

October 16, 2009 - EATING Out by Fay Jacobs

Happily, MIXX Joins the Mix

There's something new added to the restaurant mix in town and it's called MIXX.

With a very cool concept--small plates, large martinis and an adventurous kitchen--MIXX has taken over the cozy spot formerly housing Dish! Restaurant.

In its opening week, MIXX hit the ground running with the restaurants owners Ginger Brenneman (of the original, but not latest incarnation of Dish!) and Pete Borsari (of Frogg Pond fame) welcoming friends, family, visitors and the curious.

The result dazzled. At one point, on their opening night, the owners, servers and kitchen staff received an ovation from the crowd.

MIXX specialties include flights of martinis (flights! Three small ones from their gigantic and ultra colorful martini menu) featuring both traditional and imaginative ingredients like fresh fruit purees, exotic liquors, and jolts of Red Bull or X-Rated Fusion Vodka. I sampled and sampled and sampled and let somebody else drive me home.

The food at MIXX features a choice of small or large plates, either tapas or entrée size. Standout small plates include the Shrimp Lollipops (coconut coated jalapeno shrimp tempura with red pepper coulis. Sort of a very sophisticated corn dog!), an Eggplant Tower served with goat cheese and a wickedly good diabalo sauce, and a delightful pepper-crust Beef Carpaccio with teeny baby haricot vert. Oh, and the Fried Calamari is very reminiscent of the incredible recipe that has been served in that space for a long time! Yay!

MIXX mixes ingredients and flat bread for a pizza-like Chicken Florentine that won raves from our table and those adjacent. I don't know what kind of onions they used in the MIXX Salad, but they were the most flavorful I have had in years, along with the chopped pecans, greens, grilled peaches and feta.

As for entrees, the Deviled Short Ribs were amazing. The ribs were braised in horseradish, with a cabernet balsamic reduction and served with garlic mashers and asparagus. Winner!!!! I have ordinarily passed up short ribs, but on my next MIXX visit, I'm going for them!

A rockfish entrée, encrusted with popcorn (yes!) served with old bay hollandaise was my runner-up favorite. It was cooked perfectly and proved memorable.

Now I know I'm telling you all about last week at MIXX, but here's the thing: the concept includes incredible flexibility for a local restaurant. Chef Dave Sauers promises that the menu will change weekly, with all kinds of adventurous new tapas choices and entrée selections. Right now the staff is probably huddling about the menu the next generation! But one thing that is promised is a Wednesday night MIXXED UP Burger and Half-Price (not kidding!) Martini night. I checked it out this week and

can report that the Angus Beef Burger did them proud. And the sweet potato fries were to die for although you can also get truffle fries or carrot and parsnip chips (I will try them next time) Other burgers to choose from include a Mediterranean Chicken burger, Asian Pork Burger, Southwest Turkey Burger, Black and Bleu Buffalo Burger or a Black Bean and Veggie Burgerso Burger Night is not just a patty and fries!

Wine lovers have something to rejoice at MIXX too, as their extensive wine list (flights available) will have detailed descriptions on the menu to assist you with selections. They will have pre-designed wine flights to go with their daily menu as well as allowing you flights of fancy so you can choose your own three wines by the glass for a flight. Thursday nights will be wine nights with a \$35 four-course prix fixe menu with wine pairings.

And you can MIXX it up at brunch too, with a Bloody Mary Bar, Mimosas and much more.