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**KATHLEEN ROBERTSON
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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS**

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Sea Bass with Bean & Cipollini
Stew, Lemon and Mache

Three Seventy Common

An earthy neighborhood eatery, blocks away from the beach

WRITTEN BY ERIC WIENER
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATT FUKUSHIMA



Beet and Sweet Carrot Salad with Citrus, Pistachio, Red Onion and Goat Cheese



Portland-styled eateries have been popping up in trend setting spots all along the West Coast. Rustic and sustainably designed menus support meat prevalent courses in hip, fun settings; and, Laguna Beach's Three Seventy Common has opened in this vein, fashioning the former Sorrento Grille into their version of a natural, open-spaced boutique restaurant.

Roasting wood and the aromas from searing bacon and long curing pork belly create an immediate rural undertone, along with scents that double as male-attracting pheromones. A stone fireplace complete with a mock bull's head holds down one interior corner, opposite a granite grill-top looking into the partially open kitchen. Old Fashioneds with fresh fruit, bitters, and bourbon swing out from the nearby bar, which curls from the kitchen to the staircase, where more secluded, private dining awaits.

"The goal for the restaurant was to create a neighborhood place where people could come once or twice a week. We stripped it down, went for a lower price point, and really focused on making it as comfortable as possible," Proprietor, Executive Chef, and lifelong local Ryan Adams noted, before adding, "It's food. It's supposed to be fun."

When sipping ginger beer cocktails out of tin mugs, staring at framed meat cleavers and antique knife sets, and carving filet mignon sized

pork bellies among huckleberries and mandarin oranges, having fun is a nearly foregone conclusion. And that's without the commencing basket of bacon maple popcorn.

Shredded kale has been tossed with sliced persimmons and pears, currants, walnuts, and shaved pecorino. The walnuts keep the texture even and the fruits and vinaigrette leave little evidence of kale even being involved.

Brushed with harrisa barbecue sauce, the pork loin offers a friendly, well-known safe haven. It's simple and exactly what you'd expect. Wide macaroni shells shrouded in gooey cheeses and bread crumbs join apple-sweet onion slaw for a dish you might imagine being served at your favorite chef's backyard BBQ or to someone's children. Kids' meals even come on compartmentalized metal trays, as if they might be getting mini hot dogs and a brownie next (and they might be).

Indeed, Three Seventy Common's most fascinating quality is its ability to appease both sides: foie gras with huckleberry pancakes, bacon, and maple plays counter to meatloaf with mashed potatoes and gravy. For the adventurous, split and stacked bones are sprinkled with shredded red onions, parsley, and radish. A tiny spoon awaits, inviting careful scoops of the marrow onto triangles of grilled toast – for a lustrous ride that few other local eateries offer.

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Cheddar burgers keep the scale from tilting too far in either direction. And then again, black cod continually surprises, as it is served Cajun style with leeks, commanding chunks of garlic and onion, and smooth, soft lentils. A chorizo sausage has been divided up across the plate for a spicy nudge to each slick and oil-finished bite.

Bulbs throughout the space glow dim enough that the interior wires and filament radiate as if on their own fruition. A book shelf holds tomes about meat, and a random sign simply says the word "whiskey." The atmosphere is smart enough that finding a third of the patrons with their families can be shocking.

"We're cooking what we'd like to eat and what our chef-friends would want to eat," Chef Adams explains about his menu and their process. Three Seventy Common uses hormone and antibiotic free meats, local produce, and has a goal of becoming 100% domestic in the very near future. Likewise, they host a Sunday Night Social dinner with rotating, family-styled courses at family-styled rates. The goal is to let people come in every week for their reliable comfort foods: roasted chicken, pot roast, or even shepherd's pie.

Undoubtedly, there are times when Three Seventy Common attempts to do too much. But it's always with the aim of seeing just how much more pleasure they can bring to the neighborhood. ●

Three Seventy Common
370 Glenneyre Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
949.494.8686
www.370common.com



Fried Apple Pie



Black Cod with Lentils, Chorizo,
Leeks, Parsley and Red Onion

