

Restaurant Offers Fresh Menu and Inviting Ambience - County Line Magazine

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Photo by Stan Johnson

As the proverb goes, there's nothing new under the sun. A new restaurant in Tyler challenges that notion by doing fresh things with tried-and-true ingredients.

Roast Social Kitchen offers up a sort of nouveau Mediterranean cuisine. It's ideal for health-conscious eaters, but traditionalists find plenty to like there too.

The combinations are part of the charm. Scanning the menu reveals interesting and inviting possibilities. Have you ever had grapes on a pizza? How about eggs? Or potatoes? Or hot honey?

Gourmet and new renditions of classic pizzas make up the main entrees, yes, but plenty of other starters and sides are equally enticing. Try the cauliflower and grapes dish or the pork and ricotta meatball soup with Parmesan broth. Many items feature soppresatta, defined as “pepperoni’s sophisticated older sister.”

“It’s a lot of stuff I’ve been using a long time, but then I’d say ‘Let’s give that a try,’” said owner and creator Jen Pencis.

The new restaurant comes from the entrepreneurial vision of she and her husband Nick, owners of the popular Stanley’s Famous Pit Bar-B-Q, also in Tyler. Jen explains the name comes from that “Roast,” the focus of growing and making food in-house, “Social,” the style of eating and “‘Kitchen’ is obvious.”

The menu plays down the fact that most of the food is organic and appropriate for people with dietetic intolerances because people can eat right without being confused or reluctant due to strange-sounding terminology, she said. When a diner wants to order gluten-free, they are encouraged to use the code words “Ella Bea,” after a 10-year-old family friend who suffers from food allergies.

A foundational part of pizza — the dough — also has fresh and tasty origins. The restaurant consulted with culinary experts to come up with a signature recipe, and so all the dough is made in-house, too.

Besides the main course, the desserts are equally interesting with names like Carrot Cake Woopie Pie, Lavender Cheesecake and Date Night, which pairs dates with whipped ricotta topped with pecans.

If visiting with children, the kids menu will suit them.

They also have an extensive specialty drink menu for the adventurous.

Located at 1125 E. Fifth Street the restaurant serves lunch and dinner between the hours of 11 a.m. and 10 p.m., but is open till 1 a.m. on Fridays and 2 a.m. on Saturdays. Customers walk up to the counter to order and the wait staff delivers food to the table.