

RESTAURANT REVIEWS

As we entered the Sunset Café Grill at 4:30 in the afternoon on New Year's Eve 2005 the place was hopping. Even though the staff was preparing for the night's festivities we were seated promptly and greeted warmly by our host for the evening, Charles. "My friends call me Chuck", he said; and that's what we called him for the remainder of our visit.

There's seating inside, outside on the deck, or down on the docks. We sat on the dock with a beautiful view of the Banana River. The river plays an important role at the Sunset Café, but more about that later.

Chuck gave us plenty of time to make our selections but was right there to take our orders when we were ready.

Joann and I split an appetizer of 20 wings; we had 10 teriyaki and 10 buffalo. The buffalo wings come in mild, medium, hot, and "crazy hot". I went for hot and they were delicious. Joann wasn't going anywhere near mine but said that her teriyaki wings were also very tasty.

The kids enjoyed their chicken tenders baskets and actually had no leftovers; not however because they ate all their food. Once the kids were done eating they got up and looked at the water. It was teeming with catfish so the boys started feeding them. By the time they had emptied their plates there must have been nearly 100 fish churning up the water. It was the best time our kids have had at a restaurant in a long time. And I learned that catfish would eat anything, including pickles!

When the main courses arrived we were not disappointed in our choices. Joann had surf and turf.

The lobster tail was meaty and succulent and it just melted in the mouth. The steak was char-grilled to perfection and delightful. I'm sure the rest of the food was great too, the steak and lobster blotted out the memory of everything else though. I had the blackened seafood combo. The fish was flaky and flavorful, the scallops were large and tender, and the shrimp were just right. Everything was great. Joann however had a Pain In The Ass; it was tasty and came in a souvenir glass.

We were so stuffed that we had to take our dessert home. It, along with our leftovers were just as good the next day.

AS I mentioned earlier, something special happens everyday at the Sunset Café. If you're lucky enough to be dining when the sun sets over the river you'll be notified by clarion bell that it's time to stop and watch. And "Time

To Say Goodbye" by Sarah Brightman accompanies the sunset, which is a beautiful song that has been a part of our personal music collection for several years. Chuck explained that it's a nod to the ancient Roman ritual farewell to the sun.

We were pleased on all points, from service, to food, to atmosphere. I highly recommend the Sunset café if you're looking for a good time for the whole family, or a nice night out on the town without the kids. You'll find it all here! ■

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