

Rustic Canyon Wine Bar | No Reinvention Required



Went to Rustic Canyon Wine Bar to try their new exec chef Evan Funke's farmers market fare and was beyond satisfied. Here's a gem that defies the economic slump by continuing to deliver well beyond what's expected.

We like to share dishes and get wines by the glass. The Qupe Viogner/Chardonnay was oakey and lactic, and we liked the house prosecco (great in their "cocktails"). The olives are tasty, in a small dish with herbs and zest over a nice oil. Get for some bread for sopping that up.

Notable dishes:

- Burrata Panzanella: a generous glop of the most delicious early mozzarella, over a bed of xltnt heirloom tomatoes, grilled croutons and pickled "ramps" (tiny streamside wild onion shoots). Whatever you do get this salad.

- Sweet Pea Ravioli: 3 tasty little morsels served with bacon (pancella) bits that are really really really good. That's a "really" for each one.

- Market Vegetable 'Shepherds Pie': loved this dish without reserve owing to a wonderful medley or roasted roots (turnip, carrot, rutabaga, whatever) topped with a buttery sweet potato puree and toasted breadcrumbs. Just add another prosecco.

Putting it all over the top was a simple scoop of homemade chocolate hazelnut ice cream with a little fresh cinnamon doughnut. Need we say more.

I like Donan Whelan who makes the rounds and talks shop. It's not often The HEAD finds new foods (this one was "ramps") served by brother of the owner Gabriel Loeb who's the nice sort of guy you hope your daughter will grow up to bring home to passover.