

The Mooring opens in style

ByLaLg

Georgia Derico, Rod Porter and Charlie Santangelo, the owners of the Mooring Restaurant in Port Kinsale, threw a gala pre-opening gathering for family and acquaintances to celebrate the inception of a new Italian/seafood menu.

In September 2007 Charlie and his fiancée, Mary Beth, made a trip to Tropea on the southernmost tip of Italy's "Big Boot." This trip has become known as "Charlie's excellent culinary adventure!"

Not only did he find time to sample the best food and wines that southern Italy has to offer from family favorites in tiny trattorias, to gourmet delights in the most "elegante ristoranti" of the area, but Charlie and his Mary Beth became formally engaged on Stromboli, not the food, but on a live 2000-year-old volcano.

That's not all this restaurateur and graduate of New York's Culinary Institute managed to accomplish in Calabria. He visited the kitchens of the trattoria and elegant restaurants to observe, learn and even to assist his hosts in preparing their epicurean delights.

Many of the dishes sampled and ingredients discovered by Charlie will become a staple part of the Mooring's new menu.

Guests and family had the opportunity to sample many of the new menu items at the preopening gala starting with delectable antipasti which included cheese, olives, mushrooms, roasted red peppers, prosciutto di parma, and Italian salami - delightful to look at and delicious to eat.

There were many fine pasta dishes served, such as linguine a la vongole, whole baby clams poached in garlic and served over fresh linguine in a light wine, garlic and parsley sauce; and Tagliatelle Bolognese a la Georgia, a classic meat sauce of veal, beef and pork finished with a heavy cream and parmigiano served over fresh pasta.

There was a scrumptious, fresh Chesapeake flounder stuffed with shrimp, vegetables, currants and pine nuts; Captain Scottie's fresh catch of the day - "Pesce Fresco Del giorno," a hard to beat treat; and Yummie Spiedini, filet tips rolled in breadcrumbs and served over capers and anchovies with a lemon butter sauce.

Many people, including myself, really enjoyed Chef Andre's tasty palate teaser - "Pasta Della Casa," white chicken meat sauteed in extra virgin olive oil with sun-dried tomatoes, mushrooms and baby asparagus served in a delicate vodka and cream sauce - mmmmgood!

There were too many other excellent dishes for me to enumerate here. My suggestion is that you make a trip to Port Kinsale. Whether you travel by road or the "rivah" you will enjoy the ambiance, the delicious food, and the friendly staff.

Go on a Sunday for the Best Brunch. Go during the week for New York hand-tossed pizza and a beer. Take your lady for a gourmet dinner and stroll by the Rivah. You will not be sorry.

Rent a cottage, or a room in the Skipjack Inn and stay a while.

Once you have seen the sun set over the west branch of the Yeocomico River from the Mooring deck you will be sure to return.

