

TRIO A Brick Oven Cafe

By A. Parks

RESTAURANT REVIEW

If memory serves me correctly, it was about this time of year two years ago that TRIO appeared on the Downtown Greenville restaurant scene to rave reviews. Well, as far as that goes, not much has changed in the past two years! TRIO is still one of the lunch and dinner favorites of the downtown eating establishment.

When this group of young entrepreneurs came to Greenville (actually one was already here with two darn good Italian restaurants - one on the East side and the other in the Augusta Road area - both called "Portofino's"), they purchased the building on N. Main St. that housed a "young people's" clothing store on the corner of N. Main and Coffee Streets. After much planning and considerable renovations, TRIO was born.

In a recent conversation I had with one of the three (TRIO) owner/ partners, he told me that the restaurant had been very favorably received by the community almost immediately after opening its doors. It was conceived and built as a quality, moderately priced family and business casual dining establishment, and it works!

The wood burning brick oven is a nice touch and has been a relatively recent successful innovation in restaurants across the country. Its not just a marketing gimmick, it really does add a distinctive flavor to the already unique "Wood-Fired Pizzas" they serve at TRIO. I've tried many of the pizzas on the menu and one of my favorite is the Smoked Salmon with red onions, diced apples, capers, brie cheese and of coarse fresh dill.

I've been told by one of the partners that when they originally formulated the idea for the restaurant they wanted a "family feel" to it with unique food and moderate prices. The type of eatery that you would feel very comfortable in with a business customer or co-worker or with your spouse with or without kids, and a place you could afford to come to more than once a week. I think they hit the nail right on the head!

Continuing with that line of thinking you need a pretty varied menu to support those goals and TRIO has just that. I mentioned the pizzas, of which they have a full page to choose from, and they have another page of pasta dishes of which my very favorite is the Spicy Shrimp & Scallops Fusilli. This delight is sautéed with garlic (I love it) onions, shiitake mushrooms, Cajun herbs (though I love lots of spices I don't think this is too much for most pallets) and white wine served over Fusilli pasta.

You'll also enjoy selecting from Rotisserie Chicken, Calzones, stuffed Pitas and a whole bunch more. With this selection, and serving only selected domestic and imported beers, to even include a few draft selections and some very great tasting, moderately priced wines (their decision to limit their alcoholic beverages to these categories just happens to conform with the newly announced downtown sidewalk dining and drinking ordinance), TRIO is most definitely following its original direction of being an often selected choice for the Greenville or Greenville visitor to consider frequenting more often than just once a week.

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