

DINING REVIEW

The search for a ‘wicked good lobster roll’ when



BY TINA RONDEAU
Columnist

Everywhere you turn these days, there seem to be stories about this year's lobster glut in New England and how the price of lobsters is at a record low.

Those stories got me craving lobster rolls (I actually enjoy those more than wrestling with a whole Maine lobster), and since I saw no prospect in the next few weeks of getting to Boston or points north, I thought I would sample lobster rolls at restaurants in our area (tough duty, but someone's got to do it) and report on where they are best.

The classic 'lobstah roll,' as true aficionados know, consists of steamed lobster meat (claws, knuckles and tail), tossed sparingly in mayonnaise with a bit of diced celery for a little crunch, a dash of lemon, and a buttered split-top hotdog bun that has been toasted until the sides are golden brown.

The filling should consist of nice bite-sized lobster chunks, not little bits of meat that have been minced into the consistency of what you would find in a tuna salad sandwich. You lay some lettuce into the bun (or not), pile the lobster good and high, and season with a little salt and pepper. That's all there is to it.

For years, we considered the lobster roll at the New England Eatery in South Melbourne Beach (\$14.95) the best in this area. And it's not bad. But a sampling of a half dozen local places offering lobster rolls persuaded us there is now better to be had.

On our most recent visit to the New England Eatery, the bun was per-



fect (if it's not buttered and grilled, it's not the real deal) and the lobster chunks were sweet and savory. But the chunks were augmented by what seemed like processed lobster. Overall, a bit disappointing.

Better on this score was a newcomer to the local lobster wars, Captain Butcher's in Sebastian, featuring nice chunks of lobster mixed with just a bit too much celery in its lobster roll (\$14.99). But the roll was what brought the demerits here. While toasted on the inside, it was not the classic New England hot dog bun.

A better combination of correctly toasted roll and lobster meat was the lobster roll we encountered at the Lob-

ster Shanty (\$12.50). The nice lobster chunks in this one, unfortunately, were swimming in too much mayo, and the roll was also curiously topped by chunks of tomato. But the Lobster Shanty's roll wins our award for best value.

Then we came to the Fishack. To our delight, the Fishack lobster roll (\$15.95) was excellent – perfect bun, full of nice chunks of lobster, right amount of mayo – and best of all, it is available at Fishack both on the lunch menu and the dinner menu daily.

The closest thing to the perfect lobster roll, however, was the one that turns up on the luncheon menu about once a week at the Citrus Grillhouse. The Citrus lobster roll (\$15) ticked all

the boxes on our checklist – tender, sweet lobster chunks with just a smidgen of lemon, mayo, celery, and chives. And while purists might frown on the chives, I thought it was a nice touch. The taste of the lobster was heavenly.

In addition to these, we discovered a few new dishes – not a classic lobster roll, more of a nouveau lobster roll. Many – as is the case with so many dishes these days – involve bacon.

I was first introduced to one of these some months ago in Boston at the LTK Bar and Kitchen – an off-shoot of the famed Legal Seafood (LTK stands for Legal Test Kitchen).

Their lobster wrap (\$22.95) consisted of lobster, avocado, bacon, and

DINING REVIEW

a trip to New England is out



Dockside Grille



Fishack

chipotle mayo on grilled flatbread. Other quibbles aside, the sweet sea taste of the lobster was totally overpowered by the strong taste of bacon.

But in researching this story, I tried a Lobster Rocket at Dockside (\$17). It was disappointing all the way around. Served in what the waiter described as a hoagie roll, the lobster filling lacked any sizable pieces of meat, and the taste was overwhelmed by two strips of greasy bacon.

If you want to forego the classic, a far better choice would be the lobster club sandwich (\$16) on the luncheon menu at the 12A Buoy. This version consists of chunks of lobster mixed with mayonnaise and avocado, shredded lettuce, tomato and bacon served on a toasted Kaiser roll. Very tasty.

But for a 'wicked good lobster roll' in this area, my vote goes to Citrus Grill-



Lobster Shanty

house. Remember, however, that you are only likely to find it on the luncheon menu on Thursdays. If you are hankering for a lobster roll some other day, we strongly recommend the Fishack.

I welcome your comments, and encourage you to send feedback to me at tina@verobeach32963.com.

The reviewer dines anonymously at restaurants at the expense of Vero Beach 32963. ■



12A Buoy

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This classic cabernet from the premiere small lot winery of Sonoma County sees chewy tannins tango with chocolate covered strawberries, dancing their way from the front of the tongue to the long, satin finish. Classic cedar and graphite enrapture dark raspberries, with hints of anise, cloves and black olives.

This wine is available at \$46.99 at The Bottle Shop in Pelican Plaza at 4877 North A1A.

If you have a candidate that you would like to recommend as our wine of the week, please email us at wine@verobeach32963.com.