

Spice It Up

WELL-SEASONED GOOD FOOD, GOOD TIMES FOUND AT HAVANA AT GREAT NECK



Havana at Great Neck in Virginia Beach is known for well seasoned good food and good times.

The restaurant offers a casual dining experience for anyone who wants tantalizing noshes while meeting friends for a drink after work to romantic dinners for two. "Our slogan is, 'An American Café with a Cuban

Twist,'" says Blair McGinnis, who has owned this location since 2008.

"So we're not necessarily authentic when it comes to the menu, but we do offer great food and incredible drinks —with tastes that are influenced by the tropics, Asia and even the Pacific Rim—in a casual but not-too-laid-back environment."

Start off with appetizers that include Tuna Sashimi, Mussels or Clams, Scallops, Oyster Havana (a stew of sautéed oysters, onions, apple-smoked bacon, cream, cilantro and parmesan cheese served with grilled sourdough bread), Cigar Rolls (shredded chicken and vegetables wrapped in spring roll paper), Roasted Red Peppers and Goat Cheese, Calamari De Cuba, Homemade Soup, and their locally famous Chicken Nachos.

On the lighter side, a variety of delicious salads or the Vegetable Napoleon (fresh grilled squash, zucchini and portabella mushrooms, baked with tomato and fresh mozzarella and served with an olive oil and balsamic vinegar reduction), and Havana's take on the Sandwich Cubano is offered.

For bigger appetites there is the Casa Filet (grilled beef tenderloin served over Myers dark rum-peppercorn sauce), Crab Cakes, Ahi Tuna, Paella De Playa, Flank Steak Mojo, Chicken and Shrimp Coconut Curry, Pork Osso Bucco, Traditional Ropa Vieja (slow roasted and shredded flank steak), Wild Salmon, and a Baked Pork Burrito.

For smaller appetites or just a little something to go with your mojito, Havana has a full line of tapas including Petite Casa Filet served over roasted garlic mashed potatoes, Chicken or Pork Tostada, Cuban Chicken, Grilled Asparagus Wrapped with Applewood Smoked Bacon, Chicken or Pork Quesadillas, and Chile Relleno.

Dessert selections includes Cheesecake, Crème Brulee, Chocolate Rum Cake, Bread Pudding, Chocolate Tart, Key Lime Pie, Chef's Cobbler and Homemade Ice Cream. Or if you prefer to imbibe your dessert, you can choose from a host of "Dessertinis" that include flavors such as Cuban Espresso, Chocolatini and S'mores.

Havana offers a select wine list and a full complement of beer, specialty cocktails, mojitos, sangria (red or white) and margaritas. In fact, Monday is Mojito Monday (featuring flavors such as the Havana Originale, Coconut, Raspberry, Mango Pineapple, Strawberry Champagne, Pomegranate and 10 Cane).

Make sure you're on the Havana email list (sign up at www.havana-



greatneckvb.com) to take advantage of two-for-one entrees on Tuesdays. Wednesday is half-off wine on selected labels, and Thursday is "Martinis and Mussels," offering special prices on martinis and all-you-can-eat mussels.

McGinnis, who started off at Havana in Norfolk as a bar back (which is no longer associated with Havana Great Neck because it is independently owned and operated), wants people to know that Havana is a fun experience, featuring delicious food and drinks, colorful décor, and a staff that has been in the business a long time so they know how to treat

their customers. "It does get a little noisy sometimes, especially when we have large parties—we get quite a few of those," says McGinnis. "But that just adds to fun of dining with us."

Reservations are recommended on the weekends. Be sure to check us out on Facebook.

Havana

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