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## Cin Cin

### Cheers to Cin Cin for inspired Mediterranean fare

Originally published on April 06, 2005

"Inspired Mediterranean cuisine" is the mantra at Cin Cin, a new restaurant that finally answers the prayers of local foodies who've long hungered for this region's fare.

Sure, we've got our share of French, Greek and certainly Italian restaurants. But what of Spain and Morocco and other culinarily rich nations that fringe the Mediterranean Sea?

They're all embraced in the gustatory mission of Cin Cin Mediterranean Bar & Grill, which truly delivers on its promise of "inspired" cuisine. Witness such dishes as roasted vegetable baklava, crab lasagna with mascarpone and basil pesto, pork tenderloin stuffed with spinach and feta.

And it's all presented by a superbly trained staff in a luxurious environment of plush fabrics and rich colors.

The well-separated bar and dining areas both are decked out in pomegranate, mustard and black. Business was slow the night of our visit, so we enjoyed a quiet evening and the full attention of the staff.

Narrowing down the choices proved daunting — I could have tried nearly anything on the relatively short menu.

I sipped a glass of 2000 Meeker "10th Rack" zinfandel while considering our options. Instead of bringing it to the table in a goblet, the server arrived with a small glass vessel and poured it into the glass already on the table. He held a white napkin to one side of the goblet — apparently to spare the patron the risk of a splash. The wine had a dry, spicy front with a lush berry finish — a good pairing with a lamb I ordered.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Fresh bread arrived with hummus — a nice departure from the ubiquitous olive oil dips.

For starters, we opted for the calamari and the aforementioned baklava.

Far from the typical breaded and fried appetizer, this preparation consisted of wide rings of tender squid stuffed with spicy chorizo. I may never order calamari fritti again. The sausage added flair to the dish — unlike the tasteless zucchini fritter on the bottom of the plate.

**CIN CIN****13451 McGregor Blvd., Fort M**

- Price: Most over \$20
- Hours: 4-10 p.m. Sunday-Thur and Saturday
- Credit cards: Major cards acce
- Call: 415-2007
- Noise level: Low
- Etc.: Full bar; reservations acc

Food: 3.5 stars (out of 4)  
Atmosphere: 4 stars  
Service: 3.5 stars

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We also liked the baklava. Roasted eggplant, peppers, and squash were tucked into flaky p  
tahini yogurt sauce on the side added a cool, tart touch.

For entrees we settled on a pair of Mediterranean favorites — rack of lamb and a seafood b

The lamb's meaty ribs were crusted with mint, a nice complement to their mild flavor, and p  
rare state I requested. Each bite was juicy, sweet and minty. The pomegranate demi-glacé  
of the plate didn't add much but color.

Underneath it all was an excellent morel risotto — creamy but not mushy, earthy but unders

My companion's skewered swordfish included large chunks of perfectly grilled fish along wit  
and other vegetables served on tabouleh. The fish was mildly seasoned with Moroccan spic  
by a zesty curry yogurt sauce. A simple dish expertly executed.

Savoring all these hearty dishes left us little room for dessert. Still, we managed to share a  
with chantilly cream and studded with blueberries. It was sweet and light — a lovely finish to

Cin Cin (pronounced chin-chin) roughly translates to "cheers" in Italian. Having an "inspired  
restaurant in town certainly is worth toasting.

— Jean Le Boeuf is the nom de plume of a local food lover who dines at The News-Press' e  
comments to Le Boeuf in care of Lifestyles, P.O. Box 10, Fort Myers, FL 33902 or fax them  
mail to [jleboeuf@news-press.com](mailto:jleboeuf@news-press.com)

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