

## **DINING REVIEW: Bonefish Grill**

**The area's new seafood chain is quite a catch.**

The Kansas City Star

THE KANSAS CITY STAR

Posted on Thu, Jun. 15, 2006

By LAUREN CHAPIN

After just one Bang Bang shrimp, I'm thinking positive thoughts.

After two bites of crispy-on-the-outside, tender-on-the-inside calamari dipped in a sweet/hot Thai sauce, I'm glad this chain has come to town.

Then the waiter, one of the most professional I've encountered in weeks, delivers the night's special: grilled black cod drizzled with a rich, unctuous miso sauce. That's it. I'm buying stock in Bonefish Grill.

Bonefish Grill chose the Tuileries Development, a fancy-pants glass and limestone development off 64th Street and west of Interstate 29, as its first Missouri site. (A second location just opened in Leawood.) The chain, started in January 2000 in St. Petersburg, Fla., serves mostly fresh fish. Some of it is grilled over an oak-burning fire; some of it is sautéed. Regardless of the cooking technique, the finished product was beautifully cooked.

If you're off fish, Bonefish serves flesh: fire-roasted Lily's chicken, Fontina pork chops and two steaks, an 11-ounce center cut sirloin and two sizes of filet mignon. The chicken was especially tender and juicy, and the kitchen cooked the steaks as well as it did the fish.

The Bang Bang shrimp were a seafood version of Buffalo wings: crackly fried and coated with a spicy sauce. The calamari was wonderfully crispy beneath its coating. Although I preferred the Thai sauce, I also enjoyed dredging the bites through a fine marinara.

The real show was the entrees, though, including a delightful grouper piccata and grilled Chilean sea bass. Both had beautifully browned crusts and just enough sauce, a lemon caper butter sauce on the grouper and a warm mango salsa on the sea bass.

Customers can also choose a lime tomato garlic or Pan Asian sauce for their fish. It's a pleasure to eat fish that is this fresh (flown in fresh, not frozen) and cooked until its flesh is translucent and flaky.

Most dishes come with a Bonefish side salad or Caesar salad, a choice of sides and a seasonal vegetable. On both my visits the vegetable was two-bite wedges of squash and onion in a tomato slurry. Sides included creamy garlic mashed potatoes with soft, subtle garlic flavor and au gratin potatoes with a hint of rosemary.

The warm bread was served with an addicting basil pesto/olive tapenade dipping sauce with an extra virgin olive oil base. Do save room for desserts, which are big enough for at least three.

The Key lime pie came on a roasted pecan and graham cracker crust, and the chocolate macadamia nut brownie cake was devilishly rich — and served warm. I knew the kitchen was up to snuff when neither the Key lime pie nor the crème brulee was overbaked. Their centers were soft and oozy, like good, homemade pudding.

Bonefish Grill is a great catch, Kansas City.

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**bonefish grill**

6334 N. Lucerne Ave.

(816) 746-8179

**Food:** □□□

**Service:** □□□

**Atmosphere:** □□ 1/2

**Hours:** 4 to 10 p.m. Sunday, 4 to 10:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 4 to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

**Entrée range:** \$12.90 to \$26

**Vegetarian choices:** Bonefish house salad, side vegetables

**Reservations:** Some reservations taken

**Smoking policy:** Smoking in bar only

**Credit cards:** The major ones

**Children:** Yes

**Seating capacity:** 200

**Parking:** Ample lot space

**Takeout:** Call ahead 15 to 25 minutes

**Handicap accessible:** Yes

**Web site:** [www.bonefishgrill.com](http://www.bonefishgrill.com)

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### **bonefish grill menu sampler**

**Bang Bang shrimp** | \$7.90

**Calamari dipped in a sweet/hot Thai sauce** | \$6.90,

**Fire-roasted Lily's chicken** | \$13.90,

**Fontina pork chops** | \$14.90

**Eleven- ounce center cut sirloin** | \$14.90

**Filet mignon** | 6-ounce \$18.90; 9-ounce \$21

**Grouper piccata** | \$17.20

**Grilled Chilean sea bass** | \$23

**Key lime pie** | \$5.50

**Chocolate maca- damia nut brownie cake** | \$5.50

**Crème brulee** | \$4.90

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### **star ratings**

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Unacceptable

### **how we do it**

In reviewing restaurants The Star follows certain guidelines:

- Each visit is conducted as anonymously as possible.

- The newspaper pays for all meals in full.
- Each restaurant is visited at least two times, and a wide range of menu items are sampled.
- New restaurants generally are not formally reviewed during their first two months of operation.

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### **The wine list**

I ordered cocktails first, including a wonderful Rita-Tini, a classy riff on the margarita, and an Icicle Aphrodisiac made with Skyy vanilla and passion fruit juice, garnished with a watermelon popsicle. I ate it first.

The wine list is decent, including a wonderful New Zealand Brancott Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, full of luscious citrus notes, and a satisfying Wild Horse Pinot Noir. It was fruit and leather, spice and wood, and a great match for our entrees.

For a splurge, try the Cyrus Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. The 80-percent Cab blend is softened with Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. It is the kind of wine you'll long remember, the kind of wine that makes you fall in love with the fruit of the vine all over again.