

Shades Restaurant & Bar

The Hilton Waterfront Beach Resort recently revamped its signature restaurant with a stylish new look, a new name and a continually updated menu featuring the freshest seasonal ingredients on the market.

Whether seated inside the casually elegant amber-hued dining room or on the hip open-air patio near the firepit, guests enjoy an unobstructed panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean. But as great as the ambiance is, where Shades really makes its mark is in by Executive Chef Jeff Littlefield's innovative menu of "market-driven California contemporary cuisine."

Popular specialties range from the roasted blue nose sea bass served with cannellini bean ragout and artichoke confit salad or roasted chicken accompanied by a spring onion risotto cake, Tinker Bell peppers and Romesco sauce to ranch favorites like the well-marbled, juicy Angus beef ribeye steak or the Colorado lamb chops marinated in garlic and rosemary.

His signature dish is the Maryland Crab Cake (which won the "Best Taste" award at the Taste of Huntington Beach event last spring), which is served year-round with seasonal accompaniments – like the current incarnation with Lakeville Farms lettuce, currant tomatoes and avocado vinaigrette.

"My restaurant chef, Ben Lafleche, and the rest of the team continually collaborate to create specialties based on the freshest available ingredients for that day's menu," says Littlefield. "For example, the quality of produce can literally change overnight. Today, the heirloom tomatoes available might be absolutely beautiful, but might not be a good choice tomorrow."

Littlefield adds that he also takes the feedback he receives from his customers to heart in continually evolving the menu to reflect the tastes of today's discriminating diners.

"One of the recent changes we've made is to incorporate more bistro-style cuisine into our offerings to give our guests a bit more of a casual dining option," he says. "So far, the concept has been very well-received by locals and hotel guests alike."

Bistro items include a roasted chicken and Brie cheese sandwich, served with watercress, sliced apples and a walnut aioli and an Artisan cheese plate featuring a flavorful selection including a mild goat's milk cheese with a soft rosemary finish, an award-winning cheddar and a ginger and mango stilton.

"We're having a lot of fun with the bistro part of the menu," says Littlefield. "We want people to come and stay awhile to enjoy the ambiance, the cuisine, the hip music – this is the place where locals can come to enjoy an altogether different experience from the downtown HB bar scene."

Shades Restaurant concept has apparently already hit the



mark for locals like Lisa Loughran, vice president and branch administrator for the HB-based Surf City Bank.

"Some friends and I were looking for a place with ambiance," she says. "We found it around the outdoor firepit at Shades, where we can relax, enjoy a glass of wine and listen to soft Calypso music. Being in the customer service industry, I always find myself paying close attention to the service I receive and can attest that the service here is consistently outstanding." **HB**

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Hilton Waterfront Beach Resort
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