

# PLATO PUTAS

## The Apps are King at E11even

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I'm a fan of making a meal out of appetizers and [E11even](#) (15 York Street) — the upscale restaurant located near the Air Canada Centre — makes this easy to do. Take their **Crab Cake** (\$19), which is truly the best crab cake I've ever had in my life. Sure, it's priced like a main entrée, but when you've been on a seemingly pointless quest to find even a decent crab cake, stumbling across this gem turns an ordinary day into a special occasion.



Run by Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (the same people responsible for the Jamie Kennedy fries & foot-long hot dog [I ate at the ACC](#)), E11even has been wooing clients and corporate diners since they opened in November. There's a couple novel things about E11even such as the drink menu that's presented on an iPad. (The other involves their bathrooms, but more on that later.) You can swipe, tap and spread those fingers to peruse their wine, cocktail, beer and liquor list.

At a recent media tasting I got the chance to dine at the communal table and taste a few apps from their menu which features "simple but elegant food." Here are some of my favourites.



Now back to that infamous Crab Cake. The picture above says it all. Yes, those are massive chunks of leg meat falling out with each forkful. My eyes and mouth couldn't believe I had found the mother load — I'd searched long and hard for one containing more crab than "cake." The kitchen uses panko crumbs to bind the crab and surrounds it with a grainy mustard remoulade.



It's usually a shame to fill up on bread, but here the bread was so tasty and the perfect golden brown that I couldn't resist diving in for more than just one piece. Served warm in a cast iron round, the top is sprinkled with shards of salt and the butter melts lovingly into the spongy interior. Sign me up for a whole loaf.



Another simple but delectable appetizer is the **Sheep's Milk Ricotta** (\$12). The cheese is whipped to make it light and airy, then black pepper, some fresh herbs (including parsley and marjoram) are folded in and it's drizzled with olive oil. Slather some on the grilled country bread and you'll experience a delightfully mild cheese that's like eating a savoury cloud.



For a meaty fix, there's no better combination than the **Double Cut Bacon** (\$9) and **Kobe Meatball** (\$19). The two slices of belly cut pork features a maple glaze and on its own is equal parts sweet and salty, though we're told some diners order it to add to a burger. The meatball is massive at 10 ounces yet I feel the meat is a tad bland and yearning for more salt and seasoning. It's presented in a warm cast iron pan and covered in sauce, grated cheese and strips of fresh basil.



Okay, it's bad form to go from talking about food straight to a review of the bathroom, but I'd be remiss not to mention what goes on in the ladies room at E11even. (Sadly the gents miss out on this one, or so I'm told). If anyone's ever been to Japan or remembers *The Simpsons* episode in Tokyo when Homer encounters the water-spraying toilet, you'll recognize the Toto Washlet contraption. The bidet-toilet is an interesting piece of technology to those of us living in North America and the panel mounted on the wall speaks for itself.



There are many other non-restroom-related reasons to visit E11even, and their plans for a 100-seat patio will definitely make that list. I can say confidently that their stellar Crab Cake is the only reason I need for a repeat visit.

**E11even / Maple Leaf Square 15 York St., Toronto**  
**416 815 1111 / Hours: Lunch Mon-Fri 11:30am-4:30pm, Dinner Mon-Sat 4:30pm-close**