

peaceout2011

sabbatical memories documented for all to see



Dinner at e11even

I wish I was a restaurant critic. I love food, drink, good service, and providing feedback. Thank you [e11even](#) for allowing me to feel like a restaurant critic for a night. I have a personal connection in the kitchen at e11even that allowed this to happen – thank you Graham.

There have been mixed reviews published about e11even so I was excited to see for myself. My conclusion: great space, great service, great food, great wine list, great toilets. Seems like I won't make much of a critic with this 'everything was great' assessment.

Space: it's big, but it still feels cozy due to the gorgeous wood ceiling, curved plush booths, warm lighting, and different heights for different seating areas. I also liked the connection to the kitchen with the mirror and permitted walk through along the line.



me and soozan

Service: Attentive, but not annoying. Nathan was great as our waiter and Jonathan M. dealt with us very well as sommelier. Graham, sous chef, also visited us periodically to make sure the food

was to our liking. When each of them asked how we liked what we were eating/drinking – they appeared to really want to know. I like that in a restaurant.

Food and Drink: There was a lot so I will keep notes brief.



cheeseburger amuse bouche

Starter Cocktail: Mr. Manhattan for me and Garden of Eden for Sue. The manhattan was really good and it packed a punch so I was tipsy on my first visit to the washroom (see toilet review below).

Amuse Bouche: Cheeseburger (a tasting version, but still huge). Buttery, meaty, cheesy goodness. I'd imagine the dinner size version would fill up any eater.

1st Course: Bacon. I could end the description here, but must add that this was particularly amazing piece of pig. Maple sherry glaze with thyme – wow. I will order this again. I also recommend the manhattan as a perfect pairing for this course.



mmmm, bacon

2nd Course: Crab Cake. The cake itself was delicious, you could taste crab and that's the important part to me. The mustard remoulade sauce that accompanied was a bit overpowering for the delicate crab – in my non-professional opinion.

2nd Course Pairing. Jansz Premium Cuvee. This sparkling wine from Tasmania had great acidity and balance, perfect for the crab.



not your average ACC hot dog

3rd Course: Hot Dog. This is a hilarious meal so far. For a hot dog, this is a good one – as it should be at \$16 on the dinner menu. I liked the deviled egg the best on this plate, but I am no hot dog lover.

3rd Course Pairing: [Thirty Bench](#) 2009 Riesling. Tough to pair a hot dog. I love this wine so I was happy regardless. I'd suggest a beer match next time – an ale. Jonathon thought [Mill Street](#) Stock Ale – for me the Tank House Ale would work.

4th Course: Skate Wing. A fish special that was both delicate and rich with a somewhat salty buerre blanc sauce. Loved the fingerlings and green beans that went with the fish. A successful dish I would be happy to have as a main course.

4th Course Pairing: [Tawse](#) Robyn's Block Chardonnay. Jonathon had me at the Thirty Bench, but to pull out Tawse too was amazing! Love the local emphasis and two of my favourite wineries in the Beamsville Bench part of Niagara. This cool climate chardonnay balances the oak with the acidity very well which paired nicely with the richness of the buerre blanc.



baby back ribs

5th Course: Baby Back Ribs. At this point I'm so stuffed that fitting in the yummy yukon fries and coleslaw is not an option. The ribs were perfectly cooked and the sauce was tangy and not too sweet just as I like it.

5th Course Pairing: Carmel Road 2008 Monterey Pinot Noir. Fresh cherries, strawberries and a hint of spice on the nose. An interesting pairing with the ribs and it worked.

I think we got a blood orange palette cleanser at this point, but it's starting to be a blur.



duck and lentils

6th Course: Duck. In spite of the duck being over cooked slightly and the lentils bringing a texture to the meal I wasn't interested in, I didn't hate it. Flavours were great and a nice treat to end the courses with duck.

6th Course Pairing. Charles Cimicky 2004 Shiraz. On first nose, the wine needed to breathe longer. We could smell the gas from the Enomatic wine preservation system. After some time, the earthy, rich, black cherry tastes came through and a lovely wine appeared.

A beautiful cheese plate was presented for dessert and I'm just sorry we didn't do it justice (well the Moliterno Black Truffle Pecorino got quickly devoured). Two porks, two beefs, a crab, a fish, and a duck. Now that's a dinner.



Toilets: A visit to the ladies room made a lasting impression. I don't really want to spoil it so if you want to know check out [Toto](#) toilets or go to [e11even](#).

Well I wanted to be brief, but that seems impossible. It was a great night. Thanks to all who made this tasting possible.

I already know my order when I next visit: Smoked Salmon, Tuna Tartare, Roast Chicken, Key Lime Pie and that will warrant another succinct review...

~ by lp on March 18, 2011.

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