

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Restaurant 4 at Hotel Ranga - Hella, Iceland

Restaurant 4 at Hotel Rangá located in the south in **Hella, Iceland** is a sleeper of a restaurant, one that is well worth the one-hour drive from Reykjavik. It is a wonderful surprise that appears like a mirage located along a salmon river where ambitious guests can catch their own dinner.

With that said, it is important that I note that although there were plenty of fishermen who were guests at the hotel lining the shore and venturing in fishing waders into the river for the opportunity to catch the freshest fish possible, it was late September 2009, the temperature was cool enough to require a heavy coat, and Edward F. Nesta, our friend, Eggert Jóhannsson, and I decided that it was best to simply order off the appetizing menu.



Salmon Fishing

Restaurant 4 is located at Hotel Rangá and looks somewhat rustic in a log-cabin kind of way from the outside as we drove up the road, so it was no great surprise to enter the hotel and see a towering mounted Greenlandic polar bear in a full stretch pose in the reception area. Like many things unusual, there is a rather long and involved story about how the polar bear came about to be the "greeter" at the hotel, which I will leave for you to discover when you visit.

Once inside the hotel, I noticed the walls are indeed made from logs, however the overall appeal is definitely luxury country inn with upscale furnishings and amenities in the public spaces as well as in the creatively unique guestrooms. The well stocked bar features a playful wood stool made to look like a pair of woman's legs complete with heels and skirt where you can sit while looking at the creative cocktail menu that features drinks with crazy names like Mango Salar - The Sexy Salmon, Troll Juice, and Sjóbirtungar - The Sea Trout.



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The restaurant features three walls of windows that provided us with stunning views to watch the salmon fishermen as well as the dramatically changing sky. Black wood chairs flanked the tables that were elegantly dressed with white linens, accessorized with votive candles in glass holders, and linen napkins artfully arranged in mirrored silver napkin rings.

Restaurant 4 is all about guest comfort and choice that extended to the assortment of salts and peppers in square white bowls, along with a small bowl of olive oil, and butter, to accompany the selection of breads.

Eggert and Edward began dinner with Mushroom Cappuccino paired with Smoked Wild Goose with Blueberry Reduction and Truffle Oil that was gorgeous in its presentation and was well paired with Villa Maria, Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, 2006, Private Bin, 13.5% alcohol, from New Zealand.



Mushroom Cappuccino with Smoked Wild Goose

My version of the starter consisted of Mushroom Cappuccino paired with Icelandic Langoustines and White Chocolate Sweet Potato Purée, and both versions provided sophisticated flavors that melded beautifully together. Although white chocolate and sweet potato sound like unusual companions, the result was rather sensational.



Mushroom Cappuccino with Icelandic Langoustines

We continued with a luscious quartet of Smoked Sturgeon with Sour Cream and Sevruga Caviar from Canada, Smoked Icelandic Halibut with Mango and Mustard Sauce, Smoked Tuna with Teriyaki Curry Sauce, and Graved Smoked Wild Salmon with Horseradish Sauce and Artic Char Roe. Eaten in a sequence, each fish was presented to showcase its unique flavors and not overpower a milder fish. Although each presentation was wonderful, my hands-down favorite was the wild salmon, which was amazing.



Fish Quartet Sampler

Next there was a tasty course of Salted Cod with Oranges, Fennel, and Vanilla Foam presented in a deep bowl that was lovely with its yin yang, sweet and salty elements, that was lusciously paired with Château de Sancerre, 2008, 13.5% alcohol, from France.

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Salted Cod

For our main course, we decided to each go a separate way; Eggert had Beef in a Burgundy Cherry Reduction Sauce with Pickled Portobello Mushroom, Vegetable Terrine, Carrots, Parsnips, and Snow Peas.



Beef in Burgundy Cherry Reduction

Edward had "Surf and Turf" consisting of four generous slices of Icelandic Lamb and Lobster in a Veal Reduction Sauce with Rösti Cake, Tomato Salsa, Carrots, and Celeriac.



Surf and Turf (Icelandic Lamb and Lobster)

Since I was in "salmon country" I had Wild Salmon with Rangá Champagne Sauce with Strawberries, White Chocolate Sweet Potato Purée and Broccoli. All three of our courses were beautifully presented and were well paired with Château Musar, 2001, 13.5% alcohol, from Lebanon - Bekka Valley.

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Wild Salmon and Rang á Champagne Sauce

As the finale to an excellent dinner, Eggert and Edward went for decadence with a rich Valrhona Chocolate Fondant with Vanilla Ice Cream and an artistic palette of coulis painted on the plate that was garnished with blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries. I decided on a lighter and refreshing offering of Strawberries Marinated in Grand Marnier and crowned with Pink Champagne Sorbet.



Valrhona Chocolate Fondant

Although the restaurant's gourmet menu is certainly reason enough to drive the distance to Restaurant 4 and Hotel Rangá, as added incentive, if the night is clear, the restaurant is the perfect place to watch the Northern Lights (aurora borealis) in the winter months.

Restaurant 4 is open daily for lunch from 12:00 pm until 3:00 pm, and for dinner from 6:30 pm until 10:00 pm (April until September), from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm (October until March Weekdays), and from 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm (October until March Weekends).

Read about Restaurant 4 in the **Chefs' Recipes** where Hotel Manager and former chef **Björn Eriksson** shares his special recipe for **Fish Soup (Fisksoppa) à la BB at Hotel Rangá**.



Restaurant 4
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