

Riverside Bar & Grille is a new hidden gem

Psst! I'll let you in on a secret.

Resting at the mouth of the Little Manatee River in Ruskin is the Riverside Bar & Grille.

What? You didn't know about it either?



Lynn Kessel

It's been there almost a year now, and I just now learned about it.

To find this hidden eatery, you have to either live in the Riverside Club Golf & Boating Resort or be told about it by your friends, like I was.

"We have 1,000 residents and haven't had a need to do any advertising," chef Ted Hastings, the eatery's manager, told me. "Business is great."

If You Go

WHAT: Riverside Bar & Grille

WHERE: Riverside Club Golf & Boating Resort, 1 Pier Drive, Ruskin

HOURS: 11 a.m.-8 p.m., Tuesday-Saturdays; 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays

INFORMATION: (813) 641-1600 or visit www.RiversideBarAndGrille.com

Trained in classic Italian cuisine in San Diego and Pacific Rim and Asian cuisine in Oahu, Hawaii, Hastings has spent more than two decades honing his skills in the restaurant business. Most recently he worked as sous chef for Roy's in Sarasota and restaurant chef at Tara Golf & Country Club in Bradenton.

Although Riverside Bar & Grille is at the back of

the gated golf community by the water, it's open to the public. Just look for the parking lot teeming with golf carts. The restaurant offers lunch and dinner, and happy hour drinks from 3 to 7 p.m. daily and all day Sunday.

I loved the restaurant seating, which overlooked the Little Manatee River, the friendly staff and flexible menus.

Lunch selections in-

clude a full array of appetizers and baskets, salads and sandwiches, including grilled Angus beef burgers, Thai chicken, fish and chips, Greek chicken and hot pastrami. For dinner, you'll find entrees like buttery burre blanc over pan-seared grouper, filet mignon, New Zealand rack of lamb and hand-breaded pork tenderloin. My neighbors go there just for the mussels. Of course, the chef always offers a special of the day and a soup prepared from scratch.

Hastings said he sometimes asks his customers — and he knows most of them by name — what they'd like him to make. Then he puts together weekend specials based on their suggestions. It's a

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LYNN KESSEL

Chef Ted Hastings chose to share his favorite Valentine's Day recipe, Chateaubriand with wild mushroom Madeira sauce. He likes to serve it with coin-size sliced russet potatoes and grilled asparagus.

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Golf scores

Summerfield Crossings Ladies Golf Association

Dec. 21: Christmas Scramble

First: Carol Porada, Honey Jenks and Pat Colton
Second: Young Yoo, Linda Slater, Charlene Moore and Ann Schreppe
Third: Jane Lange, Nancy Rademaker, Gene Szczepaniak and Dotty Engle
Fourth: Bess Hosford Roseanne Dougherty, Lynn Patron and Sue Kroll
Fifth: Linda Smith, Kathy McNabb, Madelyn Scholz and Susan Yazdani

Dec. 28: 3 Clubs and Putter

Flight one: Young Yoo, 76
Flight two: Pat Colton, 81
Birdie: Linda Slater

Jan. 4: O.N.E.S.
Flight one: first: Bess Hosford, 37; second: Young Yoo, 38

Flight two: first: Lois Kelly, 36; second: Diana Linkous, 36.5

Flight three: first: Pat Colton, 39.5; second: Gene Szczepaniak, 40.5

Flight four: first: Marilyn Meister, 38; second: Genette Scalpone, 40

Birdies: Linda Smith

Jan. 11: Even Holes
Flight one: first: Carol Porada, 32; second: Bess Hosford, 33; third: Young Yoo, 34

Flight two: first: Diana Linkous, 33.5; second: Mary Ann Speich, 34.5; third: Kathy McNabb, 35.5

Flight three: first: Molly Walker, 31; second: Charlene Moore, 31, third: Pat Colton, 33.5

Flight four: first: Ann Schreppe, 33, second: Sue Kroll, 33, third: Linda Sands, 37.5

Birdies: Honey Jenks
Jan. 18: Scramble

First: Linda Smith, Lynn Patron, Gene Szczepaniak
Second: Jane Lange, Roseanne Dougherty, Madelyn Scholz

Third: Bess Hosford, Mary Ann Speich, Linda Sands, Susan Yazdani

Jan. 25: Three Blind Mice

Flight one: first: Linda Smith, 47; second: Bess Hosford, 49; third: Kitty Cunningham, 51

Flight two: first: Pat Colton, 45; second: Diana Linkous, 47; third: Roseanne Dougherty, 52

Flight three: first: Charlene Moore, 45; second: Gene Szczepaniak, 48; third: Linda Sands, 48

Flight four: first: Ann Schreppe, 46; second: Sue Kroll, 53; third: Genette Scalpone, 56

Birdies: Linda Smith, Charlene Moore, Gene Szczepaniak

SCRAPS

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way for him to keep his menu fresh and customers happy.

Hastings will offer a Valentine's special on Saturday, since the restaurant is closed on Mondays. Reservations aren't required, but call ahead for pricing and menu options.

Hmm. I'm beginning to think maintaining a low profile may be the surest way to draw a crowd. It has certainly worked at this place.

For this week's recipe, Hastings chose to share his favorite Valentine's Day recipe, Chateaubriand with wild mushroom Madeira sauce. He likes to serve it with coin-size, sliced russet potatoes and grilled asparagus. Bon appetit.

Lynn Kessel is a freelance food columnist and blogger. For more of her recipes, visit southshore.tbo.com and enter the search words Lynn Kessel or look for her blog at www.lynnkessel.blogspot.com.

Chateaubriand with wild mushroom Madeira sauce

1 pound beef tenderloin (filet mignon)
1 cup morel, portobello and cremini mushrooms, cut into thick slices
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 tablespoons olive oil
2 shallots, minced
1 tablespoon butter
¾ cup Madeira wine
1 russet potato, peeled and cut into coins and fried
Chives, thinly sliced
Salt and pepper the tenderloin, and preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Heat an oven-safe sauté pan on medium/high, then add the olive oil. Allow it to get very hot – until it just begins to smoke. Keeping the heat on high, place the beef filet in the pan and quickly sear each side for 30 seconds, until all sides are nicely seared browned. Place pan straight into the oven on the middle shelf and roast 12-15 minutes for medium rare, 20 minutes for medium, and so on. Take the beef out of the oven and onto a plate, and then let it rest. Meanwhile, add the garlic, shallots and mushrooms to the searing hot sauté pan. Let cook for 30 seconds and deglaze the pan by adding the wine. Let sauce reduce for 30 seconds and add the butter, letting it simmer for another 30 seconds. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cut the beef into thick diagonal pieces and serve on top of coin-size, cut-and-fried russet potatoes. Pour the wine sauce over the top of the beef. Garnish with fresh chives. Serves 2.

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