



Woodfire Grille

301 Bell Street, Dubuque, IA 52001
 563-690-4755 – DiamondJo.com
HOURS: Monday – Thursday, 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm
 Friday – Saturday, 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm, Closed Sunday
ATMOSPHERE: Casual, **NOISE LEVEL:** Quiet
RECOMMENDATIONS: Avocado Spring Rolls; Lobster Bisque; Chopped Salad; Sea Bass; Woodfire Steak Au Poivre; Filet Mignon with Boursin Cheese; Herb Roasted Chicken; Bacon Wrapped Shrimp; Veal Porterhouse
LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar; Professionally stocked wine cellar; Enomatic Self-Serve Wine System
PRICES: Appetizers: \$8 to \$14, Entrees: \$19 to \$45
RESERVATIONS: Recommended; 2 to 30
PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Check, Debit, Major Credit
ACCESSIBILITY: Front Door and Restrooms
TAKE OUT: Yes, **DELIVERY:** No
PARKING: Complimentary Valet / Free Covered Parking



WOODFIRE GRILLE

by Rich Belmont

The Management of the Diamond Jo Casino certainly knows a thing or two about hospitality. So it is no surprise the Woodfire Grille, located inside the Casino, offers a most delightful fine dining experience!

This restaurant opened in January, 2009 and right from the beginning its creators had ambitious goals. They would accept nothing less than the Woodfire attaining the position of the best restaurant within 100 miles. Its purpose was to offer quality and spectacularly tasting dinners by

an indulgent and knowledgeable staff. Just as important was a determination to provide the Casino's players, and local Dubuque diners as well, with Prime Grade meats for a few dollars over cost and fine wines at prices no more than ten dollars over their costs.

Certainly these goals could only be accomplished by a talented and experienced staff. To insure success an expert team of professionals was assembled. This team includes, Tiesha Taylor-Junius, General Manager (pictured above, center) and former wine bar owner; Jeff Holder (above, left), Director of Food and Beverage, a 25 year veteran of the food industry who owned and managed his own restaurants and was with Sysco Foods; Jonathan Nelson, Executive Chef (pictured at right), a regional executive chef for over 20 years; Jason Culbertson (above, right), House Chef and 2005 graduate of Le Cordon Bleu, Minneapolis; Emily Puls, Pastry Chef

with experience in several professional kitchens and Jim Terry, former restaurant owner, Chef and Certified Sommelier Extraordinaire.



In their quest for excellence no detail is left to chance. For example, the current Summer menu is carefully designed to offer you the finest warm weather cuisine. The wines are specially chosen to pair well with appetizers, entrées and even desserts. Many of the menu items can be customized. So if you prefer a slightly different preparation or desire an ingredient added or removed your wish is their command.

The breads and desserts are all made on the premises fresh daily. Many of them are made with seasonal fresh fruits and berries. Fresh fish is overnigheted from Hawaii from the same source supplying nationally recognized restaurants like Per Se in New York and Tru in Chicago. There is even a gluten free menu and diners with special dietary needs or food allergies can be accommodated. Usually special requests



can be handled with no prior warning. Of course, the kitchen staff appreciates advance notice of these requirements so they can show off their culinary skills!



After a great dinner you will most assuredly want to sample the delicious desserts. While you are at it be sure to sample the large selection of after dinner liqueurs, organic coffees and dessert wines.

Adding to the dining experience is an experienced and dedicated wait staff. The servers are knowledgeable both in food preparation and proper serving techniques. They are all friendly, eager to please, and attentive but not overbearing.

The Casino Management, as well as the Restaurant Managers, all have a passion for wine. Jim Terry, the Certified Sommelier, says he is like a kid in a candy store! He was added to the team because one of the Woodfire Grille's goals was to have





a distinctive and unique wine program. Jim was given a mandate to develop a professionally stocked wine cellar. All of his selections have characteristics that merit their inclusion on the wine list. They are chosen to compliment the evolving menu that encompasses bold seasoning and fresh ingredients. Jim searches for matching wines with big and rich or delicate, elegant and crisp flavors containing floral notes to pair with the dining creations.

Jim has also been directed to insure the cellar is well stocked with high quality wines that can be offered at an exceptional value. This is why the wine list is always evolving. The restaurant can only receive so many cases so when wines are sold out new ones must be added to the cellar. Many of the wines on the list are very limited productions; even ones that are inexpensive. Wineries and wholesalers allocate how cases are distributed so it is fortunate Woodfire has a reputation for having an extensive collection. This means it is sometimes able to get wines in short supply. Currently there are 275 different wines in stock representing vintners from all major wine producing regions in the world.

The Woodfire Grille is one of a very few establishments in the entire Midwest possessing an Enomatic Self-Serve Wine Dispensing System. This is located in the restaurant's bar and is a fun way to enjoy wine. You and your friends can meet here and enjoy all sorts of food and wine pairing. The menu appetizers are specifically designed for eating at the bar Tapas style. If you are not in the mood for a full dinner you can get casual service at the bar and use the serve yourself wine dispensing system. Or you can experiment with tasting different wines before you decide what to have when you sit down for dinner.



The Enomatic System dispenses 32 different wines. Taste, color, body and aroma are the characteristics that make every wine unique. However, a few minutes after opening, oxygen begins to degrade the wine and change the taste, aroma and color. Enomatic substitutes air with food grade Argon gas which is tasteless, odorless and colorless. Since the air is replaced with Argon there is no oxygen present and therefore no oxidation. The wine's integrity is protected for more than three weeks.

Your bartender or server can add any desired amount of money to your Woodfire Wine Card. Then you simply insert the card into the dispenser and pour yourself a glass of any of the 32 wines you would like to try. There are 3 buttons for each bottle so you can activate a pour of 1, 2 or 4 ounces.



You must not drink too much, however, because there are culinary delights waiting to enthrall you. Begin with a delicious appetizer such as the Avocado Spring Rolls – these are a blend of chopped, fresh avocados and sun dried tomatoes infused with a purée of onions, cilantro and rice vinegar hand rolled in won ton skins. The rolls are served with a sauce reduction of sugar, ginger and cilantro.

Following the starter, have some Lobster Bisque – this is a delicious creamy soup made from a seafood stock with onion, shallots, garlic, heavy cream and sherry. Then lots of lobster tail meat is added and it's topped with a fresh mozzarella croûton with parmesan and fresh dill.

The chopped salad is an awesome creation! A spring mix is blended with bacon, tomato, onion, cucumber, egg, avocado and Maytag Blue Cheese sprinkled with a special house dressing.



Many of the entrees are simply spectacular! The Steak Au Poivre is a 28 oz. giant cowboy ribeye with a 14 inch bone. A blended rub is prepared from toasted coffee beans, toasted cumin, black pepper and kosher salt. The steak is pressed into this mixture and pan seared before roasting in the oven.

The Filet Mignon with Boursin Cheese and Prosciutto ham offers an array of complimentary flavors. A Prime Grade Filet is marinated in Balsamic Vinaigrette and broiled to your requested temperature. Then it is topped with sliced Prosciutto, a thinly sliced dry cured ham, and Boursin Cheese, an authentic French natural Gournay cow's milk creamy cheese flavored with garlic and herbs.



The Sea Bass is overnighted Federal Express from Honolulu. This fresh, never frozen, fish is pan seared in clarified butter, oven baked and served over sautéed baby spinach. It is finished with a chipotle cream reduction consisting of garlic, shallots, lemon juice, bay leaf, chipotle peppers, cream and butter.

Or perhaps you are in the mood for Herb Roasted Chicken. A freshly cut semi-boneless half chicken is dusted with an herb blend and sautéed in clarified butter and roasted with sliced oranges and onions, rosemary and a touch of brown sugar.

For a new experience you can try the Veal Porterhouse. A 14 ounce veal steak is sautéed in clarified butter and finished in the oven. It is served over a sun-dried tomato and basil polenta cake, sautéed in butter. It is topped with a chutney (condiment made from fruit and spices) consisting of figs and apricots infused with port wine.

I hope you saved room for dessert! How about a Whiskey Banana Foster Sundae! Pamper yourself with this decadent bowl of sautéed bananas tossed in warm caramel sauce and served in a freshly made almond tuile (a thin flat cookie) topped with vanilla bean ice cream, candied pecans and fresh whipped cream and warm hazelnut ganache (a chocolate and cream glaze).



By now I know you have figured out the Woodfire Grille is all about having fun. Bring your friends and stay a while. Experiment with new wines and appetizers at the bar. Visit during Happy Hour Monday through Friday from 5:00 to 7:00 pm and get a free appetizer when you buy two glasses of wine. Or sit in the dining room and enjoy the fireplace. If you are the outdoors type have dinner on the patio where you can listen to free entertainment on Wednesdays. And by the way, you can even bring your kids. The Grille (and also Cherry Lanes Bowling Alley) is not on the gaming floor so kids are welcome. However, keep in mind there is no children's menu.

You might also want to periodically check the Diamond Jo Casino website or 365Ink for upcoming events. For example, every six weeks or so there is a special wine pairing dinner. The next one is September 30th and will be on Malbec wines.