

BAMBOO CLUB

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diverse populations with different cultures and palates, very accepting of various food experiences."

CULINARY OFFERINGS

Dunn, whose resume reveals her broad experience, holds a degree in culinary arts from the Art Institute of Seattle.

"Living and working there, only a block from the International district exposed me to Pacific Rim foods," she said. "Flavors are intense, yet carry a nice balance. Made from refreshing, emerging and healthy ingredients, they are not rich, and a diner does not leave the table feeling overly full."

Enticing flavors stem from many ingredients such as ginger, lemongrass, star anise, togarashi (Japanese seven-pepper spice) and sambal olek (garlic and chili paste).

The Bamboo Club's eclectic menu is easy to understand. Divided into sections — with headings that include bamboo favorites, grilled, sized, noodle, steamed and wok — cuts you straight to the chase of your favorite cooking style. Yet, if you notice the exhibition wok

line, with about a dozen seats to watch the show, you may be tempted to hit the wok section first.

CHEF'S FAVORITES

Many dishes are vegetarian-friendly, and Dunn pointed out those she favors or believes will be hits with area diners: At lunch, chicken or vegetable spring rolls and soothing lettuce wraps with a mixture of shrimp and chicken top the list. Signature Spicy Crackling Calamari Salad, prepared with flash-fried, flour-dusted calamari, Thai chili and garlic dressing sauteed with four vegetables and served on a bed of iceberg lettuce, is a hot item. Yes, it's spicy and marked with an asterisk, as are all spicy items.

Other lunch main plate favorites are Thai Spicy Shrimp with green beans, Mulu's Spicy Steak, cubed and tenderized New York Strip wokked with onions, green peppers and mushrooms, and the impressive tableside preparation Hong Kong Steak and Mushrooms, flambéed with brandy, which is also a hit on the dinner menu.

Asian appetizer preferences modify at dinner to crispy crab wontons and coconut shrimp with honey mustard sauce. Soups such as Kwai's Spicy,

wonton or vegetarian hot and sour are chosen over salads. Among "bamboo favorites" are Mandarin orange chicken or beef and Bamboo Beijing Duck with Asian pancakes. Vietnamese Steak utilizes the same cut as Malia's but is wokked with diced carrots, onions and green beans in a light black pepper soy sauce and served over a bed of chopped romaine.

If you know Pad Thai, expand your noodle horizons to Korean Style Beef or chicken on crispy rice noodles.

The Bamboo Club features an extensive progressive wine list (ordered by intensity) with a host of brand recognizable offerings — by the bottle and by the glass — that pair well with the various Pacific Rim dishes.

Since you'll have room for dessert, order the grand finale serving two, Bamboo Club Berries (a seasonal blend) presented on a sizzle platter, flambéed tableside with raspberry liqueur and brandy, then spooned over vanilla bean ice cream.

Eleanor Heald is a nationally published writer and Troy resident who writes about restaurants, food, wine and spirits for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave her a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 18648.



Hanlin Lee and Juan Perez (background) whip up lunchtime orders at the Bamboo Club.

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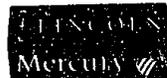
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