

On The Menu:

An Evening Of Progressive Dining At The Fish Market Restaurant

By Dosi Cotroneo

What do a live jazz band, a Canadian lobster, and a bottle of Pinot Grigio all have in common? If you guessed a fabulous dinner out at Ottawa's landmark seafood spot The Fish Market Restaurant, you guessed right. For decades, something fishy has been going on in the heart of Ottawa's Byward Market that has been attracting not only diehard seafood lovers, but the meat and potatoes bunch as well. No matter the season or the reason, locals, suburbanites, and tourists from near and far arrive in droves with mouths watering and stomachs growling to the home of the freshest catch in town, their famous fish and chips, not to mention the \$12.00 French fries with a magnificent side order of sirloin steak and Caesar salad.

Originally constructed as a hotel back in 1875, today only the lobster are sleeping until they are served to perfection either solo or with a side of sirloin. With something on the menu to tempt every palate, the Fish Market offers up crab cakes to authentic pastas, fresh salmon to seared tuna steaks and just about every other type of fish in between. On any given day, The Fish Market boasts 15 – 20 varieties of the freshest fish in town.

Two worlds collided and what began as part of the Old Fish Market chain evolved into the marriage of fishmonger and restaurateur. Former chef Gerry Oates and then Old Fish Market General Manager Barbara Mireault found not only love but also The Fish Market Restaurant. In 1997, Mireault joined forces with decorated chef, friend and founder of the Old Fish Market Restaurants, John Wood, to create The Fish Market Restaurant. A partnership that alongside



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fishmonger husband Gerry Oates, owner and operator of Gerry's Fish Market, the three have perfected.

“We are our own supplier and our quality is second to none,” Mireault said. “Our restaurant is known for offering more than 15 fresh fish selections every day and exclusively Canadian Lobster. To have a list like that you need a fishmonger who can keep up and who understands the needs of his clients. We prepare more than 500 pounds of mussels every week.”

Seafood is only one part of the equation at The Fish Market. The historic building at 54 York Street houses three dining experiences all under one roof. Ottawa's first-ever wine bar, Vineyards, has won a Wine-Spectator award every year since the early 1980's, and with a selection of over 300 wines, more than 80 offered by the glass daily, one may never stomp grapes again. Wine Spectator Magazine calls Vineyard's wine list, "one of the most outstanding restaurant wine lists in the world!"

For an intimate, warm and cozy open-grill food experience, upstairs is Coasters Seafood Grill the the spot to enjoy lobster & crab dip to all you can eat mussels for \$12.95. Warm up in front of a fireplace while overlooking the hustle and bustle of the Byward Market.

“We like to offer our guests a progressive dining experience,” Mireault said. “We can start you up in Coasters with PEI Mussels and then head downstairs to the Fish Market for a blackened catfish fillet. After dinner, it's onto Vineyards for a wine or scotch flight coupled with some live local jazz, no cover charge.”

Sounds like the recipe for a perfect evening.