

Culinary Confessions: George Martin's Grillfire Restaurant

By Father Leo Patalinghug

Growth in Hanover is a hot topic these days, affecting nearby St. Lawrence the Martyr Parish (named after a patron saint of chefs who was grilled alive). Part of that growth includes a chic hotel, The Hotel at Arundel Preserve, with a ground-floor signature restaurant offering comforting cuisine from George Martin's Grillfire Restaurant.

Ambiance: The restaurant features easy access, free garage parking and a lengthy, beautiful and functional two-sided gas fireplace near the entrance. Earth-toned, modern decor, high ceilings, dimmed lighting and comfortable furniture gives an autumnal calm - as if eating in a modern, upscale chalet. 4.5 out of 5 halos

Service: There's a friendly, but tight reception area. My server (perhaps having a bad day) was inconsistent - not unfriendly, but seemingly unmotivated. Thankfully, other servers and food runners were nearby to give patrons some attention. 2 out of 5 halos

Menu: George Martin's offers an impressive combination of family-friendly and familiar options, with fusion flavors available for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Selections are homey yet given some pizzazz. Specials offer multi-course deals (steals) for about \$20. 4 out of 5 halos

Beverage selections: Specialty cocktails and ample wine list, all moderately priced, make this place popular for happy hour. 4 out of 5 halos

Food: There are some promising menu items - a variety of salads, multiple appetizers and special fish tacos. Entrees include horseradish, cheddar and bacon-crusted meatloaf. The crab, bacon and brie-crusted filets were tasty. Other plates were bland and inconsistent. Overall, balanced with reasonable pricing and a whimsical complimentary cotton candy, there was more contentment than complaint. 3 out of 5 halos

The growth of an area brings many concerns, but we cannot discount the blessings as well, including more food opportunities. Possibly through the intercession of St. Lawrence, the Hanover area now has another "grill fire" to celebrate. Grillfire's cuisine brings comfort to travelers and to area locals - pilgrims in life, called to build up the Kingdom of God.

For more information, visit gracebeforemeals.com



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