

02/28/10 - Go East Young Women



Many people who live in West LA consider it too far to go to La Cienega, or, god forbid, beyond, East to be precise toward down town or beyond to eat. In a city teaming with restaurants, serving everything on earth, from humdrum, real chef's creations, and everyday ethnic cuisine, it is amazing how people limit themselves. If the neighborhood has a little grit, is a little worn they are afraid! Today 2 of my friends and I ventured East ? to Fairfax, to a little hole in the wall called Tart, chef Lauren Kyles in residence. Tart is in the old, remodeled Farmer's Daughter Motel, across from the Farmers Market/Grove mall. I think I sold my duplex near the Grove too soon, before the Grove was built. Oh well, but I digress. I drove around the block until I figured out the parking situation then I gave my car to the motel valet- only in LA.

I sat with my friends in the unpretentious patio. The patio had wood tables, lacquered barn red and plastic patio chairs. Black and white large gingham check napkins encased the cutlery and were already adorning the tables. There was a large oasis of succulents planted in tall pots breaking up the monotony of the old concrete paving. There were large anemone including the mysterious black schwartskopff color, mixed with trailing varieties and coral cacti. It was live sculpture.

The three of us sat at a 4 top table and as we began to peruse the menu, our slightly botoxed eyebrows went up as the offerings exceeded our expectations.

First to come, the Ahi Tuna Sliders, on light as air brioche, slathered in garlic aioli. The tuna was perfectly seared Cajun style with a bite and there was a little bit of arugula for color and bitter contrast. Second, the hot from the oven corn muffins. Delightfully, crispy exteriors, that are soon lost when muffins sit before serving, gave way to steamy perfectly textured interiors and pure corn muffin taste. My dieting resolve was already in the trash.

We ordered the 'three kinds of potato' French fries with three kinds of dipping sauce. The potatoes were pure crisp on the outside giving way to fluffy potato insides and no greasy a



, Orange fleshed Sweet potatoes and anything but regular Idahoes. The fresh jalapeño mayonnaise was the perfect blend of piquant chili with smooth sauce. After our starters, the house salad of baby lettuce, pear slices, blue cheese, and walnuts was lightly dressed and perfect, unlike most restaurants where the salad is drowned in dressing. The grilled vegetable sandwich with goat cheese, open face, on crisp French baguette painted with pesto was marvelous. The vegetables, the perfect combination of red peppers, zucchini, and eggplant were hot off the grill, just the right thickness and cooked through. One of the best grilled vegetable sandwiches I have ever had.

We split a dessert, a tart of course! A triangle shaped tart with a crust like a madeleine cookie and the filling a chocolate espresso brulee with the perfect salamandered sugar crystal crackle on top took the prize at dessert.

We will definitely consider Tart in our future dining plans. Driving East is worth the time and effort. I said goodbye to my friends and ran back to the valet to claim my car and make it to my next appointment if only a little late.

Tart is not a kosher restaurant, but the items I samples can all be re-created in a



Ahi Sliders with Fried Green Tomatoes



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