

Yachtsman Steakhouse From a Vegetarian's Point of View: A Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, *PassPorter Featured Columnist*

As a vegetarian, there's one word that strikes terror into me when it comes to dining out and that's "steakhouse." It instantly says to me that there will be nothing on the menu for me as a non-meat eater, and that I'll be confronted by information about the steaks and perhaps where they came from, and that's something I can't deal with.

That's the reason I put off visiting the Yachtsman Steakhouse at Walt Disney World's Yacht Club Resort for so many years. I had read in books about the refrigerated display that's there just as you walk in, and there was no way I wanted to see it, so it was with great trepidation that I first entered the restaurant, keeping my eyes firmly to the right, making sure that I avoided that sight.

Once past that, my fear subsided somewhat and I was able to take in the surroundings. It's a restaurant that uses mahogany wood to provide a subdued and romantic atmosphere and, looking at it, I couldn't help but think that it would fit in more with the rich theming of the Wilderness Lodge, rather than the brightness of the Yacht Club. It really is like stepping into a totally different atmosphere, but it's also refreshing to do that.

While dining here, we were on the Deluxe Dining Plan, so we were able to sample all three courses from the expansive menu in front of us. It was hard to know what to go for, but we had some excellent help from our server Susan, who knew the menu back to front and gave us some great advice, which helped us to decide what we wanted.

To be honest, deciding on the appetizers for me wasn't a problem, as I had already had a very good recommendation from a friend, who had told me not to miss the seared Maine diver scallops with Diamond white cheddar risotto and aged sherry vinaigrette. My friend was right and we shared those, savoring every wonderful mouthful. We also shared my husband's chilled seafood salad, and this wasn't just any seafood salad, it was packed with lobster, shrimp, and jumbo crab, and turned out to be a superb palate cleanser after the scallops.

The main course was perhaps where there was less choice, understandably, if you weren't a meat eater. There was only the vegetarian risotto or the salmon, which usually came with bacon. Susan

immediately reassured me that it could be made without bacon, and it would still come with the Brentwood corn, fingerling potatoes, corn nectar, and crushed avocado. I decided to swap out my potatoes for creamed spinach and again, that was no problem. It's a signature of Disney dining that they'll handle any changes you want -- within reason of course -- with no fuss.

Because we were on the Deluxe Dining Plan, my husband went for an option that there is no way that we'd pay out of pocket for - the Australian Wagyu. If you haven't heard of this before, then you're not alone, as it was a new concept to us as well, but our server informed us that it was pretty much on a par with Kobe beef, which we had heard of, as one of the best steaks in the world. It was a 10oz strip loin, served with truffle mashed potatoes and Cabernet reduction. Of course, there's a price to pay for that and, in this case, it would have been \$54. Yes, you did read that right, but as I say, when you're covered by the Deluxe dining plan, it allows you to experiment and try the most expensive choices on the menu!

I don't think either of us had any issues with our main courses, although it was very difficult for anything to compare to the wonderful scallops that we had started with.

We still had dessert to enjoy and, once again, we were able to pick one of the more expensive options, although here, it was me with the expensive tastes. The Artisanal Cheese Platter comes with four cheeses that I'd never heard of before and I like to think of myself as something of a cheese connoisseur. The samples were the Rogue River Blue, Zamorano, Boucherondin, and Saint Andre. These came with fruit, although I did feel that the fruit detracted from the flavors of the cheeses themselves.

For my husband, the antique apple tart with caramel gelato was a definite winner. He described it as the best he'd ever tasted.

The Yachtsman Steakhouse certainly lived up to its billing as a fine dining experience, although it comes without some of the frills that you find at some of the other signature restaurants on Disney property. It certainly doesn't have the stunning views of the California Grill, the superb decor of the Flying Fish Cafe, or even the unusual food that Jiko boasts, but regardless of that, what it does do is serve up first class food that you can't fault, in a charming and intimate setting. We found it remarkably quiet in the Yachtsman Steakhouse, despite the fact that there were a number of families in there. Somehow it didn't seem to echo like some of the other restaurants at Disney do.

So would we return to the Yachtsman Steakhouse? Most definitely, yes, and I never thought I would say that! As a result of our experience here, I'm starting to get over my fear of the word "steakhouse," and we're already planning a return trip here -- perhaps even for this year's Christmas Day dinner. It was that special!

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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