

CREPE NEPTUNE

Quality ingredients in a novel delivery vehicle

The secret of Crepe Neptune's success is that there is no secret. You step up to the counter, pick a crepe — either savory or sweet — and watch it cook on the circular flat top before you.

First, a thin layer of batter is spread across the cooktop surface. It is, as described by co-owner Yuri Vidal, a traditional recipe (flour, eggs, milk, butter). As it begins to bind, the crepe is flipped, the top now just ever-so-slightly browned. Then come the fixings, and there are rarely too many of them — usually three or four, five at most. They get spread and sprinkled about, and in the case of eggs or cheese, cooked or melted.

And that's about it. The now-spongy, wafer-thin crepe is folded in halves until it resembles a triangular pocket sandwich — about the size of a pizza slice — and slid into a custom-made carrying case. And, voila, there you have it: Crepe Neptune.

The process is two-fold and vaults most importantly from quality ingredients: fresh fruit and veggies, strong cheeses and the like; little else is necessary. Crepe Neptune's second strength is a novel delivery vehicle. The handheld crepe — in custom packaging that you peel away, layer by layer, as you go — is an enjoyable process. That said, it doesn't wholly make up for the lack of a dining room; Crepe Neptune is essentially an ordering window, and consuming is largely done elsewhere. (And, as anyone who's spent a moment in the unpredictable North Coast wind knows, outdoor dining isn't always ideal.)

Crepe Neptune's to-go configuration is an extension of its roots. Eight years ago it began

as a cart. In that iteration, efficiency and delivery became paramount. Three years after that proof of concept, founders Maya and Yuri Vidal opened the shop in downtown Cannon Beach.

Crepe Neptune offers around 20 different varieties, plus the opportunity to add ingredients and essentially design your own crepe. The menu is split rather evenly between sweet and savory. Many of the items, featuring geographical monikers like the Cape Lookout and Haystack Rock, differ only slightly — particularly on the sweet side, which leans heavily on Nutella, bananas, chocolate and whipped cream. The savory side affords more variety.

I began with the Cape Meares (\$9). Served steaming hot, a layer of scrambled eggs was more suggestive than plump. Thinner than the thin layers of spongy

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An in-progress Twin Rocks crepe (\$7) heats on Crepe Neptune's circular cooktop. Twin Rocks features with Nutella, caramel and sea salt.

crepe, the egg mingled humbly against bright, fresh tomatoes and smooth goat cheese. Occasionally diced jalapeños deigned to holler out over the rest.

Another of the savory crepes I had — the Cannon Beach (\$10) — featured goat cheese, as well as figs and prosciutto. It was a spectacular balance, both in flavors and texture: the prosciutto was rich and salty; the goat cheese smooth and

cutting; the figs sweet, thick and supple.

I also tried the Nehalem (\$8.50), which very much reminded of classic European building blocks with an oily pesto, sharp tomatoes, bread and mild brie. I only wish the brie would've spent a moment more on the flat to continue melting.

From the sweet menu I dabbled in the basic poles: the tartness of the fruits and the richness of the sugars. I found the fruits much preferable. (That said, I'm no insatiable sweet tooth.)

The Cape Falcon, with strawberries, lemon curd and a modicum of whipped cream was bright enough to have in the morning without remorse. The Twin Rocks (\$7), with Nutella, caramel and sea salt, was another story. It was a light desert to-go and quite thin. Though it needed a touch more salt, when it leavened the sugars I nodded along.

Crepe Neptune too offers espresso and smoothies. There's little to say about the espresso — it's the standard — but the smoothies are divine: for \$5 they abound, full of bright, fresh fruits, not ice.

And while for over \$10 you could get a whole lot more food elsewhere — this is, after all, the Cannon Beach price — you won't be lulled back to sleep at Crepe Neptune with their tasty little packages.

mouth

OF THE COLUMBIA

COAST WEEKEND'S LOCAL RESTAURANT REVIEW

Story and photos by THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA • mouth@coastweekend.com



Crepe Neptune's smoothies abound with bright, fresh fruits.

Crepe Neptune

Rating: ★★★★★

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crepeptune.com

HOURS: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday and Friday; 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

PRICE: \$\$ — Most crepes hover around \$10, but one is usually more snack than full meal

SERVICE: To-go, quick and courteous

VEGETARIAN / VEGAN OPTIONS: Vegetarians will be happy, vegans not so much

DRINKS: Espresso and smoothies

KEY TO RATINGS

- ★ poor
- ★★ below average
- ★★★ good & worth returning
- ★★★★ excellent
- ★★★★★ outstanding, the best in the Columbia-Pacific region