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# The Weekly Entrée

## Fish and Grill

By Jim Clark

Rating:★

Another study stating the health benefits of Mediterranean food was recently in the news. It seems reports related to Mediterranean food consistently point to its virtues.

However, this hasn't sparked a rash of local restaurants dedicated to this cuisine. What a shame. Whenever we find one, we always enjoy the crisp, fresh flavors offered and comment on how we wish there were more places close by.

Educated as a nutritionist in his native Turkey, Fish and Grill owner Riza Canca understands the importance of eating healthily and wants to expose patrons to the great, healthy tastes of Turkish food. Everything is made with this in mind — olive oil is used in recipes in place of butter and margarine, and there is no deep-frying.

Canca was first exposed to the restaurant business when, as a young boy, his mother opened a small café in his hometown of Kilyos, a resort town near Istanbul, on the Black Sea. He and his siblings learned the business firsthand, helping run the restaurant.

Perhaps his hometown's location explains the trappings of Fish and Grill, with its nautical and Mediterranean-seaside feel.

While the atmosphere is that of a casual seaside, the food is true Turkish. The red lentil soup is a smooth blend of vegetables with a nice creamy flavor. The Turkish salad is finely chopped fresh lettuce, onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers and parsley tossed in vinegar and olive oil, and topped with crumbled feta cheese.

The arugula salad has a contrasting flavor, as the arugula is tossed in olive oil and lemon for a more pungent flavor and topped with almonds to provide crunchiness.

After savoring these items, we enjoyed an assortment of five cold appetizers. Homemade hummus is whipped to a very smooth consistency with cumin and garlic seasoning for a pleasant flavor. The eggplant salad is pureed, char-broiled eggplant seasoned with garlic, lemon and oil. The eggplant with tomato sauce has cubed, fried eggplant in a fresh tomato and

onion sauce; lemon and oil again highlight the flavors.

The spicy, minced peppers are a mixture of diced tomatoes, onions, peppers, parsley and walnuts with spices in the lemon and oil. Lebni is a thick, homemade yogurt loaded with chopped walnut, garlic, carrot, squash and dill. These dishes are meant for spreading on the homemade bread presented in the eatery.

We sampled two of the hot appetizers, the cheese pastries — cigar-shaped pastries filled with feta, parsley and dill — and the zucchini pancakes served with garlic yogurt sauce. This sauce was so tasty, we dipped the pastries in it.

My main dish was the St. Peter's fish. Although most fish offerings are served filleted or whole (and I love the presentation of a whole fish), I felt lazy this evening, so I had the filet lightly pan-fried in lemon juice.

My spouse ordered the mix grill. It proved to be a large portion of skewered chicken and skewered lamb accompanied by a lamb patty and a lamb chop.

Both dishes were served with a hefty portion of grilled, fresh mixed vegetables and homemade rice pilaf.

Even desserts are on the healthy side of the scale. Helva is a baklava-like dietetic dessert made with honey and semolina flour. Kazan Dibi is a whole-wheat, rice flour and milk delicacy similar in texture and flavor to vanilla pudding. Sultan's Delight is a dark chocolate pudding-cake mixture with a very rich flavor. From its taste, it's perhaps the least healthy of the bunch, but at least it's made with olive oil rather than butter. And, of course, there is baklava.

For this guilt-free trip of healthy food, Fish and Grill rates AHHHHH (5) out of 5 AHs.

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