

It's Worth it on Wednesday

BY JACQUELYN MYSLIWIEC



Ah, it's a new beginning to another year. As many of you may be starting fresh with a new diet and workout plan—I, as a foodie, say – Yes, do it! Exercise and eating clean are the two most important pieces in my daily-life equation— the ones that help the most with staying focused and energized during a quick press cycle with fast approaching deadlines. However, the third piece is making sure to reserve one evening a month for a nice dinner out, with a cheers, or two.

With that said, if you're looking to choose a place that's worth your "one night out" to indulge, an evening at Pain D'Avignon on a Wednesday is well worth it. And I say that from experience, as my boyfriend and I celebrated the first evening of the New Year with a delightful dinner prepared by executive chef Mathew Tropeano, and live Latin music performance by Perry Rossi & En Fuego, featuring vocals by the restaurant's own Chantal Joseph.

From the moment my date and I were seated at the front table closest to the band, right up until the end of the night when the crowd picked up and folks were on their feet dancing, the experience was relaxing, intimate and excitingly upbeat--like an underground city lounge.

At first I was a little worried that the band might bombard us with sound, but this wasn't the case at all. We enjoyed a fantastic dinner with light, authentic Latin sounds lingering around us while we were able to still carry conversation without speaking over the music. Both our meals were exceptional. We ordered the entrée specials for the evening. One was monkfish- one of my favorites which you don't often see featured. Tropeano paired it with a saffron risotto with a lobster sauce— a beautiful blend of flavors. The other was a pork chop paired with sautéed spinach that my date was pretty reluctant to share. That's how I know it was good. Portion size was perfect, too.

Besides the wonderful meal, I was blown away by the band's talent - individually and as a whole, as they performed a range of musical flavors, even covering Bob Marley, Chaka Khan, and Whitney Houston. Chantal nailed the vocals in every genre, and when the other members started going with the trumpet, the flute, and the drums--mixed with Chantal's vocals- I couldn't get rid of the grin on my face, nor the little side-to -side groove I had going in my chair to the beat.

Even though it may be a "school night," it's worth the stop in, even if it's only to hear a few numbers. Their theory: Why not feel good and excited during the middle of the week rather than when it's all over. Agreed (as long it's in moderation, of course!)

So, if you're looking for something that might make it a little easier to get over that mid-week "hump," swing in at Pain D'Avignon— you won't be disappointed.

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