

SOIZIC RESTAURANT REVIEW

OAKLAND

OCTOBER 26, 2003



Took Shelly, the Demon Child no longer, out for her fifteenth with her sister, who is no longer a teen. Went to a nice little cosmopolitan place on the edge of Jack London Square called Soizic. Atmosphere there is Vague Mediterranean in a single room decorated with contemporary postmodern paintings that evoked a mixture of classical France, Greece, Italy and Art Nouveau. We arrived at five-thirty and the place filled quickly after that with groups of four and six. Style of menu and food preparation was California Cuisine.

The wine list contained some moderately good to poor wines, all wildly overpriced by the glass, so we would recommend splitting the bottle if wine is a necessary.

We had for appetizers: smoked trout salad with cranberries and vinaigrette, Portobello mushroom with spinach, and the marinated and seared asparagus under spinach and pesto. Everything was prepared well with attention to detail and each dish continued to provide pleasant surprises with each bite.

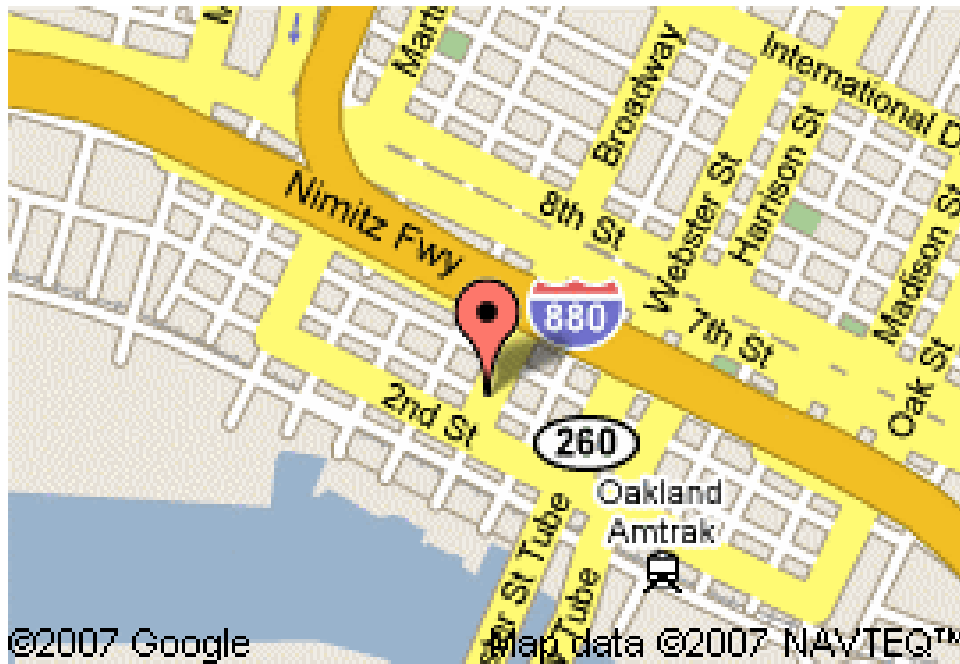
The smoked trout proved to be surprisingly tasty, with yummy crumbles of trout mixed in to greens with nuts and cranberries. The miniature asparagus spears lathered with a subtle pesto and sprinkled with pecans also was quite delightful.

As main courses we had lamb with potatoes au gratin, stuffed eggplant with spinach and polenta and a basic fettuccini with white wine sauce.

The best success for the entrees was the lamb, which was served as boneless strips of delicately braised meat in a savory brown sauce accompanied by a flaky potato cube stuffed with aromatic cheeses. The eggplant consisted of layers of seared eggplant with tomato and mascarpone cheeses with basic spinach drenched in a tangy vinaigrette and sided with a lake of polenta. The fettuccini with bacon in wine sauce is a difficult dish to prepare and the wise tend to avoid this one. In its favor, we can say that this version did not appear to have the heavy cream treatment that so often ruins the dish.

The general consensus is that the place is very good on the standing of its appetizers, which, true to the California cuisine style, match the entrees in bulk and quantity. If you want to chow down, we suggest going down the street to the considerably more informal Everett and Jones BBQ joint. In fact, any one of us could have dined exclusively on the appetizer menu and been quite satisfied. Soizic proved that Oaktown can compete with the best of them in terms of quality and in service, which remained prompt and courteous in spite of an obviously full house. Two thumbs up on this one.

300 Broadway, Oakland, CA
(3rd & Broadway near Jack London Square)
510.251.8100
<http://www.soizicbistro.com/>



Lunch

Tues - Fri 11:30-2:00

Dinner

Fri & Sat 5:30 - 10:00

closed Sunday and Monday