



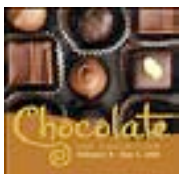
GOING OUT

The latest nightlife news from the Plain Dealer

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GOING OUT GUIDES

Delightful, affordable Italian-infused dishes at Amherst's Jefferson 150

by [Bob Migra/Special to The Plain Dealer](#)

Friday March 21, 2008, 11:18 AM

Pulling into the lot of the Jefferson 150 restaurant in Amherst on a slushy, after-the-blizzard weeknight, I wondered if this review was such a good idea. The combination of gravel parking lot, rundown caboose and water tank, and salvage yard of broken sandstone and old pallets behind the restaurant produced a mood that was not helped by the grays and browns and melting snow of a Northeast Ohio March.

But chef-owner Shawn Grieves, a Culinary Institute of America graduate and Huron native, assures that, like the weather, the property will soon be changing.

"The Amherst Historical Society has huge plans for the whole area," Grieves said. "It'll all make sense in a little bit."

Grieves has equally big plans for his cozy, 36-seat restaurant, occupying a century home that was the office of the Cleveland Quarries Co. back when Amherst was "The Sandstone Capital of the World."

But diners don't have to wait for the improvements to experience Jefferson 150's bargains and creative preparations of old-fashioned Italian and southern United States comfort foods.

We were impressed by just about every dish we sampled. The fact that almost all the pastas and "blue plate" entrees were priced between \$9 and \$12, including salad and bread, was an unexpected bonus.

The flavor surprises started with a grilled barbecue chicken pizza (\$7). I wondered how the generous topping of fresh dill would pair with savory pulled chicken, roasted tomatoes and buttery cheese atop a charred dough. The answer: perfectly.

Bargains continued with the salad. The restaurant charges a mere 75 cents to



(Scott Shaw / The Plain Dealer)

Owner/chef Shawn Grieves and his Pork Chop Florentine at Jefferson 150.

WE WANT YOUR REVIEW

Have you been to Jefferson 150? Email us your review of the food, service and atmosphere. Please include your full name and the town you live in. We'll publish a sampling on Cleveland.com and in The Plain Dealer. [CLICK HERE TO SOUND OFF](#)

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add creamy goat cheese to the complimentary greens. A zesty roasted tomato vinaigrette alternated sweet flavors with a hint of red pepper heat.

Our entrees included a twice-baked lasagna bolognese, filled with stringy mozzarella, savory meat sauce, wild mushrooms and roasted red pepper (\$11). The dish came out extra hot, sizzling in a cast-iron skillet. A huge serving of meatloaf and smashed potatoes cost \$9.50. The accompanying "country gravy" was nothing like the heavy glop you might expect. Instead, the dish was paired with a delicate stock broth with a hint of lemon.

Sauteed chicken artichoke scaloppini (\$11) and a perfectly grilled Delmonico steak with sweet potato hash (\$17) also impressed, although the chicken dish was a little overwhelmed by large, astringent capers.

Grieves' version of coconut cream pie (\$5) was a gem. The "deconstructed" dessert featured servings of rich coconut custard over and under a crisp wonton skin topped with whipped cream.

Beautiful weather, an 80-seat outdoor deck decorated in sandstone and moss, live music, movie nights and dishes featuring fresh produce and herbs grown on the property will no doubt have diners flocking to Jefferson 150 this summer.

But why wait? You can experience creative dining right now -- for Bob Evans' prices.

TASTE BITES

Jefferson 150

Where: 150 Jefferson St., Amherst.

Contact: 440-988-0330.

Hours: 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Fri day; 4-9 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Sunday; closed Monday.

Prices: Appetizers, \$3.50-\$7; salads, \$3-\$7; sandwiches, \$7-\$8; dinner, \$9-\$17; desserts, \$5.

Reservations: Accepted for parties of six or more.

Credit cards: Visa and MasterCard.

Cleanliness: Very good throughout.

Kid-friendliness: Fairly extensive chil dren's menu available.

Quality of service: We experienced the full range during two visits. Late one weeknight, when we were the only diners left, chef-owner Shawn Grieves sent his server home and waited on us personally. He was gracious and infor mative. On our second visit, a new hire struggled through her first day of train ing.

Noise level: Quite peaceful, even on a weekend when the tiny dining room was almost full.

Bar: Full service, featuring creative cocktails and a bargain-priced wine list of small-winery gems from several re gions of France, Chile, Germany, Hun gary, Italy and California. Most of the wines are priced from \$18-\$22, a few dollars per bottle above retail.

Accessibility: Fully accessible.

Grade: ***



(Scott Shaw / The Plain Dealer)

Pork Chop Florentine, left, and Sauteed Chicken Artichoke Scaloppine over Farfalle at Jefferson 150.

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Bob Migra is a free-lance writer in Westlake.

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