



the River restaurant & beverage review



August 2010

Outside the office I am as passionate about food as I am about commercial real estate inside the office. And when it comes to my tastes in food, the more interesting, unique, and delicious, the better. One of my greatest hobbies is traveling the area and sampling some of the cities' most delicious concoctions and finest beverages. Each month I will feature a great local restaurant along with one of my favorite beverage selections.

Café Ena

4601 Grand Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN

612-824-4441 | www.cafeena.com

As we enter the dog days of August in what has been a wonderful summer, I want to introduce you to an environment that will help to extend the season, Café Ena. Located on a quaint corner in South Minneapolis at 4601 Grand Avenue South, Care Ena has much to offer.

With easy access at the 46th Street exit off of I-35W, on street parking, and an expansive semi-private sidewalk patio loaded with plantings and flower arrangements, Café Ena says welcome. The interior is appropriately decorated to the Latin Fusion Cuisine theme, is heavily windowed,

spotless and inviting. The following quote from their website helps to describe this restaurants intent; "Inspired by our trips through Latin America, Chef Hector has masterfully blended distinctive and traditional foods with classic French technique and presentation. The end result is Café Ena: a new, upscale, and delicious cuisine unique to Minneapolis."

Accompanied by my star Marketing Advisor Deb and her friend Kelsey we enjoyed 90 minutes of pure dining pleasure and table talk over a splendid family style lunch. Aperitivos included the Camaron Caribe (Roasted corn-curry fritters, topped with beer battered drunken shrimp, cilantro aioli, pickled red onions, and cucumber-roasted tomato sauce), Guacamole (Fresh avocado, yellow and red tomatoes, red onion, roasted tomato salsa, micro cilantro, served with homemade tortilla chips) and Tartare (Ahi tuna with yellow tomatoes and cucumber, in a ginger sweet chili sauce, topped with a basil avocado mousse and micro beets). As wonderful as each of the appetizers tasted it was the presentation that awed each of us. We followed with the Quesillo sandwich (Seared panela cheese, avocado, spinach, roasted red peppers, and black beans served on telera bread) and an Entrée order of Carne Frita con Mofongo (Sautéed pork tenderloin served over mofongo of yucca in a white wine, garlic, onion sauce). We all agreed that each item selected was exceptional with the pork tenderloin taking top honors. In summary, a warm and inviting atmosphere, great service, good value and exceptional food are all reasons I will return.



Bill's Beverage of the Month

I recently had dinner at one of my prior review locations, Bar La Grassa, and was wise in my selection of both a specialty tap beer and very nice Chianti (Milla di Campobello Chianti Classico Riserva 2003). The 21st Amendment Brewery (www.21st-amendment.com) out of San Fransisco has this to say about their Bitter American EPA: "Like our founding fathers, arguing over a few pints of ale, this summertime session ale provides the perfect forum to air all your grievances. Our extra pale ale has lower alcohol but all the flavor and hop aroma you expect from a much bigger beer."