



Jack's Bistro Chicken comes stuffed liberally with mozzarella and mushrooms and is topped with a red wine mushroom sauce.

PHOTO BY JESSICA BRATTON

Jack's Bistro, a breath of fresh air

The first time we came across the David Finney Inn in Old New Castle, we felt like we'd discovered paradise. The adjoining restaurant at the time (then called The Chef's Table) featured an outstanding menu and a heavenly oasis in the form of their brick-covered back patio.

Then, less than two years later, the restaurant closed for business, and we were bummed. Until we were on a drive through town last week and noticed that the dining room window at 222 Delaware Street was bustling with business behind a new sign that read "Jack's Bistro."

We stopped in to find that the old haunt, established in 1685, had been brought back to life and was teeming with a lunch crowd that made it feel as if business had picked up right where it left off. Naturally, we sat on that wonderful back patio.

Lunch on this sunny April afternoon consisted of two starters: the guafrettes ((\$6.25), a basket of crispy thin waffle fries served with a somewhat spicy remoulade for dipping, and the hot spinach dip (\$6.75), which offered more creamy spinach than cheese, and was served with crisp baguettes.

My lunch entree, the Westcountry fish and chips (\$9.75), was a bit surprising in its presentation. I expected a few pieces of battered cod, but instead was served one long filet with a deliciously crunchy batter on the outside, along with potato wedge fries tossed in salt and pepper.

Lunch was so good that the following week, a return visit for dinner was a must. This time our foursome sat inside the colonially decorated dining room, starting with the baked mozzarella (\$8.95), a hot and cheesy dip served with baguettes and the pan seared scallops (\$12.95) with buerre blanc.

The cheese dip was simply amazing, layering mozzarella with fresh tomatoes, garlic, grated parmesan and basil. The scallops were commendable, though a little on the small side for the price. However, the buerre blanc offered a nice, tangy zip to the dish.

As for the main course, the Jack's Bistro chicken (\$14.95) gave new meaning to the phrase "winner, winner, chicken dinner." Stuffed liberally with mozzarella and mushrooms, the succulent chicken breast was also topped with a red wine mushroom supreme sauce and served with potatoes and asparagus.

Across the table sat another wonderfully hearty dish, the Westcountry shepherd's pie (\$12.95). Peppery lamb filled the crock, along with vegetables like carrots and peas in a thick stew covered on top by a layer of creamy mashed potato, baked in the oven.

To the right sat the very aromatic shrimp scampi (\$15.95), featuring six large shrimp simmering in a broth of white wine, garlic and butter. Instead of pasta, rice was served as the starch, along with the veg of the day, a large portion of asparagus.

Both meals turned out to be delightful and gave our dining groups the confidence that Jack's Bistro will be a success. Good thing, too, because it's prime al fresco dining season, and that patio is calling us.

222 Delaware Street
Old New Castle
544-5174
www.jacksbistrode.com

Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tue & Wed
11 a.m.-10 p.m. Thu, Fri, Sat
11 a.m.-8 p.m. Sun; closed Mon

Cuisine
Classic American

Dress Code
Smart Casual

Prices
appetizers: \$6.25-\$12.95
lunch entrees: \$6.25-\$15.95
dinner entrees: \$9.75-\$24.95

Payment
 MC Visa
 AmEx Discover

What you need to know

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> Good wine list |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lunch | <input type="checkbox"/> Cool cocktails |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dinner | <input type="checkbox"/> Open seven days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late-night eats | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeans are OK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small plates | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoor seating |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dine at the bar | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Romantic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dessert menu |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good for kids | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Veggie friendly |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good for groups | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Make reservations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open for parties | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Takeout |

INSIDER TIPS

About the owners

The David Finney Inn was without tenants for two years until this past December, when restaurant veterans Steve and Lisa Coruzzi re-opened as Jack's Bistro.



Owners / Chef Lisa and Steven Coruzzi of Jack's Bistro