

Citrico's at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort: A Walt Disney World Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, *PassPorter Featured Columnist*

Citrico's is one of those rare signature restaurants that we don't visit very often, and the reason for that goes back to an appalling meal there in late 2006.

□ We found our server to be verging on rude, and the food not particularly good, certainly not the quality we've come to expect from other signature restaurants. However, after reading a number of positive reviews from friends, I decided it was about time we went back, and gave it another go. After all, almost a decade had passed since our last visit, and surely things had changed since then?

Well, they had, and this restaurant is now definitely on a par with the other signatures from the meal we had that night. We were dining with friends, who know a lot of the Cast Members there, and I'm sure that had something to do with the table we were given, overlooking the resort's marina. We were told that this would provide us with a perfect view of Wishes when that started, and it did, although for any keen photographers, it's worth knowing that with the amount of light in the restaurant, it's virtually impossible to get any good shots from in here.

□ The menu offered lots of choice for me as a non-meat eater, particularly on the appetizers. I could have had the cheese course, the PEI mussels with spiced poma rosa tomato sauce, crisp chardonnay and caramelized garlic, the sauteed Florida rock shrimp, served with freshly squeezed lemon, chardonnay (a popular ingredient the night we were there), ripe tomatoes, a hint of garlic and sharp feta or even the winter greens and Riesling-braised beets salad or the local strawberry and blood orange salad, baby red romaine and frisee with strawberry vinaigrette.

□ Eventually, I opted for the smoked wild mushroom bisque, with hand foraged wild mushrooms, cream sherry, crème fraiche, pepper cress, and arbequina olive oil, after our friends raved about it, and it was remarkably light, which was just what I wanted, and beautifully flavored. Every mouthful was an absolute delight.

My husband had the slow-roasted Berkshire pork belly, with Anson Mill cheese grits, smoked jalapeno, sweet onion, and hibiscus BBQ sauce. I have to say the list of ingredients sounded very unusual to me, but he

couldn't say enough good things about the dish, so I guess unusual as they were, they worked well in combination.

□ Other meat options for appetizer that night included the arancini, Sicilian street food, made up of crispy risotto with sweet Italian sausage, creamy mozzarella and poma rosa tomato puree, the charcuterie dish, and the lamb albondiga, soft lamb meatball, slow braised in aromatic curry-tomato sauce and creamy herb polenta with sharp crumbled feta.

□ I had no such issues picking my entree, as I knew what I wanted as soon as I saw the menu, the oak grilled Florida swordfish with Provencal vegetables, plump Israeli couscous and bright citrus-marinated shellfish frutti de mare. This is where, for me, Citrico's really shone, as I could not fault this at all. The flavors combined perfectly, and again, just like the soup, it was such a light dish. This really is signature dining at Disney at its best!

□ My husband ordered the oak grilled filet mignon with crushed Yukon gold garlic potatoes, peppadew pepper, caramelized onions, broccoli rabe and Cabernet reduction, and he enjoyed his dish just as much as me, telling me the meat was superbly cooked.

□ Other options that night for main course included the Ashely Farms pan-seared chicken, wild caught striped bass, Berkshire pork two ways cannellini cassoulet, the crispy pan-fried veal chop elephant, and the red wine-braised beef short ribs. For vegetarians, there was seared tofu with ratatouille, roasted mushrooms, lentils, and sun-dried tomato puree.

□ We were delighted when we saw the dessert menu, and realized that it was what I'd call a traditional one. We'd already eaten at the California Grill during this trip, and I really do not like their attempt at "fun twists" on desserts. When it comes to the final course of the meal, I'm as traditional as it comes, so this fitted the bill perfectly.

□ Some of the options included the intriguing sounding Granny Smith green apple sorbet, the equally interesting sounding lemon-scented cheesecake, tiramisu, and seasonal berry gratin. As a crème brulee lover, I went for the tropical fruit crème brulee with mango and assorted berries, and it was very nice, and given how many crème brulees I've sampled over the years, that's high praise indeed!

□ My husband got the warm chocolate-banana torte with vanilla ice cream and handcrafted Belgian couverture chocolate crown. It didn't sound appealing to me, given I'm not that much of a fan of banana, but

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an amazing creation turned up, and I found myself regretting not getting it when I saw the presentation.

□ The service throughout the meal had been wonderful. It was well paced, and our server Kiera appeared almost as if by magic whenever anything needed doing, such as the water or wine being topped up.

□ We both came away feeling that Citrico's had more than redeemed itself in our book. We were glad we had given it a second chance, and we could understand the rave reviews we'd read. It's now on our (very long!) list of places to return to at Disney, and is right back up there with the best of Disney's signature restaurants.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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