

CHARLEY'S
On Willamette

May 16-17 ▶ Elliot Maxx
As seen on:
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OREGON COAST AQUARIUM

Saturday, May 3
Newport's Loyalty Days Parade. Starts at noon!

***Every Tuesday evening in May**
Free admission to Lincoln County residents with a can of food for Lincoln County Food Share. 6-9pm

Sunday, May 11
Mother's Day Whale Watch & Brunch
To register call 541-867-3474 x5221

Saturday, May 17
"Down by the Riverside"
Riverbed cleanup. 10am-1pm
541-867-3474 x5221

Hatfield Marine Science Center Grand Opening!
2-4pm

Members' Night
Celebrate our Fifth Anniversary as you visit some of the behind-the-scenes areas. Enjoy refreshments and live music with Balafo Marimba Ensemble. 7-9pm. R.S.V.P. by May 12. 541-867-3474 x6362

Saturday, May 24
Grand Opening Fossils, Fins and Fangs exhibit
Visit the far side of prehistoric time with Alaskan artist Ray Troll's exhibit on bizarre animals and prehistoric oceans. Special opening day appearance by the Ratfish Brothers band! 9am-6pm. Included with the price of admission.

Fifth Anniversary Celebration Dinner & Public Fireworks Display
An elegant progressive dinner, with the island music of Kudana and a stunning fireworks display, will usher in yet another successful five years. \$55 individual/\$100 couple 7:30-10:30pm. R.S.V.P. by May 17. 541-867-3474 x6362

Saturday-Monday, May 24-26
Anniversary weekend
Activities include music, face painters, craft stations and photo opportunities with fun animal characters. 9am-6pm. Included with price of admission.

Celebrate Five Years of Wonder

During the month of May, the Oregon Coast Aquarium and the community of Newport will be "Celebrating Five Years of Wonder," as the Aquarium marks its fifth successful year of operation. Month-long festivities include a whale watch, participation in Newport's Loyalty Days Parade, FREE Tuesday evenings for Lincoln County residents*, a gala dinner, public fireworks and much more.

OREGON COAST AQUARIUM
FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Celebrating Five Years of Wonder

2820 S.E. Ferry Slip Rd.
Newport, OR 97365
541-867-3474
<http://www.aquarium.org>

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PARENTS' WEEKEND 1997

Ambrosia serves quality Italian food

By Mike Schmierbach
Oregon Daily Emerald

I have to confess I have a certain bias. I like Italian food. Most any Italian food, unless it is really screwed up.

Ambrosia serves Italian food, and it certainly doesn't screw it up. How could I not like this restaurant?

Ambrosia features moderately priced, typical, quality Italian food. The thing is, typical, quality food in Eugene is anything but typical, making Ambrosia a great place to go.

Mind you, when I say moderately priced, I don't mean the meals fit easily within a college student's budget. However, if you can get friends, relatives or relatives of friends to take you out, the roughly \$20 they'll spend on a meal is worth it.

Appetizers are definitely one of the menu's high points. Not everyone likes mushrooms, but the stuffed ones at Ambrosia can do a lot to improve fungi's bad reputation. The hummus on focaccia with fresh tomatoes is an interesting combination and another good choice.

It's almost a shame the appetizers come in such large portions because you'll be too full to really appreciate the main course. The menu includes both pasta and full entree choices, as well as pizzas and calzones.

Ambrosia is proud of its pizzas, which are baked in a wood-burning oven and feature a range of standard and unusual items. Among the latter are roasted eggplant and a zucchini and mushroom saute.

While both the pizza and calzone are fine, if a little heavy on crust, the fact is you can get better pizza cheaper at other restaurants in Eugene.

If you're going to go to a decent Italian restaurant, you might as well get something you won't find elsewhere. The dishes are a bit more unusual than spaghetti with meatballs or chicken parmesan, and they taste better than any slop Denny's ever dished out.

The restaurant also features daily specials, one of which is usually an all-too-tempting seafood dish. Don't make up your mind until your server has told you what's not on the menu.

On the pasta side, the farfalle rosemarie — bowtie pasta with chicken, sun dried tomatoes and a rich cream sauce — is particularly good. Most of the pasta is great actually. Too many restaurants serve noodles that taste like they've been soaking in a bucket of water for a few hours, but Am-

brosia avoids that faux pas.

The restaurant does make a few mistakes. Their vegetables can be, well, limp. Additionally, their range of salad dressings is limited to two: blue cheese and creamy Italian. For those of us who feel dressing was not intended to be white, this can be disconcerting.

Moreover, the atmosphere leaves a little to be desired. The two-story building has been nicely decorated in the ever popular wood-and-plant decor, but privacy is lacking. If you want to listen to other people's conversations, the arrangement is great, but if you would prefer to keep your discussion confidential, the place can seem awfully loud.

The meal should end with two more expenses: dessert, which is only marginally worth it, and the tip, which ought to be generous. I've always found the service to be friendly, with waiters who were glad to talk about what was on the menu or going on in Eugene.

Ambrosia isn't the cheapest restaurant in Eugene, and it's probably not the best. However, if you've got the cash and the time to go someplace better than Taco Bell, it's a nice place to take visiting relatives or friends.

REVIEW

Ambrosia

★★★

(good service, great food, limp vegetables)

■ **WHERE:** 174 E. Broadway

■ **COST:** \$15-\$20

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