



“Rupert’s has a menu to match its excellent view of Payette Lake”

A big meal at Rupert’s in McCall may call for a stroll along the shore of nearby Payette Lake.

The Asian noodle cakes are among the creative appetizers on the globally-inspired menu at Rupert’s.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Critic’s choice

Executive chef Christopher Bradbeer gets most of his dishes right at this new McCall eatery.

RUPERT’S AT HOTEL MCCALL

Address: 1101 N. 3rd St., McCall

Phone: (208) 634-8108

Hours: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily

Menu price range: \$4 - \$31

Libation situation: Draft beers, various domestic and international wines and Dawson Taylor Coffee.

Miscellaneous: Visa/MasterCard/Amex/Discover cards and local checks accepted. Wheelchair accessible.

By James Patrick Kelly - Special to the Idaho Statesman

Edition Date: 12/21/07

Hotel McCall recently underwent an extensive renovation, adding more suites, an indoor swimming pool and amenity upgrades to its existing units.

It also debuted a full-service restaurant that offers guests breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week, just like a true hotel restaurant should.

Executive chef Christopher Bradbeer, formerly of North Fork Caf and Sweetwater, and sous chef Peter Hall

were hired to put out the food in the stylish new dining room, which boasts stunning views of Payette Lake and the surrounding mountains.

Located in the spot where Epicurean once resided, Rupert's is much larger than its predecessor. The dining room has beautiful hardwood floors and ornate Asian rugs, giving the space an elegant yet comfortable feel. There's also a small bar area for those looking to quaff Guinness on draft after a day on the slopes.

Rupert's, named after owner John Carey's Jack Russell terrier, is a great addition to downtown McCall's dining scene. Carey also owns Jug Mountain Ranch, a public golf course and restaurant that recently received accolades in *Golf Digest*.

At nighttime, diners at Rupert's can find a seasonal menu of European and pan-Asian offerings with Northwest flair.

Start with Asian noodle cakes (\$12) and the winter beet salad (\$10), a plate of mixed greens adorned with red wine-poached pears, al dente crimson beets, tangy goat cheese and candied walnuts and filberts, served with fragrant lavender-infused vinaigrette.

Fork-tender medallions of beef tenderloin sit atop a tangle of sweet and spongy yakisoba noodle cakes, drizzled with a dark Hunan-inspired sauce. A pile of bright Asian slaw and pickled ginger offers the proper sour juxtaposition.

The wine list is somewhat Cali-centric but diners can find some Northwest appellations, such as L'Ecole No. 41 Recess Red (\$7) from Walla Walla Valley, an earthy red wine that pairs well with the earthiness of the beet salad. Entrees range from steak frites to portabello Napoleon to chutney-stuffed pork chops.

But be sure to get the specials from your server, because you don't want to miss out on dishes such as grilled steelhead (\$25/wild from Washington) zigzagged with champagne barnaise sauce, sided with fluffy rice pilaf and crisp vegetables.

Bradbeer shows his playful side with the tournedos martini (\$22), a steak dish inspired by the classic cocktail. Grilled slices of baguette are situated in a pool of vodka-tinged espagnole sauce, topped with tender grilled shoulder medallions (medium-rare, in our case), vermouth bchamel and green olives, pimentos included.

The Walla Walla wine was hearty enough to stand up to all these flavors.

Rupert's offers its hotel guests a gratis (or included in the lodging price) continental breakfast. Yet diners also can find a substantial selection of made-to-order morning offerings.

Every hotel restaurant should serve eggs Benedict. Rupert's makes a good Benny (\$11) with crusty toaster muffins layered with salty and sweet Canadian bacon, delicately poached eggs and just the right amount (not smothered in it) of lemony hollandaise.

Golden brown breakfast potatoes round out the plate.

Smothered potatoes are popular around McCall, and Rupert's is confident it serves the best spud pile-up (\$9) in town, or in the state, for that matter. It says "Idaho's best breakfast potatoes" right on the menu. Expect to receive a tasty amalgamation of crispy potatoes, smoky ham, bacon, red bell pepper, mushrooms, onion and shredded cheddar, crowned with an egg cooked to your liking and chunky red salsa.

The restaurant pours a special house blend of Dawson Taylor Coffee to wash everything down.

All in all, Hotel McCall is doing an excellent job with its restaurant program. Service is generally efficient and professional, and the dining room has one of the best views in town.