

bill of fare

Logan Inn in New Hope, Pa., fancy inside, casual outside

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The venerable Logan Inn, which has been feeding travelers and townsfolk in New Hope, Pa., for nearly three centuries, has taken on a something-for-everyone persona under its latest ownership.

While glass-enclosed porches and the Fireside Room still feature elegant dining opportunities, alfresco dining spreads out across the more casual patio and extends into an adjoining outdoor bar.

The choices are rounded out by lighter fare at the tavern, says Nick Gialias, whose family took over the historic inn a year ago.

Purchasing the Logan Inn was an easy choice for his family, he said.

"This is an ideal location to do our kind of business," says Gialias, whose family, headed by his father Pete, has owned the Clinton House in Clinton, N.J., for more than 13 years.

Many of the dishes offered in New Hope had their origins in Clinton, he said, where the family set a standard for high-quality ingredients. They continue that at the Logan, where dishes range from burgers at the bar to a \$68 Kobe strip steak Gialias maintains is worth every penny.

A thick layer of crab imperial was evidence of that quality when

The Logan Inn

10 W. Ferry St., New Hope, Pa. (215) 862-2300 (loganinn.com) Full bar. Casual to business attire. Reservations recommended on weekends.

HOURS: Lunch 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; dinner 5 p.m.-closing daily; brunch 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Sat.-Sun.

CREDIT CARDS: Most major

FOOD: Very good

SERVICE: Attentive and efficient

AMBIANCE: Circa 1722 inn maintains sense of history indoors, but is more contemporary outside where a seat on the patio offers a clear view of the street.

COST: Appetizers \$4.50-\$18.95; entrees \$16.25-\$68.25

tucked under a blanket of Swiss cheese for a crab fondue, \$14.95. Hefty enough to share, the dish was filled with quality chunks of crab, although there were out some bits of shell that were missed when the crab was cleaned.

An appetizer of baked brie, \$9.75, also was of high quality. The rich imported cheese was baked to the near-melting point inside a filo dough wrapper and served with a mound of raspberry jam that had been spooned in a color-coordinated red cabbage leaf. This also was enough to share, and, with slices of fresh fruit, almost enough for a light lunch.

A nondescript dinner salad is served with most entrees, but a



MARTIN GRIFF/THE TIMES

The outdoor patio offers more casual dining at the Logan Inn in New Hope, Pa.

Greek salad from the menu, \$12.95, was outstanding. A bright and brilliant dressing of herbed olive oil and vinegar was the perfect finish to a combination of fresh mixed greens, festal cheese, peppers, kalamata olives, onions and tomatoes.

Among the entrees, the Logan offers three variations of filet mignon. The filet mignon au bleu, \$37.50, was an 8-ounce center cut, perfectly cooked to the requested rare and topped with enough blue cheese for three steaks.

It seemed a shame to waste the tangy cheese, but push it aside we did, in order to keep it from overpowering the flavor of the top-shelf steak. Accompanying sautéed mushrooms and onions also were delightful, although "moon" potatoes (full moon, not half) were ho-hum.

Lightly pan-fried crab cakes, \$29.50, were fat and sassy with lots of lump crabmeat (no shells this time) and just enough coating to hold them together. Steamed vegetables and rice completed the colorful plate.

Sauerbraten, \$24.50, which Gialias calls one of the Clinton House's signature dishes, is found under the inn's comfort food menu. Slices of tender braised beef share the plate with a heap of red cabbage and two of the best potato pancakes we've tasted. Vinegar takes a back seat in the meat's marinade, which makes the dish more sweet than tangy.

Desserts, \$6.50 (\$5.50 for ice cream) are either made in-house or in Clinton. A slice of chocolate cheesecake tasted like and had the

texture of mousse rather than cheesecake. But all flaws were forgiven because of the outstanding accompanying scoop of hazelnut mocha ice cream.

Fresh strawberries topped with a dollop of whipped cream were darker and sweeter and had better texture than one might expect with the local berry season still about a month away.

Gialias said the inn draws customers from as far away as Connecticut and Virginia and as close as down the street, much as it has since it was opened by ferry owner John Wells in 1727. With hefty portions of meat and seafood and a variety of choices of where to dine, it should continue to serve them for some time to come.