

Favorites



Mustard Crusted Filet of Salmon

Nestled in one of Uptown's most frequented blocks is The Porch — a sleek yet casual restaurant and bar that offers classic dishes and an array of cocktails.

With a 46-foot bar, a spacious, rustic interior and enclosed patio facing North Henderson Ave., The Porch's setting complements its menu of American favorites with an upscale twist.

Executive Chef Scott Freeman says The Porch is geared toward chef-driven, home-style cuisine. "A lot of the menu items are things we had as kids, so there's a nostalgic feel to it," he says. "We have mac and cheese and ribs, but they're made with the highest quality ingredients. Take the grilled cheese: We chose the creamiest, most decadent cheeses for it."

Freeman says he tries to create as many things in-house as possible. Vinaigrettes and grenadine are made in the restaurant, the juices are fresh-squeezed and there's even a smoker for meats.

The Porch is owned and operated by Consilient Restaurants, a Dallas-based company that specializes in unique restaurant concepts. The three other members of the Consilient family are located within walking distance of The Porch and all have their own unique appeal. Cuba Libre is a two-story bar and restaurant that offers an American take on Latin cuisine. Hibiscus specializes in meat and seafood dishes, and Fireside Pies serves up wood-fired, handcrafted pizza in a casual atmosphere.

Freeman says each restaurant has its core, repeat customers, but that many frequent more than one of these. "It creates a good syner-

gy among the restaurants," he says. "Some might go to Cuba Libre for lunch, then come here Saturday for dinner. There's really no competition among the businesses."

Mickie Crockett, general manager at The Porch says the restaurant is going strong because there's a niche for it in Big D. "This was one of my favorite restaurants to go to before I worked here," she says. "I love the concept and I believe in it."

Dinner is The Porch's strong point, but its extensive cocktail and wine list make it a popular weekend destination, and desserts, like the Bourbon Pecan Pie (See recipe on Page 46), keep that sweet tooth satisfied.

What Crockett loves about The Porch's recipes is that they typically include one or two ingredients most people don't usually keep in the cupboard, so those who want to prepare them at home can try a few new things. For example, the Blackberry Smash Cocktail calls for rye whiskey, and champagne vinegar is used in the Mustard Crusted Filet of Salmon recipe (see both recipes on Page 46).

"These recipes are guidelines only, and you shouldn't be afraid to change them around a bit," Crockett says. "If you want more butter, use more butter. If you don't like salmon, use a different fish. All our recipes are great to try at home. They're tried and true."

All recipes courtesy Executive Chef Scott Freeman of The Porch, 2912 North Henderson, Dallas, 214.828.2916, www.theporchrestaurant.com. ▶

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Blackberry Smash Cocktail

Serves 4

20 EACH FRESH MINT LEAVES
32 EACH FRESH BLACKBERRIES, reserve 8 for garnish
1 CUP JIM BEAM RYE WHISKEY
2 TABLESPOONS FRESH LEMON JUICE
4 TABLESPOONS SIMPLE SYRUP
1 CUP GINGER ALE
4 MINT SPRIGS

Muddle the mint and blackberries in a cocktail pitcher. Add the rest of the ingredients and stir well. Add ice and serve in high ball glasses. Make sure to get the muddled berries in each glass. Top each cocktail with a splash of Ginger Ale, fresh mint sprig and additional blackberries.

Mustard Crusted Filet of Salmon

Serves 4

4 (7-OUNCE) FRESH SALMON FILETS
SALT TO TASTE
BLACK PEPPER TO TASTE
1/2 CUP DIJON MUSTARD
1/4 CUP MAYONNAISE
1 TABLESPOON HONEY
1 TEASPOON CHAMPAGNE VINEGAR
2 TABLESPOONS FRESH TARRAGON, chopped
1 CUP DRIED BREAD CRUMBS
1/4 CUP FRESH PARSLEY, chopped

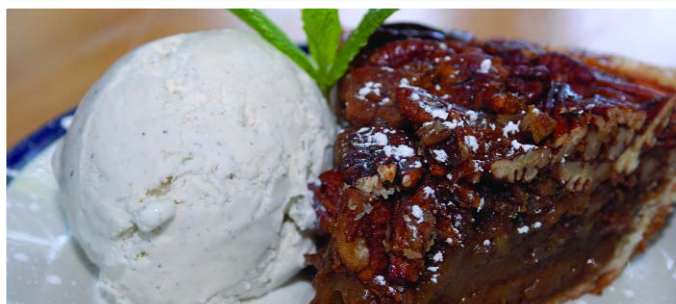
In small bowl, combine the Dijon, mayonnaise, honey, champagne vinegar and fresh tarragon. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Combine the bread crumbs and parsley, set aside. Season the salmon with salt and pepper. In a heavy bottomed sauté pan, sear the salmon on one side only — do not cook through. Place the salmon filets in a roasting pan with the seared side up. Smear the salmon with the mustard mixture, about 2 tablespoons per filet, and top the mustard crust with bread crumb mixture. Place in a preheated 350 degree oven for about 10 minutes. (Serve with butter whipped spuds or herb roasted new potatoes.)

Roasted Tomato-Basil Soup

Serves 4

6 POUNDS VINE RIPE ROMA TOMATOES, quartered
2 CUPS HEAVY WHIPPING CREAM
4 TABLESPOONS FRESH BASIL, hand torn
4 TABLESPOONS AGED BALSAMIC VINEGAR
1/2 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER, cubed
SALT TO TASTE
BLACK PEPPER TO TASTE
FRESH LEMON JUICE TO TASTE

Roast the tomatoes in a preheated 400 degree oven for approximately 20 to 25 minutes. Stir them occasionally to keep them from burning. This will concentrate the sweet tomato flavor. When the tomatoes are ready, transfer them to a heavy bottom stock pot and add the balsamic vinegar and heavy cream, bring to a simmer. Let the soup reduce by about a third. Remove from heat, add the fresh basil and puree the soup with a hand blender until smooth. Stir in the butter, season to taste with the salt and pepper, then finish the soup with the fresh lemon juice.



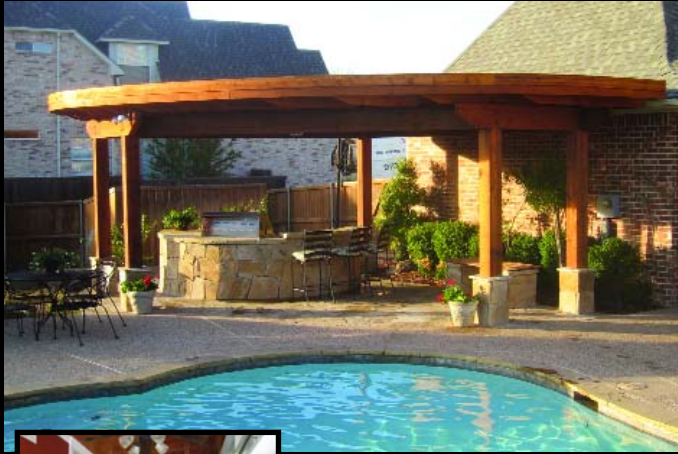
Bourbon Texas Pecan Pie

Serves 6 to 8

2 CUPS LIGHT BROWN SUGAR, packed
1/4 CUP ALL PURPOSE FLOUR
1/4 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER, melted
12 EACH WHOLE EGGS, slightly beaten
2 TABLESPOONS PURE VANILLA EXTRACT
3 CUPS LIGHT CORN SYRUP
1/4 CUP MOLASSES
1/4 CUP PURE MAPLE
4 TABLESPOONS BOURBON
1 CUP TEXAS PECANS, halved
1 EACH 9-INCH DEEP DISH PIE CRUST SHELL

In large bowl, combine all ingredients except pecans. With wire whisk, mix well to break up any lumps and scrape the bottom of the bowl. Then, add the pecans. Place the deep dish pie crust shell on a baking sheet. Pour the mixture into the pie crust shell making sure to get all of the pecans, fill to the top. Bake on the lower rack of a preheated 350 degree oven for approximately 45 to 50 minutes or until set in the center of the pie. Remove from oven and let rest for at least 2 hours before slicing. (Serve with your favorite ice cream.)





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