

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE CITY TAVERN

What could possibly be better than spending an enchanted evening at a delightful restaurant? When so many New Year's Eves have been cold, icy, and bitterly cold, a warm starlit New Year's Eve is a very special experience. Couple that weather with an old brick building that has been restored with warm subdued lighting, elegant dark wood, and a musical trio and you have the start of a perfect evening Or sort of the start of an enchanted evening. We had made called a week in advance and were disappointed when the front desk had no record of our reservation. The maitred' apologized for the inconvenience, explained that she needed a minute to work tables around and, a couple of minutes later, she had us seated. Our enchanted evening continued.

Unlike so many of today's restaurants where the noise level prohibits normal conversation, the acoustics at the City Tavern enhance conversation and allow diners to fully enjoy their dinner and fellow tablemates. The cocktails were well done and the wine list although not large was diversified. Our waitress was vivacious, knowledgeable and had great timing. She was able to describe the evening's specials, make appropriate suggestions and her timing was impeccable. We never felt rushed nor were left to linger too long over a dirty dish.

The menu is unique in Kansas City starting with its oyster menu. Six different oysters are offered as appetizers, allowing diners to mix or match their selection of oysters. Other appetizers included Brie, mussels and carpaccio of beef. After careful scrutiny, we selected a variety of oysters. Although all were very good, it was difficult to tell the difference between them. The oysters were served with three different sauces, a cocktail sauce, a spicy wine sauce and horseradish. The oysters would probably have been more interesting if more sauces had been available for tasting.

Three salads are offered for the diner, a green salad, spinach salad, Caesar salad and an iceberg lettuce salad. We selected the green salad and the Caesar salad. The mixed green salad was attractive but nothing unusual. The Caesar salad was presented with stalks of lettuce and served with a mustard Caesar dressing. A unique presentation but it looked better than it tasted.

Entrees offered were varied but not a wide selection. Four fish entrees, two shellfish, steaks, duck and poultry embraced the entire selection. We tried the lobster tail and the grouper. The first bite of the grouper was dry but mixing the fish with the sauce and the vegetable, the dish came alive. The lobster tail, too, was cooked to perfection and the accompanying vegetables were perfect compliments to the dish itself.

The dessert menu had many typical items, crème Brule, fresh fruit and ice cream but no signature dish.

Although the menu may have lacked creativity, the restaurant's ambiance more than made up for any lack of culinary prowess. The food was very good, not great, but on a

perfect New Year's Eve ambiance and good vibrations are more important than a signature dessert dish.

We can hardly wait until springtime and an opportunity of dining on the outside patio. There must be some special occasion that is worthy of the City Tavern.

The City Tavern is located in the Historic Freight District, 101 W. 22nd Street, Kansas City, MO. Hours are Monday-Friday 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, and Saturday 4:00 PM to 10:00PM. Closed on Sundays