

Joe's Restaurant

By JAN MARLYN REESMAN



As I settled into my chair at Joe's Restaurant in Venice, I couldn't help but notice that it instantly felt as comfortable as slipping into a favorite cashmere sweater. The popular restaurant draws a mix of Venice bohemians, tourists and Joe's loyalists, many who drive all the way across town for a taste of the California-French cuisine.

Chef-owner Joe Miller's restaurant is stylish and cozy. Warm, earthy tones and modern paintings offer a laid-

back, yet casually elegant ambience. You can come dressed up or dressed down. After all, this is Venice, California.

The oak wood used for the floor and other details was taken from an old barn from the East Coast, providing a slightly worn look and enhancing the softness of the room. Splashes of deep pumpkin and maroon accent walls throughout the restaurant, while modern, Shaker-inspired chandeliers illuminate the room with a golden glow. The effect is utterly charming, adding to the relaxed atmosphere of this beloved Venice restaurant.

Outside, Joe's offers additional seating in an intimate outdoor patio, which is painted warm mocha and trimmed with same oak found in the interior. On one of the walls, a new stone waterfall creates a calming, comforting whisper as you dine.

The service was attentive and gracious. We were immediately offered either sparkling or flat water that was filtered at Joe's. We chose one of each

and asked our server to pare the wines with our entrées. It proved to be a good choice.

For an appetizer you might try the beet risotto, Hawaiian yellowtail with cucumber gelée, seared scallops on fava beans with rhubarb and onion purée, or the terrine of goat cheese and yellow beets.

Joe's entrées include the Little Gem Salad with artichokes and English peas, basil gelee, baked cherry tomatoes, serrano crisp and an artichoke vinaigrette; the grilled house-made duck sausage with salad of sea beans, daikon, peaches, ginger gastrique and black pepper tarragon sorbet; and last but definitely not least, the tuna tartar and smoked salmon with sliced cucumbers, diced tomatoes and lemon oil.

For dessert we had apricot tarts and strawberry-pistachio parfait with eucalyptus foam.

Our waiter was extremely knowledgeable and friendly. The food is slightly pricey, but not exorbitant.

From the meal to the décor, everything was fabulous, including the outside patio with the trickling water wall.



Joe's is a perfect place for a romantic dinner.

- Dining Style: Casual Dining
- Cuisine: California-French
- Neighborhood: Venice
- Price: \$11 to \$30
- www.joesrestaurant.com
- Phone: (310) 399-5811