

VALENTINE'S DAY

Dining out can make for a special evening

Valentine's Day brings more than the opportunity to enjoy romance; it also brings the chance to sample delectable eats at local restaurants.

♥ **Napoli Restaurant and Bakery**, at 686 E. 13th Ave., is conveniently located for people who wish to give their companion a taste of European delights but don't have transportation.

Napoli serves southern Italian cuisine. It has something for the patron who likes salad and pasta dishes or the one who craves pizza or more elaborate dishes. Napoli offers a delicious, extensive array of desserts, from lemon bars to the popular Italian Tiramisu. Each dinner and dessert is made fresh daily in the restaurant. Napoli will be open Tuesday evening until 10. But this is Napoli's busiest night, so plan to go earlier rather than later.

— Kim Weiss

♥ **Treehouse Restaurant and Lounge** is another restaurant close to the University, at 1769 Franklin Blvd.

The Valentine's Day special will be a crab cakes dinner with Caesar salad, priced at a reasonable \$14 — reasonable because Treehouse is a restaurant with an elegant atmosphere, respectable service and gourmet cooking. Everything from chateaubriand to poulet grille and Indian-baked salmon can be found on the menu, including a popular mud pie for dessert. The price range for the dinners is average, around \$10 to \$25. Treehouse will be serving dinner from 5 until 9:30 p.m. I recommend reservations.

— K. W.

♥ **Ambrosia Restaurant and Bar**, at 174 E. Broadway, is a restaurant with an ample choice from which to choose on the menu. It is located close to the Eugene Mall. Downtown Eugene may be slowing down, but Ambrosia is not.

Fish will be the special for Valentine's Day. The specific type depends on what is fresh that day. The dinner menu has items ranging from Fettuccine Davide, made with chicken, fettuccine, olive oil, basil and sun-dried tomatoes, to Falle di Pollo, consisting of chicken, tomatoes, white wine and rose-



NATALIE MONTGOMERY/Emerald

Napoli specializes in authentic Italian cuisine and atmosphere.



GARY GRASS/Emerald

Mekala's, in the Fifth Street Public Market, has spicy Thai food and various vegetarian entrees.

mary. Dinners are average-priced, including the fish and seafood specials for the evening at around \$16.

Ambrosia will have champagne specials, and of course, desserts will be a feature to add at the end of the meal. Freshly made cheesecakes are Ambrosia favorites and the traditional Italian dessert Tiramisu, made with espresso-soaked chocolate ladyfingers and marscapone cream, will also be available. Ambrosia will be serving dinner from 5 until 9:30 p.m. Valentine's Day evening.

— K. W.

♥ **Cafe Fandango**, at 146 E. 11th Ave., is a small, quaint restaurant specializing in seafood entrees, although it makes non-fish meals that are just as superb. Cafe Fandango has special entrees based on what's fresh and what is in season. Crab cakes, however, are a Fandango staple, and they are one of the best items on the menu. Be sure to try the black bean salad and cheese quesadilla appetizer — it's tangy and a perfect way to start a meal.

The decor in Cafe Fandango is charming. With a black and white tiled floor and Marilyn Monroe prints adorning the wall, it is classy and retro at the same time.

— Trista Noel

♥ **Mekala's**, at 296 E. 5th Ave., in the 5th Street Public Market, serves the best Thai food in town. The elegant atmosphere and exotic menu provide a fine dining experience whether you want a casual meal or a special evening. Mekala's has an extensive vegetarian menu. The Pad Thai (a peanutty noodle and bean sprouts dish) is a favorite, as is the Hot and Spicy soup. Don't leave without having a Coconut Island for dessert. The combination of warm sticky rice and cold coconut ice cream is a dream.

Mekala's is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weeknights.

— T. N.

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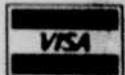
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