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Restaurant critic review: Cobalt will leave you anything but blue

By Diana Foote

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

VERO BEACH — Some of the best food in Vero Beach can be found at Cobalt, a stylish and lively restaurant in the Vero Beach Hotel and Spa. At a recent Saturday night dinner, my companion and I enjoyed a meal that surpassed any we have had in recent memory.

We began with drinks at the bar, and tried two of the little plates served there for the amazingly low price of \$3 each. The fish taco was in a grilled soft shell and etched with a lime aioli sauce laced with heat.

The chef does such a subtle job with spices that it's often difficult to distinguish what is being used. No matter. Everything tasted wonderful.

In the restaurant, we began with translucent beef carpaccio (\$12), so thin you could see through it. It was topped with the tiniest greens I have ever seen, which turned out to be micro basil. I had to ask. Raw beef is a disaster if not done right. Cobalt's surpasses all others.

Rich golds and browns predominate in the bar and restaurant. Patio dining is available, with a gas fire that overlooks the ocean. The maitre d' and the waiters dote on the customers and work hard to answer any questions.

My pork tenderloin (\$26) was cooked to slightly pink and paired nicely with grilled brussels sprouts, and — a first for me — buttery rice grits. They tasted somewhat like risotto.

My companion had the salmon special (\$28), flaky and mild, served over a creamed corn. I had more than one taste of the corn, because it was absolutely stupendous. The crunchy kernels swam in a rich, creamy sauce dotted with fresh red peppers, a bit of tarragon and some magic.

For dessert, we shared a decadent bread pudding with homemade cinnamon ice

cream (\$8) and left, vowing to return soon.

Diana Foote dines anonymously at the expense of Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers. Contact her at foodgal@comcast.net.



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