



Rosa's and Footloose

By Teri Bayus

Consistency, romance, culinary delights and perfect service; it is always so good to go home to Rosa's Ristorante Italiano. This restaurant is an elite keepsake on the Central Coast. The staff is phenomenal, so well trained they compliment your choice to dine here. We came with friends, and everything about the meal was impressive. Rosa's is tucked away at the entrance to Price Street, but it is the go-to spot when you want to impress visiting guests or business acquaintances.

Gary started with the specialty dessert, a Chocolate Tangelo. Two scoops of chocolate/tangelo gelato served in a frosted dish with a cannelloni with mascarpone and a candied bird's nest decoration with an accompanying orange soaked in plum wine. It was so sweet he ate the rind. He was kind and offered to share, a feat I think only happened because we were with guests.

The rest of us started with the calamari appetizer. Fried crisp, these tubes and tentacles were perfectly cooked and dunked in a house-made cocktail sauce and a cilantro cream dipping green sauce that brought out the essence of the ocean when combined.

The owner, Bill, came to join us for a glass of wine and told funny jokes and sweet stories about his late wife. Then he brought us a taste of his newest concoction, a swirly pasta sautéed in a white wine olive oil sauce with hunks of fennel and sausage. An original taste that ended with a touch of fire. We all agreed it should be put on the specialty menu. I love that he is trying to bring the Italian palate to California.

I started with the Tuna Capriccio with a thin layer of smoked ahi tune covered with arugula leaves, onions and capers. Capers are my favorite fruit and this dish holds both large and small ones. I am in salty heaven when I eat this. I have never seen it offered anywhere else, and I could eat it every day.

Then I had an appetizer as an entrée, as the special menu beckoned to my senses. This mastermind dish consisted of large scallops wrapped in prosciutto resting on a bed of sautéed spinach and caramelized Parmesan cheese crisps. It was a symphony of flavors, and I inhaled it as if it was my last meal.

Gary had the Brianna Platter Special, which is named after the chef's daughter and always a hit. It is a huge manicotti with a spinach ricotta covered in flavorful tomatoes, sauce and beef cannelloni. He was awed at the sheer size of the dishes and the remarkable flavor.

Even though it is an Italian restaurant, our friend had heard they have the best steak filets. Confirmed by Chef Doug McMillan to be the best from Creekside Farm, where the flavor of free-range beef is outstanding and the benefits many. He devoured every inch of this medium-rare hunk of beef. We tried a bite and it astounded us. Accompanied by the chef's famous saffron risotto, this was a mouth-watering repast.

Our friend ordered the four cheeses and red potato pizza, done on a cracker bread crust with Gorgonzola, Fontina, Parmesan and Mozzarella cheese. This is a pure Italian pizza better than anything this side of the Vatican. Rosa's offers a full bar, so we tried Stacey's (the best bartender in town) famous martinis. They were a success with all.

We finished with a visit from the chef, Doug, as he told proud family stories and the reason why this is the best restaurant on the Central Coast. "Passion, love and family" is their mantra and I agree whole-heartedly. The decorations are simple and elegant with meeting rooms for large groups and an enclosed patio for outside dining. With two generations in the kitchen, Rosa's combines the best of old and new world cooking to create a wonderful full-flavored and astoundingly good menu.

Rosa's Ristorante Italiano is located at 491 Price St. in Pismo Beach. They are open from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. for lunch every day but Sunday, and 4 p.m. to close every night for dinner. For big groups, call (805) 773-0551 for reservations.



I enjoy bad movies, but I enjoy bad remakes even more. Rev. Shaw Moore (Dennis Quaid) starts by telling us, "Our Lord is testing us." Silly, melodramatic and 27 years later, *Footloose* is alive and well. While not having the heavy-duty cast of the original (Kevin Bacon, John Lithgow and Chris Penn), it is updated with steamier sex, tighter jeans ("If you put a quarter in her back pocket you can tell whether it's heads or tails") and more suggestive dancing. But the melodrama of a small Georgia town (originally the Midwest) is all there and the religious anchoring abounds.

The plot is simple: The town banned dancing three years ago after a tragic teenage car accident, and newcomer Ren (Kenny Wormald), from Boston, is destined to change attitudes toward the expression of teenage longing and passion by dancing out his

feelings (sorry, I giggled when I wrote this, who would believe a teenage boy would dance out his feelings?). Along with him are senior high school buddies, more diverse than ever, for the Midwest. They all like to dance their feelings out and do it with flare.

Most notable is Willard (Miles Teller), who acts with an easy southern redneck charm and surprising neophyte dancing. If you ask me, there's not enough of this dancing and too much melodrama, but I'm used to that with my weekly dose of *Glee*. I must mention that the dancing is spectacular, a real site to behold. Updating the action with country line dancing and crumping had me also hoping for more rather than less of the energetic and sexy footwork.

Alas, Andie MacDowell as preacher wife Vi Moore needs her face time to be heroic and hip, when more break dancing could have done the job. Even Frank Capra seems in on this scrip when

Ren gives his righteous speech in front of the town council about the freedom to dance. Although the VW bug remains, director Craig Brewer changes it for the better. The original tractor chicken standoff becomes a school bus free for all, and he lets a couple of 10-year-olds shine with the cutest version of Let's Hear It for the Boys.

Though shot and marketed for children, this is not a kid movie. It is filled with sex, beating of women, tense language and kids behaving extremely poorly. Although everyone loves the wholesome

Juliaane from *Dancing With the Stars*, who plays Ariel Moore, there is way too much adult content for kids under 16.

Let's admit that *Footloose* is a formula film fulfilling its obligations with some splendid dancing, vividly colored characters, and sets to take a 1980's treasure right into 2011.

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