



ARIS: EDUCATION & SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Ship to Shore

Americans tend to display remarkable somnambulism in regards to utilizing waterfront—whether ocean, river, lake or stream—property for leisure time activities. Europeans, perhaps through some inherent urban design gene formed by cumulative hundreds of years experience of close-quarter living—“spatial problems in cheap rooms had defeated them,” to quote legendary Iris Murdoch—completely inhabit urban waterfront spaces. Cafés extend rows of tables like tenuous colorful cables that anchor them to rivers’ edge. Whether Thames, Seine or Danube, parks and benches adorn riverside walkways allowing for respite amidst tumult and cacophony. This summer Kingston’s own Rondout Creek waterfront district received similar treatment with partial thanks to Samir Hrichi of Ship to Shore restaurant. West Strand Street is closed to vehicular traffic every Saturday from 3 pm until 11 pm, allowing for restaurants to set tables farther afield and adding a new dimension to the historic waterfront area.

The old world sign above the entrance to Ship to Shore, located in one of the oldest buildings on the Rondout, announces: “Old New York Steak House with Progressive American Cuisine.” Chef-owner for nine years and 1992 Culinary Institute of America graduate Samir Hrichi and his staff deliver the heralded. Snag one of the tables in the front room, enclosed by the windowed façade and relish the visual pastiche of colonial architecture and small town street life. (Samir intends to lobby to have the cobbles unearthed on West Strand Street in order to complete the antiquarian town feel.) The interior is cozy with exposed brick walls and airy ceilings, hues of burnished wood and candlelight. Tables along the walls have wooden banquettes and chairs opposite. The floor of softly worn wood speaks of experience and good times as do the advertisements for drink specials—Pineapple-infused martini, Melon Ball martini—on the loo wall. The night we visited, a Lychee Blueberry martini was the special and the scent of blueberries, heady and sweet, preceded the drink’s arrival at the table.

The appetizer menu is varied and intriguing, offering such progressive dishes as Sashimi Tuna Wonton Tacos with Avocado and Srirachi Chili Sauce (sold out the night we dined), Lobster and Shrimp Shiitake Mushroom Spring Rolls with Hoisin Plum Dipping sauce and Hanger Steak Satay with Pineapple Black Bean Salsa and Spicy Peanut Sauce. Samir credits his mixed ethnic heritage—his mother is Latvian and his father is Moroccan—with this penchant for intriguing spice and flavor medleys.

Samir is excellent with more regional and local fare, such as Stone Church Farm pulled Duck Salad with Avocado, Tomato and Pineapple Black Bean Salsa and Sesame Orange Vinaigrette; Coach Farm Goat Cheese Spinach Salad with Roasted Red Pepper, Pancetta and Balsamic Reduction; Seared Hudson Valley Foie Gras with Tart Berry Jam, Pecan Pancake and Balsamic Syrup, and a Field Green Salad with Candied Cherry Balsamic Dressing and Pecans.

The more traditional steak house fare includes: Crabcake with Spicy Remoulade (truly spicy and smooth) and Sweet Red Slaw (inspired complement to the succulent fish and the spice of the remoulade) and a Tomato Mozzarella Napoleon that was a terrific combination of warm (balsamic glaze) and cool (tomato) and creamy (mozzarella) and firm (tomato).



Chef/owner Samir Hrichi outside of his restaurant, Ship to Shore, in Kingston. Photo courtesy of Ship to Shore

The main meals are plentiful. Pasta and seafood dishes include classic Angel Hair Pomodoro or Rigatoni with Sausage and Peppers, Roasted Garlic and Pomodoro Sauce, and sumptuous-sounding Gemelli and Smoked Salmon with Roma Tomatoes, Avocado, Lemon Zest and Cilantro (!!) Cream. Salmon is served grilled with a Basil Citrus Glaze and Crispy Potatoes; the Tilapia is Panko-Crusted and served with Pineapple Black Bean Salsa, Stuffed Roasted Banana and Sesame Orange Vinaigrette, and the Tuna comes Sweet Jerk Chili Seared with Sesame Orange Vinaigrette, Sticky Rice and Sweet Red Slaw.



Steaks and chops comprise traditional meats of beef, lamb and duck and familiar cuts, such hanger steak, New York Sirloin, Rib Eye and Filet Mignon, but with surprising presentation and creative ingredient infusions. Before helming Ship to Shore in 1998, Samir worked at the New York City Steakhouse, La Cité which explains his artistry with meat and game. The duck—from local Stone Church Farm—was a succulent literal half a duck (unlike more traditional roulades or de-boned preparations) drizzled with tart (more sweet) berry preserve resting atop two savory pecan garlic pancakes (a side plate of just those pancakes would be wonderful) and sautéed spinach. The dish is lovely and appropriately rustic in presentation. Other adventurous dishes include Moroccan Spiced Roast Rack of Lamb with Dried Cherry Demi Glace, Grilled Hanger Steak with Citrus Chipotle Glaze and Grilled Pork Loin with Roasted Pecans and Crispy Potatoes. Dishes for steak house traditionalists include a 16-ounce NY Sirloin with Roasted Garlic Butter; a Surf and Turf of 12-ounce filet paired with a 4-ounce lobster tail and roasted garlic butter sauce; a 12-ounce Filet Mignon with Black Pepper Chianti Sauce, and a 24-ounce Broiled Rib Eye with Balsamic Mushroom Demi Glace. Dinner specials change daily and are presented with suggested wine pairings.

Ship to Shore takes its imbibing seriously with a chalkboard announcing the daily red and white wines by the glass, Wednesday Night Wine Specials, Friday Night Martini Night (\$5.00 Martini and Cosmo specials) and Daily Drink Specials that include wine, beer and cocktails. The wine list is heavy on the reds, with most offerings from Italy and California. There is a New York Riesling from Heron Hill; Australia and France each have one entry.

Now, for the dessert menu: Warm Godiva Chocolate Cake with Raspberry Sauce and Vanilla Ice Cream; Lemon Berry Tart with Sweet Graham Cracker Crust and Tart Berries; Tahitian Vanilla Crème Brûlée; Warm Deep Dish Bourbon Pecan Pie; Citrus Cheesecake with Tart Berry Jam; Warm Banana Upside Down Cake with Vanilla Ice Cream and Chocolate Sauce or a choice of Locally-made Gelato or Sorbet: the night we visited, the choices were Almond and Coconut respectively. The Warm Banana Cake was only mildly warm but outrageously dense and generously drizzled with rich chocolate sauce and a mini-snowball sized scoop of vanilla ice cream. The Lemon Tart was righteously cool, tart and creamy, piled with succulent berries and just a dollop of whipped cream—not freshly whipped but still an extra note of decadence.

In addition to the daily specials, the menu changes twice a year to reflect spring/summer and fall/winter. Samir is “a local businessman who likes to support other local businesses and sources from local farms” as often as he can in the spring, summer and autumn. Some of his favorite local sources include Coach Farm in Pine Plains, Gill Farms in Stone Ridge, Stone Church Farm in Rifton, Davenport Farm Market and Adams Fairacre Market both in Kingston, Hudson Valley Foie Gras in Ferndale and Gadaletto’s in New Paltz for fish

Every Saturday and Sunday, Ship to Shore offers brunch and lunch from 9 am until 3 pm. On Sundays from 11 am until 2 pm, Ship to Shore features a live jazz band of local college students musicians that liven up Sunday Brunch. For wine lovers, every Wednesday get one half-price bottle of wine with dinner.

Ship to Shore is Zagat-rated and was voted “Best Overall Restaurant in the Hudson Valley” in 2002 from the Times Herald Record. They also have two 5-star ratings from the Times Herald Record and the Traveling Gourmet.

Ship to Shore is open seven days a week from 11 am to 11 pm, with late night bar. Reservations are suggested.

Ship to Shore Restaurant is located at 15 West Strand, on the waterfront in Kingston. For more information, call 845 334 8887 or visit www.menuexplorer.com or www.shiptoshorehudsonvalley.com.

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