

Rustic Canyon Flair

California Casual With Fresh Market Flair

By CAROLE JABLON

Appealing to Santa Monica's passion for Farmer's Market cuisine and the growing popularity of wine bars across L.A., Rustic Canyon Wine Bar and Seasonal Kitchen is a warm, inviting, grownup destination to sample outstanding boutique wines from around the world, alongside savory Farmer's Market inspired meals.

Josh Loeb, who grew up in the country-fide community of Rustic Canyon (Santa Monica), is the owner and former Wine Director for Capo and Broadway Deli. His lifelong dream to open his own restaurant/wine bar came true when he partnered up with executive Chef Samir Mohajer (formerly of The Little Door and Axe) which resulted in a regularly changing seasonal menu which utilizes select ingredients supplied by local providers who practice sustainable agriculture.

This farm-freshness shines in appetizers like the Wild Snapper Ceviche that boasts a lime enhanced tartness that is more clean than spicy. The Mixed Moroccan Salad Plate

comes with an assortment of samplings indigenous to the Mediterranean, and the warm, homemade flatbread is the perfect accessory. We couldn't resist (upon high recommendation) the Sliced Filet Mignon appetizer that came thinly sliced, perfectly cooked, and complimented with a mouth watering horseradish crème. Although there are ample selections of meat, chops and poultry, we opted for fresh fish with a Pan Roasted Halibut topped with apple smoked bacon, toasted almonds and a warm sherry vinaigrette, plus the Seared Ahi Tuna with fresh salsa verde over green beans and mashed potatoes. There's also a killer 'Cast Iron' Burger and Yam Wedges with sweet and spicy harissa (like hummus) that everyone around us seemed to be ordering. But

don't dare leave without sampling the Rocky Road Bread Pudding with homemade marshmallow cream and candied macadamia nuts, a regular on the menu and must experience for devote chocolate lovers. The teas and coffees are all Fair Trade and organic.

All dishes are prepared with sharing in mind to encourage a family-style dining experience. The rustic modern aesthetic of the interior (approx: 900 sq.ft.) is accented by 3-ft. long alder wood community tables that encourage a collective dining experience, as well as some booths and built in window seating. Consistent with their environmentally conscious philosophy, sustainable design elements also include bamboo flooring and non-toxic muted paints. Crave fresh, creative cooking? Come to Rustic Canyon.

RUSTIC CANYON

WHERE

1119 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica
(310) 393-7050 *Reservations recommended*

DINNER HOURS

Sunday - Thursday 5:30-10:30
Friday - Saturday 5:30-11:30

LUNCH HOURS

Monday - Friday 11:30-2:30

PRICES

Appetizers \$6-\$12; Entrees \$16-\$30;
Desserts \$8