

Review: Comfort food shines at Nauset Beach Club



Nauset Beach Club

222 Main St. East Orleans

508-255-8547

www.nausetbeachclub.com

5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday

The Nauset Beach Club is offering a special that has 10 entrees at \$14.50 each, served as a leisurely meal in a warm and inviting dining room.

By **LAURIE HIGGINS**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER
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For our dining-out experiences this month, we've been on the hunt for really good food at really good prices. The "Italian Comfort Food" menu at the Nauset Beach Club in East Orleans offers just that. All night long Sunday through Thursday and before 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, they have a special menu with 10 entrees for \$14.50 each. Choices include lasagna, duck cacciatore, rigatoni Bolognese and mussels with sausage, garlic and tomatoes.

We're big fans of Italian food, so this was a deal we just had to check out. Since the entrees were priced so well we decided to start with appetizers. We shared a bowl of the soup of the day (\$8) and the Caesar salad (\$9). The soup was a flavorful lima bean and escarole in a tomato broth. It came in a lovely presentation with a slice of grilled focaccia bread layered across the top for dipping. The white lima beans were freshly cooked and slightly al dente. We didn't mind this at all, but overheard another diner who preferred her beans softer complaining about it.

The salad was composed of baby romaine and it looked like the leaves had been separated, with each piece dipped in the lemon-mustard vinaigrette and then arranged back together as a head. It was a pretty presentation, but overdressed for my taste. Thankfully, the dressing was light enough in flavor that it didn't overwhelm, despite the generous amount of it. The salad was topped with crispy cubes of diced bacon and two filets of white anchovies. For dinner, I chose the pan-baked cod with linguini "Livornese," which was well worth the \$3 upgrade. The cod was topped with herbs and lightly sautéed in olive oil to flaky perfection. It rested on a beautifully arranged swirl of al dente linguini that was tossed with a chunky tomato sauce with Kalamata and oil-cured olives, capers, fresh basil and sautéed onions. The sauce also had a good portion of olive oil in it, which created a silky texture that really stuck to the pasta.

My husband ordered the sweet peppers stuffed with ground beef, veal, sausage, pignoli nuts and currants. It came with two fork-tender green peppers, brimming with meat filling and topped with a thick marinara sauce. The trio of ground meats made a flavorful filling that melded well with a light touch of nuts and currants. It was a well-executed dish we plan to try at home.

To accompany our dinner, my husband sipped the Lagaria Merlot from Sicily and I tried the Tormaresca Chardonnay. The merlot was both fruity and earthy and the Italian chardonnay was crisp. At \$8 a glass, both paired well with food. The meal was very leisurely — and almost a bit too leisurely served, but it was hard to be bothered by time spent relaxing in the comfortable atmosphere at the Nauset Beach Club on a Friday night. The rich, rust-colored walls and fireplace make the back dining room a cozy space and Christmas music added a festive air. Even though we were pretty full, we decided to share a cannoli (\$7).

It was on the small side, cut in half and served with the fluted ends pointing up. The plate was gracefully drizzled with fabulous homemade chocolate and caramel sauces. The cannoli was crisp and the filling had a lovely hint of orange flavor. A cup of good coffee was the perfect finale.

It's a testament to the Nauset Beach Club's tempting menu that we went in looking for a bargain and ordered more than we planned. Our meal was so enjoyable that it's hard to feel guilty.

If you go:

5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday