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Discover the Upbeat and Updated Grill at the Silverado Resort.....By Dorothy and John Salmon

With new ownership, big changes underway at the Silverado Resort. We recently enjoyed some of the changes with Ethan Hirsch, our Petaluma friend of more than 25 years, and Annie and Richard Bennett, our dear Napa friends and occasional travel companions. We met at The Grill at Silverado on a clear and cool Napa Valley winter evening, and immediately noticed the changes to The Grill's dining room, the food and the atmosphere that have been created by General Manager, John Evans, and his Dolce International resort management team.

We talked about our fond memories of having attended, more than 50 community events over the years, in the ballroom at Silverado. And how, now, we look forward to Dolce restoring and improving this unique and lovely example of early 20th century grandeur, which is surrounded by its PGA championship golf courses, 435 hotel suites, 13 tennis courts, 10 swimming pools, and hiking and biking trails nearby. Dolce is in the planning stages to complete room renovations, facility upgrades, renovation of the south golf course, and new conference space.

Often, many think of Silverado as a place for tourists. That's too bad, because it is an idyllic place for we locals to enjoy. If you have never been to The Grill, it is located in the building immediately to the left of the main building, just past the pro shop. The room opens to a lovely bar where you can order great bar as "Loaded" Potato Skins, American Kobe Beef Burgers, Pulled Pork Sliders and, of course, Pablo's famous Fish Tacos, with a side order of his incredible Guacamole.

The Bar offers an assortment of great beers along with some of Napa Valley's best wines. The Grill at Silverado is open for lunch and dinner, cocktails all day, and offers the best in Napa Valley cuisine. DON'T miss the Tuesday or Thursday evening, fixed price Chef's Choice Four Course, fresh, sustainable seafood, or internationally themed dinner. Every Wednesday is Kobe Burger night. Why would we ever cook at home?

Johnny Miller, Silverado Resort's most famous investor, and local Napa legend, brought in John Evans as General Manager, and coaxed Executive Jake, a Vintage High School graduate, to put a crackerjack team together to make Silverado Resort a diners dream.

As we walked into The Grill, we commented on its warm and friendly atmosphere. As Max, our server, made sure our water glasses were filled, Chef Pablo Jacinto visited us to introduce himself and take our wine order. In case you don't recognize Pablo's name, you have likely eaten something he has prepared since he worked with Cindy Pawlcyn for 20 years (most of the time at Mustard's Grill) and before that, at the Buckeye Roadhouse in Marin.

We began our dinner with an exceptional bottle of Château Montelena Chardonnay and finished the meal with a great bottle of Phillips Family Cabernet. Both the Barrett and Phillip's families have given so much to our Valley, so we feel it is important to acknowledge the families who produce our great wines by ordering them whenever we can. We settled in at our table, caught up with each other, and ordered Pablo's Fish (Mahi Mahi) Tacos (\$14) for everyone. Pablo brought them out from the kitchen and they were terrific! We could have also tried the Hot Dungeness Crab Dip with white cheddar cheese, but we knew this night was going to be a BIG one, so we stuck with the fish tacos. That was a good call!

We ordered salads to share – two of the Big Ranch Heirloom Tomato Buffalo Mozzarella Salads with wonderful basil vinaigrette (\$12) and a Caesar Salad with creamy roasted garlic dressing, crisp romaine, croutons, and anchovy (\$9). Then, we divided up the main course menu to make sure that we tried as many entrée's as we could. John quickly selected the Fulton Valley Country Fried Chicken served with cole slaw, buttermilk mashed potatoes, and sweet onion gravy (\$23), which he thought was fabulous (and refused to share). Annie ordered the Grilled, 12 oz. Kurobuta Pork Chop served with garlic mashed potato, summer squash, & pickled K&J orchard peaches (\$30). The pork chop was huge. Annie is really good at watching her food intake, so most of the pork chop went home for Richard the next day. Ethan ordered the Angus 12oz Rib-eye Steak, with Yukon gold potatoes, roasted heirloom tomatoes and cabernet butter (\$32). Ethan thought the steak was very good, and VERY filling. But, he was a bit miffed at John for not sharing his Fried Chicken. Richard ordered the Rotisserie Roasted, Fulton Valley Chicken with sweet pepper, arugula, bread salad and natural jus (\$21). Richard thought his chicken was very good. Now that we think about it, we don't recall that he shared his Chicken either! Dorothy enjoyed the fresh, sustainably sourced, Seafood Special, which, on the night we were there, was a fabulous wild Alaskan halibut served with flair (\$28).

Chef, Pablo Jacinto joined us several times to make sure that we were enjoying our dinner, and spent the time chatting with us about his years in the Valley. Needless to say, we loved it. To further acknowledge the cooking talent at Silverado, we were impressed to learn that Executive Chef Jake, was previously at the Carneros Inn (FARM) and the Boon Fly Café. He is a master at finding and preparing fresh, local food. Before arriving in Napa, he was the executive chef at The Lodge at Pebble Beach, where he helped organize food for the AT&T Pro Am Golf Tournament and Concourse d' Elegance.



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~ The Grill's Recipe ~

Wild Alaskan Halibut with a Saffron & Citrus Seafood Stew (Serves 2)

Saffron Citronette

- ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¾ cup fresh orange juice
- 12 strands saffron
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tablespoon chop garlic
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 2 tablespoons grated ginger

Heat Saffron in warm Olive oil; make sure the oil does not smoke. Cook time approximately 2 minutes. Combine lemon juice, orange juice, garlic, orange zest and ginger in a mixing bowl. Whisk together and continue to whisk while slowly adding the Saffron Olive Oil mixture. You will have some left over if preparing for two portions. Reserve in refrigerator for up to 10 days.

The Stew

- 4 oz halibut or white bass • 4 each mussels
- 4 each clams • 2 each scallops
- 4 oz rock shrimp • 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 oz white wine • 1 tsp garlic
- 2 oz citronette (as prepared above)
- 2 oz wild arugula • 2 oz butter
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Heat the olive oil and brown the halibut on both sides. Finish in the oven to desired temperature. In a different pan heat Olive oil add all the mussels, clams, scallops, rock shrimp and garlic, cook for approximately 2 minutes. Add, white wine, 2 oz saffron citronette, and finish with butter, salt and pepper. It should be nice and juicy. It cannot be dry. In a deep bowl set arugula, mussels, clams and top with the Fish. Drizzle Citronette mixture around the fish to create the stew. Then top Fish with more of the Citronette. Serve with a grilled sourdough crouton soaked in St. Helena Olive Oil. Buen provecho!!!