candied walnut, and dried cranberries. We chose a pinot noir from Echelon California (\$9.50/glass) to accompany the meal. It was delicious.

For dinner we enjoyed the Baked Seafood Combo (\$16) that included haddock, scallops, and shrimp. Served on the side were some sautéed garlic, onions, and squash and oven roasted potatoes. We also had a beautifully grilled piece of Atlantic Salmon (\$17) dressed with artichoke hearts and fresh tomato with the same sides. For dessert, Robert's offers Blueberry Cobbler (\$6), Chocolate Mousse Cake (\$6), Key Lime Pie (\$6), and a Ben & Jerry's sundae (\$5). Be sure to save room. And be sure to stop by on your way to shopping or up to camp for a true taste of Maine.

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Michael Neely is an acclaimed Portsmouth Chef who is now available for private catering and cooking classes. Visit
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