

EDITOR'S REVIEW

Casablanca Winery Inn

By Shannon Mastaler

Situated on the beautiful shores of Lake Ontario in the town of Grimsby is Casablanca Winery Inn; a full service Boutique Inn featuring a top floor restaurant offering only the best in gourmet cuisine.

Thrilled to be doing a review of the Steak and Seafood Restaurant, my guest and I entered the beautiful and warmly decorated lobby of the Inn and took an elevator ride to make our way to the eighth floor.

With exceptional panoramic views of the sparkling waters of Lake Ontario, the scene couldn't have been more beautiful; it is the perfect location for a fine dining establishment.

After being welcomed and shown to our table, my guest and I were mesmerized by the view. As the sun slowly set, and dusk turned into dark, the twinkling lights of the Burlington Skyway Bridge and Toronto beyond became lit like the candles that flickered on our table.

The sounds of soft music filled the room, accompanying the scents of fresh herbs and fine cooking. Joe, our server who has been with the restaurant for three years explained that there is live music on Friday and Saturday. This, I can imagine, would be the icing on the cake to this splendid atmosphere.

My guests and I took time to browse the extensive wine list. It features affordable selections by the glass and half litre, and an impressive Vintages list where the wine connoisseur would surely be able to find something special.

As we received the menu and made our selections, I couldn't help but notice how beautiful this establishment really is. With the dark woods, fine wine bottles, open kitchen, impressive bar and candlelit tables – they have really paid attention to the details here.

After we enjoyed a drink, we ordered our Appetizers. I decided on the Scallops Nicoise; Pan seared scallops tossed in lemon and honey with black olives, diced potatoes,

red onions and tomatoes, and my guest opted for the Baked Quebec Brie; French style wheel of Phyllo wrapped brie served molten with crackers, frosted berries and melon salad.

Both appetizers arrived looking very impressive. Upon taking our first bites, we decided they tasted even better than they looked. The brie was oozing with flavour and the frozen tart berry Popsicle was a perfect compliment to the creamy cheese. My scallops were cooked to perfection and the tomatoes added a burst of freshness.

After such tasty appetizers both my guest and I eagerly awaited our main courses. As we chatted over the candlelight and took in the mesmerizing view, Chef Karl Dockstader stopped by for a visit and explained that he tries to purchase everything local and organic where he can. He told us that Casablanca has a loyal clientele, and I can believe it (I know I'll be returning).

Our main courses arrive. I ordered the Filet Mignon with Bordelaise Sauce and Lobster Tail, and my guest took Joe's recommendation of the Mushroom Rubbed Bison Tenderloin with Lobster Tail. Both arrived looking and smelling out of this world. We were speechless – with the exception of "mmm..." and "wow". We sampled one another's selections and enjoyed everything we tasted. The lobster was juicy and accompanied by drawn butter with garlic for dipping. The flavours were classic and complimenting.

This meal was certainly one fit for a king. Casablanca is a traditional Steak and Seafood House elevated to another level – the top floor to be exact! We finished our meal and were both happily stuffed. Dessert was Crème Brulee, a golden brown on top. A cup of coffee concluded our evening and we thanked our gracious hosts and made our way home. On the drive, my guest says it perfectly "Casablanca – a heavenly spot on the eighth floor."

For more information, menus and virtual tours of Casablanca Winery Inn, visit casablancawineryinn.com or call 905.309.7171 to speak with Guest Services.

