

SAN DIEGO DINING DISH!

Dining And Entertainment In San Diego And Southern California

Fishmonger's Market



Sometimes, it's easy to fall into a pattern with restaurants. We love to eat out, but sometimes, it can feel like we are eating the same things over and over. As Californians, we are all constantly striving to find new and different. New and different is, well, difficult sometimes.

Lauded chef Frank Terzoli has brought something truly different to San Diego -- honest-to-god fresh seafood and fish. Fish so fresh that he has a tracking system (that he invented!) for where, when, and who caught each item in his restaurant.



Imagine strolling through a seafood market, picking your item from the most freshly caught fish you can buy, then having it expertly prepared. Tokyo? No, it's right here in Mission Hills, neighbored inside of 57 Degrees wine bar.

Look at those beauties, ready to be eaten smoked, raw, or sauteed in the best ingredients and presented to you. This sounds goofy, but you can really taste the ocean when you eat this fish.



We started out with some of their fresh raw oysters. I've only recently gotten into raw oysters, but now I love them. So perfectly salty and a small slippery amuse bouche.





Fishmonger's Market has signature crudos -- Italian sushi. The crudo is really the can't miss item here, with inventive slices of raw fish and other seafood paired perfectly with fruits and vinegar to create something truly unique.

Pictured is the ahi tun with blueberries and chocolate vinaigrette.



A few bites of salmon with roe and mango was a delicate play of the sweet fruit, salty roe, and the flavor of the salmon. The crudo accentuates the flavors of the raw fish, rather than sloppily covering it with soy sauce and wasabi.



My favorite, however, was the octopus. Chewy, tasty, and spicy, the octopus, which I usually don't care for, really stole the show with the crudo course. The thin slices were easy to manage, flavorful, and the spicy kick of sauce really paired well with the texture.



For main courses, we tried a bit of everything, starting with the grilled swordfish. It's been years since I've had swordfish, and this steak made me remember what I love so much about it. Swordfish is sturdy, and will take just about any seasoning, so most folks are fond of dousing it with blackening and other heavy seasonings. This swordfish was very lightly dressed, to enable the natural flavor to shine through. Accompanied by San Marzano tomatoes and seasoned cauliflower, it was an amazing presentation.





The star of the main courses was the cioppino. I love, love cioppino. I think that any seafood lover is crazy for this soup made of a simple garlic tomato broth with spices and then a bin of various seafood and fish. This cioppino had it all -- shrimp, scallops, clams, mussels, chunks of salmon and swordfish -- and King crab legs! It was some serious soup, messy but delicious. The broth was delicious, and could have stood on its own, but with all of that glorious seafood, it was incredible.





If you are a vegetarian, Fishmonger's Market has that covered as well, with a delicious eggplant parmesan. When I was a vegetarian in another lifetime, this was my favorite dish, so I'm extra critical of this Italian-American classic. I am happy to report that this version did the classic right. Thick layers of eggplant sauteed and topped with San Marzano tomato sauce, with a secret ingredient to make all of the flavors meld perfectly. I love vegetarian food done well.





We finished our meal with ricotta cake -- a perfect ball of cake wrapped in ricotta and topped with sweet berries. Not too sweet, and a perfect share after such a huge meal!

I'm so excited to return and try some of their other fresh offerings, such as the New England Chowder, and fish and chips! Check it out and see what fresh fish really is!