

courant.com/entertainment/dining/hc-flavalacarte0604.artjun04,0,5330588.story

Courant.com

A LA CARTE

Equinox In Mystic Serves Breakfast All Day

With Surprisingly Upscale Touches On The Menu

By MARYELLEN FILLO

Courant Staff Writer

June 4, 2009

Looking for a shoreline restaurant when you are out at the beach or on a summer ride? Head down to Mystic to the *Equinox Diner*, restaurateur Jimmy Doukas' newest eatery.

But be forewarned if you are a diner die-hard, for it may take some time for you to adjust. There are no cramped booths, grimy menus or frenetic service. What you will find is a super-long menu, with breakfast served all day, and an eclectic blend of offerings, many not usually considered diner fare. Fresh pastries, entrées including Sesame Ahi Tuna, Agnolotti ravioli, Chicken Sacapiella and Thai Chi Salad put new meaning into the words "Blue Plate Special."

"I consider us an upscale diner," said Doukas, who also owns Equinox Diner in Orange. Once planning to be a lawyer, Doukas joined the family's restaurant business on a permanent basis when his father became ill. And he never looked back.

"I have a passion for the business," Doukas said, explaining the decision to open the second site. "And when it is in your blood, you want to grow it."

With its color-drenched green, blue and yellow tiles, recessed and hanging lighting fixtures, big screen TV, espresso bar and full service bar, the Equinox looks like anything but the diner of the past.

"The reason we used diner as part of the name is because we serve breakfast all day, just like a diner does," Doukas said. "But you can also come here for a nice piece of fish, some really good beef as well as the kinds of foods you associate with a diner, like meat loaf, shepherd's pie and macaroni and cheese."

Doukas and company kick it up a notch, however, when it comes to these dishes. Shepherd's pie is made with braised short rib meat, and the macaroni and cheese is a blend of fresh Parmesan, cheddar, jack and mozzarella cheeses.

Even the breakfast offerings have upscale pizzazz. Stuffed French Toast is a combination of house-baked

The Bucks Start Here!

\$10 Block Island **\$10**

The coupon good for one dollar off purchases at these and other Block Island accommodations. Visit our website at www.blockisland.com for a complete list of participating businesses.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Dulard's Inn, The Bellevue House, Block Island Reservations (near Park properties), Hotel Marston, 1901 Inn, And Many More!


NO EXPIRE DATES
Valid one dollar per room, per night. Expires July 1, 2009. Cannot be combined with other offers. No restrictions on cash payments will be given.

Download valuable coupons.
Hotels • Restaurants • Shops • and more
In addition to already discounted Spring rates!


©2009 Block Island Tourism Council

Block Island


Challah bread stuffed with blueberry filling, coated in crushed corn flakes and topped with whipped cream, pecans and port wine syrup.

Standards for breakfast, lunch and dinner also share the menu with the more sophisticated offerings, with prices ranging from a couple of dollars to \$20-plus for full dinners including shrimp, chops and steaks. Located at 253 Greenmanville Ave., the diner is open Monday through Thursday from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m., Friday and Saturday from 6 a.m. to 3 a.m. and Sunday from 6 a.m. to midnight. Call  860-415-4625 .

Small Bites

La Trattoria, 21 Old Albany Tpke., Canton, will host its semi-annual German Night Dinner on June 11. Helmut Goetz, former chef and owner of the Edelweiss in West Hartford, will cook. Call  860-... for reservations.


The Wethersfield Farmers Market at Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main St., has opened for the season. The market is open Thursdays from 4 to 7 p.m.


The Griswold Inn, 36 Main St., Essex, will offer a fixed price \$20-a-person luncheon menu on Friday as part of the Potted Garden Tour Lecture Series at the restaurant that day. The lecture is free and begins at 11:30 a.m., followed by lunch. The regular luncheon menu will also be offered. Call  860-... for reservations.


Urban Oaks Organic Farm, 225 Oak St., New Britain, will host Slow Food Connecticut program, Saturday from 2 to 4 p.m. The event includes a cooking demonstration by Chef Andy Ardenski from *Passiflora* in New Hartford, farm tours and tastings. Suggested donation is \$20 a person. Children younger than 12 are free. Reservations can be made by e-mailing urbanoaks@earthlink.com or visting www.urbanoaks.org.


Baci Grill, 134 Berlin Road, Cromwell, and *Tuscany Grill*, 120 College St., Middletown, now offer a "Lobster Mania" lunch and dinner. For details visit www.bacigrill.com or www.tuscany-grill.com.

Wine Events

Pazzo Italian Cafe, 377 Cromwell Ave., Rocky Hill, will hold a Tastes of Italy Wine Dinner on June 13 starting at 6:30 p.m. Guest speaker is Michael Petrizzo of Vias Imports. Cost is \$39.95 a person plus tax and tip. Call  860-... for reservations.

Cavey's, 45 East Center St., Manchester, is hosting a Tuesday Night Wine Series . The weekly event includes five wines and five small plates. The June 9 program is titled "Right In Our Own Back Yard" and will feature wines from Priam Vineyards in Colchester. Call  860-... for information.

Litchfield Saltwater Grille, 26 Commons Drive, Litchfield, will host a wine tasting beginning at 3 p.m. Saturday. Cost is \$25 a person and includes wine and food. Call  860-567-4900 for information.

• A La Carte items should be sent two weeks in advance to MaryEllen Fillo, Features Department, The Courant, 285 Broad St., Hartford, CT 06115, or to fillo@courant.com, or call  860-241-3717 .

On the Web

For more local dining news and reviews, visit courant.com/dining.

Copyright © 2009, [The Hartford Courant](http://www.courant.com)