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Out And About: Millenia 106 Offer New American Classics Loaded With Flavor

You'll find Millenia 106 next to The Mall at Millenia, in a storefront facing the intersection of Millenia Blvd and Conroy Rd, but trust me, this is not mall food.

I was invited to check out the revamped menu, which comes courtesy of Chef Bruno Fonseca, who recently took over operations. It's hard to judge the restaurant from the outside, but you'll definitely want to venture inside for the delicious food and drink.

Fonseca's menu has some staples on it, but is fluid depending on what are the freshest ingredients he has on hand for the day. He uses local growers and suppliers as much as possible, and that inspires the day's dishes. The flavors are New American, with a hint of Portuguese, reflecting his Brazilian heritage.



We started with an appetizer of crispy pork rinds that were still cracklin' when they hit the table. They had a dusting of aleppo spice, and were paired with a dipper of pickled garlic ranch, which had a strong flavor.

If you like pate, Chef Fonseca offers a chicken liver mousse appetizer, as well. I'm not a huge fan of the dish, but his version was very creamy smooth. It was paired with toast and a pickle du jour, which this day, happened to be an onion jam. With the spices and sweetness added, I mistook it for spiced apple. It was delish.

When the chef reorganized the kitchen, he decided to keep the pizza oven, and he uses it to make delicious Neopolitan-style crust pies. We tried the "Love" pizza, which is topped with mozzarella, speck (similar to prosciutto), pieces of balsamic fig, and arugula. It was a nice balance of salty and sweet, with a hint of spicy from the greens, and the thin crust had a slight chew to it.

One of the evening's special entrees was a Chicken Gnudi, and I swear I would come back just to enjoy this dish again. Pillows of fresh noodles made with ricotta were served with shredded braised chicken,

diced bacon, pine nuts, super fresh sugar snaps, and broccoli sprouts, in a bowl with a small ladle of chicken broth. It hit so many good flavor notes in my mouth.

The final entree we sampled was, I'm told, a menu staple: the Steak & Egg. It features two strips of grilled hanger steak, simply seasoned with salt & pepper, served with a pile of confit potatoes, greens and an arzak egg, on a smear of 106 sauce. It's a straight forward dish, and the elements paired nicely. The steak was cooked-to-order for each of us, and we both enjoyed it.



Chef Fonseca said he normally has two to three desserts on the menu each night. On this night, we enjoyed a tower of dark moist chocolate cake on a bed of Chantilly cream with a sprinkle of dried orange pieces. Chocoholics will love this dish.

I also tried the special cobbler of the evening, featuring a bed of mixed berries topped with herbed crust crumbles, and a small scoop of lemon marscarpone ice cream. This was a delightful mixture of tart and sweet, and finished off my dining experience nicely.

During our meal we sampled some brews and ciders, as well as a couple of mixed drinks. Millenia 106 has a full bar, and a respectable selection of craft brews. We enjoyed the jdubs bell cow, a milk chocolate porter, and the Original Sin Elderberry Cider. The craft cocktail selection has several rum, gin, and whiskey based drinks, as well as a list of sip-ables.

Readers, I really tried to find some fault with the meal but there weren't really any. Probably the worst thing I could say is they were temporarily without steak knives, but our steak didn't need them. The meat was so tender our butter knives worked just fine.

Another thing I really liked about Millenia 106 is that this quality food doesn't come with a huge price tag. Most entrees are \$20 or less; most appetizers and salads, under \$10.

This restaurant is a hidden gem waiting for you to discover it. For added incentive, a daily happy hour runs from 4:30pm to 7:30pm with drink and food specials.

Chef Fonseca said a Sunday brunch will be coming soon, along with wine and beer dinner events. We'll post those as soon as we get dates.

Millenia 106 is located at 4104 Millenia Blvd (Suite 106), and can be found online at millenia106.com. Hours are Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11:30am to 10pm.