



Chateau of Spain Restaurant has an eclectic menu that includes a variety of mouthwatering seafood dishes.



A menu highlight is the stone steak, which allows diners to cook a 20-ounce certified angus beef loin seared on a hot granite stone at their place setting.

Chateau of Spain Restaurant: ‘They call this the ‘Cheers’ of Newark because everybody knows everybody’

It could be the location, or the 4,000 patrons registered in their points program, or perhaps it's the heated stone steak that makes the Chateau of Spain restaurant so popular in the Newark central business district.

For more than 40 years, the restaurant has enjoyed a dedicated following — 30 years at its current location. Owner Bill Oliveira and his wife Isabel have seen generations of customers frequent their establishment. Greeting familiar faces who work in the office buildings, City Hall, and Federal and U.S. District Court buildings are the norm, too, since this Spanish and Portuguese eatery is open for lunch, dinner and take-out.

“They call this the ‘Cheers’ of Newark because everybody knows everybody,” Bill said referring to an affiliation with the TV sitcom. “We have a lot of fun here.”

On the first floor of the restaurant is a bistro bar and casual dining with a jukebox playing tunes amid a décor reminiscent of the medieval era with knights and swords to capture the essence of a chateau, or castle. The accessible second floor is a quieter space for more intimate gatherings. Office parties, banquets, wedding receptions, reunions and holiday gatherings are also held in this space.

Its proximity to the Prudential Center, Newark Symphony Hall, and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center is ideal for dining before or after an event. However, when there are events scheduled at various venues throughout the city, reservations are recommended since the 240 seats in the restaurant can fill up quickly.

Bill attributes his success to modifying his menu when he relocated from the Ironbound neighborhood of Newark. Adding classic American fare to his meal planning, which he said is typically not offered in a Spanish restaurant, brought in new customers as did the take-out and delivery party plat-

ter options.

The Southern Fried Chicken is popular here, but seafood and other meats are also on the menu along with burgers, wraps and fajitas. Don't forget to try the Spanish fries, paella or pulpo (octopus) either. There's even a Little Knights menu for kids age 10 and younger.

In addition to New York strip and filet mignon, the menu includes the stone steak, which allows diners to cook a 20-ounce certified angus beef loin seared on a hot granite stone at their place setting. Popular in Portugal, this unique dining experience enables the customer to cook the beef to their personal preference.

“The granite gives it a very different taste that you can't get from a grill or a broiler,” Bill said.

There are only three of these stones at the Chateau of Spain so you may need to consider a second choice — perhaps the Portuguese steak topped with egg and garlic sauce or the picadinho pork cubes marinated in wine and garlic?

“If you look through the menu there's so many different dishes that we have. If you want to try something a little different than what you've tried in a Spanish restaurant, this would be the one that would definitely enlighten you,” Bill said about the Chateau's authentic cuisine and spices used in the meal prep.

Loyal patrons who dine here regularly, can be rewarded with points toward future perks at the restaurant by signing up at www.FiveStars.com. A complimentary drink, appetizer or main dish can be redeemed with an accumulation of points for dollars spent.

The restaurant is located at 11 Franklin St. To make a reservation, book event space, or place an order, call 973-624-3346 or visit: www.chateauofspain.com.

— Debra Stevko Miller



Paella is a favorite at Chateau of Spain Restaurant.