



DINING OUT

By Bea and Ben Sorrencified

We human beings are clearly attracted to water. Some people suggest that it is because many millennia ago, we evolved from the water. Others say that it is because our bodies are more than 90 percent water. Still others find the reason in that we implicitly recognize how important water is to our survival—we drink it for hydration, we bathe in it for cleanliness and we need it to grow our food. In truth, many of us have chosen to live here on the Crystal Coast because it is adjacent to large bodies of water, like the Atlantic Ocean and Bogue Sound. Water is effectively a magnet for us.

Not surprisingly, when we eat out, we often look for a restaurant with a view of the water. Port of Call, one of the newer restaurants on our coast, offers an expansive view of Bogue Sound. Located in Salter Path, Port of Call is just about perfect for dining with a view of the water since virtually every table offers the view—and the food is very good.

The dinner menu at Port of Call offers a world of choice, starting with the appetizers. Called Beachy Beginnings, the appetizers blend fresh seafood with other palate-pleasing ingredients. You may want to try one or more of them, perhaps with a glass of wine or a cold beer. For example, the oyster appetizers include Oyster Rocks—oysters smothered with spinach, bacon and béarnaise sauce—and Oysters on Ice—salty oysters on the half-shell to be finished with extra hot cocktail sauce. If you are not up for oysters, you may prefer Seared Salvation, ahi, yellow fin tuna dredged in sesame seeds and then seared, accompanied by a sesame-ginger dipping sauce; or the Shrimp Stand, shrimp prepared in seasoned butter and accompanied by the restaurant's extra hot cocktail sauce. Also available as a starter is Marsh Mud, a blend of crabmeat and cheeses laced with spinach. It is absolutely delicious served on toasted pita points, and it will satisfy perhaps

two or more appetites as a preliminary to dinner.

Soup and salad lovers will find good traditional dinner salads and a few soups on the menu. Among the salads are Caesar Pleaser, Spinach Sensations and Garden Abundance. The salad dressing choices are many, from the familiar ranch and blue cheese to the slightly adventuresome sesame ginger, raspberry walnut vinaigrette and pineapple vinaigrette. To move these salads up a notch, you may add shrimp, scallops, oysters, lobster tail, chicken breast or beef medallions. The menu includes two seafood soups: the Port of Call Potion—a clam chowder—and the Seafood Simplicity, a rich creamy soup combining lobster, shrimp and crabmeat.

The entrée choices are about as varied as any you will find at Crystal Coast restaurants. The Port of Call Originals include Trigger Treasures—trigger fish filet and shrimp blanketed with a wine and dill cream sauce; Seafood Sunset—a large red bell pepper stuffed with herbed crabmeat and shrimp, covered with mozzarella cheese and broiled until brown and bubbly; and Shaded Mahi—a mahi-mahi steak topped with a cheese and herb mixture and broiled. The Originals also include nicely conceived flounder, shrimp, red snapper and crab cake options.

Pasta and grits also appear on the Port of Call's menu. Shrimp-n-Grits has the usual shrimp and bacon but is covered by an extra-spicy cream sauce and topped with cheddar cheese. This dish can be ordered on linguine instead of grits. Beefy Blues combines seasoned grilled beef medallions with blue cheese in an Alfredo sauce served over linguine. Pasta lovers may also be drawn to The Alfredo—linguine in a classic Alfredo sauce accompanied by a choice of grilled chicken or grilled shrimp, and broccoli.

By now, landlubbers are wondering whether they have been given more than a passing thought. For them the chef prepares several beef, chicken and pork dishes. The beef options include a ribeye, simply seasoned or blackened and grilled to your liking, and a seasoned filet of beef that is grilled until it is rich and buttery. The chicken dishes are the Yard Bird, deep-fried strips of breaded chicken breast, and the Double Breasted, two seasoned chicken breasts that are first grilled and then covered with bacon, broccoli, béarnaise sauce

and mozzarella cheese. Hog Heaven is the sole pork dish on the menu. It is an eight-ounce pork chop marinated in a citrus and herb brine and skillet cooked to the diner's preferred doneness.

Also available are Founders' Favorites, traditional fried or broiled clams, flounder, oysters, scallops and shrimp with a Port of Call touch.

Virtually every entrée on the menu comes with a choice of soup or small salad. Except for the pastas, most of the entrées are also served with two side items, chosen from among roasted, mashed or wedged potatoes, saffron rice, baked cheddar pasta shells, steamed broccoli, spiced apples, and coleslaw.

As for sandwiches, the menu has some interesting choices. For instance, you may order the S.P. Sub, fried shrimp or bay scallops piled on a sub roll and covered with coleslaw, romaine lettuce and tartar sauce. Or you may decide on the Grilled Scallop Burger, grilled sea scallops served on a Kaiser roll with cole slaw, romaine lettuce, and tartar sauce. The other sandwich option is the enigmatically named Sea Creature, a half-pound beef burger topped with sautéed mushrooms, red onion, provolone cheese, tomatoes and lettuce, served on a toasted Kaiser roll spread with tangy horseradish sauce.

Port of Call also offers some good wines and beers to accompany your meal. For white wine drinkers, there are chardonnays, pinot grigios, sauvignon blancs, Rieslings, and white zinfandels. Those preferring red wine may select from a list of cabernets, merlots, pinot noirs and red zinfandels. We recently chose a Kunde red zinfandel that paired very well with our seafood dishes. And if you are in the mood for a bubbly, you will find several possibilities among the sparkling wines and champagnes stocked by the restaurant. Beer drinkers will find a diverse selection of brews, ranging from the familiar domestics to crafts, imports and interesting microbrews.

When you eat at Port of Call, especially if you begin with an appetizer or two, be aware that you may not get to dessert. We did not get there on our recent visit. But if you do, the chef has four enticing options: carrot cake, red velvet cake, chocolate confusion cake and bourbon pecan pie.

Port of Call is open for dinner Tuesday through Sunday from 4:00 until 9:00 p.m. The restaurant is located di-

rectly on Bogue Sound in Salter Path, occupying the space previously held by Whidden Landing. Reservations may be made (and may be well-advised, especially during the tourist season) by calling 222-7677. Port of Call's website is www.sportofcall.com.

Public Safety

During May, there were 38 incidents written up as reports by the fire division. There were seven false alarms or false calls, one good intent call, one hazardous condition (no fire), 20 rescue and EMS calls and nine service calls.

Public Safety personnel participated in 233 hours of training in May, and no fire inspections were conducted.

It is officially hurricane season, and residents need to be sure that their hurricane preparations have been completed, including locating their re-entry pass.

Once again, citizens are urged to lock all doors and windows in their homes as well as vehicles.

Pine Knoll Shores does not have lifeguards at the beach so pay attention to family members and friends in the water.

Some of the Police Department's activities during May include:

- 4 accidents/property damage
- 2 arrests/DWI
- 2 breaking & entering
- 5 disturbances
- 5 drug investigations
- 1 call concerning fireworks
- 1 call concerning a harassing phone call
- 3 missing persons/runaway
- 15 unlocked doors (see above) found during house checks
- 3 suspicious activities
- 15 suspicious vehicles
- 4 suspicious people
- 17 town ordinance violation citations
- 6 trespassing
- 15 hang-up calls to 911
- 4 arrests
- 1 assault/fight
- 151 business checks
- 21 citations
- 1 damage to property
- 4 domestics
- 10 follow-up investigations
- 28 "I am OK" checks
- 1 indecent exposure
- 9 larcenies
- 41 VIPS residence checks