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Hot Dish Review

“Livingston Debuts New Menu!”

By: Serina Patrick

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Zebulon and Jeremiah....almost sounds biblical, right? Well, they're not exactly choir boys at the Baptist church, these dudes cook up one of the meanest menus in town at [Livingston](#).

Following Gary Mennie's recent departure, his sous chef Zeb Stevenson was promoted to Executive Chef. B and I are big fans of Zeb so we were excited to hear the news! With Fall upon us, we were invited to a media dinner where he debuted his new menu featuring the seasons best vegetables and fruits like Brussels sprouts and apples from Ellijay. Jeremiah, by the way, is the new sous.

Is it fair to do a review based upon one dinner, and a complimentary one at that? Sure, what the hell. Zeb served the table of a dozen or so food writers a selection of appetizers and salads, family style, so we all had the opportunity to sample a bit of everything.



Well-known foodie, writer, and television personality Carolyn O'Neil was among the guests and quipped about the blurry black and white photomural behind the adjacent booth. (Yes, it was intentionally blurry!) Later, one of the diners at my table remarked that Kwanza Hall was seated there. Me?

Namedropping? Never.

The space is very dramatic in a rich, luxurious way, fitting for the renovated Georgian Terrace Hotel where it is located.

Our server, Wyatt, started us off with a little bubbly, then brought out an amuse bouche of tuna crudo topped with pistachio and candied mustard paired with a sliver of yellow beet with a champagne-vanilla vinaigrette.....an interesting nibble. The bread service was excellent, with an assortment of breads including the crispy sourdough roll I devoured, slathered in softened sweet cream butter.

An array of appetizers began to arrive....salads, crab cakes, bratwurst. Zeb came by to talk about the dishes. He pointed out that the crab cakes were more crab than cake. They were served on waffle potato chips and gone in a flash! I tried a taste of the sauvignon blanc that was pouring as well as a full glass of the red....can't remember what varietal but I do know it was a 2008. CO's friend M had inquired.



A simple spinach salad was dressed up with a smoky and sweet cippolini and candied bacon vinaigrette and topped with chunks of gorgonzola. Don't let anyone tell you bacon is out of fashion, honey. Even better, however, was the smoked trout and apple salad. Like the Waldorf salad's stylish cousin, this dish was a favorite of the table. I scraped the last bit out of the bowl to eat along with a slice of chicken bratwurst. Zeb makes the bratwurst in-house and serves it on a bed of shredded Brussels sprouts. Very German flavors, I was lovin' it.

Then came my bodacious lobster. I probably should have prefaced that with the statement that our table was given the full menu of entrees, eleven in all, from which to choose. (Then back to family style for dessert.)

Back to the butter poached lobster. Once again Zeb was there to explain the intricacies of poaching a lobster in butter and water....a precise science and well worth the effort. It was supposed to be served with chive gnocchi and garlic broth. When Wyatt detected my lukewarm attitude towards the potato dumplings, he suggested a substitution (gasp!) of the truffle mac 'n' cheese. Yessir!

I was hoping the mac would be baked, served in its own little ramekin but it was beneath the lobster instead. Can't complain about creamy, truffley goodness and buttery tender lobster.

After much debate B decided upon the grilled skirt steak with hand cut fries and smoked hollandaise. She commented that the tender steak really flipped her skirt and we all laughed. Zeb's hollandaise was made with cold-smoked butter. Mad scientist! Rather than being heavy and rich, the sauce was lightly whipped. I found myself dipping bites of lobster in it, as well as stealing her skin-on fries.



Across from me KL had the juicy filet mignon with creamed spinach, and M had the lamb chop. I tasted his spaetzle, forgetting that it was flavored

with mint. Although herbaciously green, I didn't detect mint specifically. Creative side. Four or five of us ordered the lobster. I would have had a hard time choosing between the two smoked meats, duck and pork, had I not been enthralled by the lobster.

Each week Livingston hosts Millionaire Mondays, offering a three course dinner with a choice of lobster or filet mignon for only \$16. And there is a nightly theatre menu with four entree selections, that includes a glass of wine, for just \$29.

A platter of flourless chocolate tart, a chocolate mousse, and espresso ice cream was presented, complimented by another glass of red wine. Beignets with coconut dipping sauce were crispy and irresistible.

We bid our acquaintances farewell and made our way to the bar, having a chat and a smoke with the two chefs, across from the fabulous Fox Theatre, it's grandeur and history intertwined in Atlanta's story. And I thought how grand it was all of us making new history here. Makin' it happen.



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