



Tuesday, Aug 09, 2011

# Red Marlin serves deliciously democratic food

The blackened Mahi-Mahi was particularly good at this Mission Bay restaurant

By [Jenny Montgomery](#)



Red Marlin's take on classic surf-and-turf - Photo by Jenny Montgomery

One of the bonuses of being pregnant—once you're through the "all food is disgusting" phase—is the world being mostly supportive of your occasionally (OK, fine, frequently) piggish eating "needs." "Listen to your body!" they reassure. "The baby will tell you what it needs!" Well, I listened to mine recently, and, apparently, it needed surf-and-turf, followed by a healthy serving of my 4-year-old nephew's mac 'n' cheese. This is the beauty of a hotel restaurant like Red Marlin:

0

[Tweet](#)

0

[+1](#)

[Share](#)

something for everyone.

It's an expansive and contemporary outpost with a traditional and tasty—if overpriced for tourists—classic American menu. As part of the Hyatt on Mission Bay, [Red Marlin](#) has that polished and clockwork-like service that comes with being a part of a large hotel chain.

Red Marlin recently acquired executive chef Brad Gillespie, who oversees not only the dockside restaurant, but all of the culinary goings-on at the high-rise hotel. The summer menu has all sorts of hearty delights that aren't necessarily out of place but don't always scream "light and beachy." Gillespie knows his audience, and Red Marlin walks the line between high-falutin' and crowd-pleasin'.

My \$40 surf-and-turf special included a 10-ounce flank steak, three giant pieces of grilled shrimp, crispy haricot verts and blue-cheese mashed potatoes. The steak was prepared well—tender and medium with a great pan jus. The crispness of the beans was perfect, though they were a bit on the salty side. The potatoes were luscious and creamy, with the perfect amount of salt, butter and cream to remind you that you don't need to mess with a classic. (Between mashed potatoes and mac 'n' cheese, I'm so done with the let's-shove-the-most-outrageous-things-we-can-think-of-into-a-starch zero-sum game.)

One of the menu highlights was the blackened Mahi-Mahi. The zesty, smoky spices of the blackened rub were nicely contrasted with a light and whipped avocado purée that streaked across the plate. Paired with a salad of sweet corn and jicama, this was a fresh and excellently executed summertime dish that's sure to please locals and impress less coastal-oriented visitors. (Side note: Can we get more jicama in our lives, please? I know it's kind of weird, but I love that stuff.)

The halibut and swordfish were other fish options done quite well. The meaty halibut sang when accompanied by a tomato antiboise, a sauce cooked down to bring out the sweetness of the heirloom tomatoes. I also enjoyed the creamy purple heirloom beans that shared plate space with the swordfish, and the charred cauliflower added a nice crispy texture to the dish.

The Kurobuta Pork Chop was also tasty, tender and moist, particularly for a giant bone-in chop. I loved the grilled peaches—peach season is far too short—a classic combination with pork, but the rest of the dish—potatoes, bacon, caramelized onion and squash—tasted very autumnal. All very good, but it left me craving cider and buckled shoes.

The S'More Brownie was a playful finish to the more conservative dinner offerings. The toasted marshmallows that capped the dense and fudgy brownie were a gooey treat, and though the brownie toed perilously close to the "flourless cake" region, it still had enough gluten in it to remain in the brownie family. (But that's a rant for another day.)

Red Marlin fit the bill perfectly for a recent large family celebration: plenty of space, plenty of food and attentive staff used to dealing with out-of-towners of all types, as well as persnickety locals. Though I could pick apart the details, we all left with full bellies, happy with the delicious and hearty fare. I'm sure the tears in my nephew's eyes were because of the beautiful sunset, not because his pregnant aunt stole his dinner.




*Write to [jennym@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:jennym@sdcitybeat.com) and [editor@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:editor@sdcitybeat.com).*

---

**RED MARLIN**  
1441 Quivira Way  
Mission Bay  
619-221-4868  
[redmarlinrestaurant.com](http://redmarlinrestaurant.com)

---

## Related content

-  [A look at sustainable seafood](#)
-  [Don't fear P.B.](#)
-  [EMCON/OWT is O-U-T](#)

## Related to:

[Red Marlin](#) [seafood](#)  
[Mission Bay](#)