

# Sea Breeze Restaurant & Lounge

Working-class Seaside eatery serves up solid value

I'd never heard of a "chicken box." (It's like a doggy-bag but for birds.) That was before I set foot in the Sea Breeze Restaurant & Lounge, where such requests are commonplace.

"Oh yeah, people ask for chicken boxes all the time," server Alice says to a customer who piles in her leftover fries.

Despite its name, the Sea Breeze feels a little more country than coastal, more working-class than tourist trap. Nestled at the intersection of U.S. Highways 26 and 101, it's almost like a time machine to when everything was made of wood, when steaks were king, and every plate came garnished with a little piece of parsley.

On the more lively bar side, over the glow and plinking of video slots and country music radio, you'll hear the latest on logging politics, woebegone recitations of off-roading adventures gone awry and tall tales from the hunt. It's been this way, more or less, since the 1950s, and I gather little has changed. From the steak-is-king menu to the aged decor, you can almost taste the burnt coffee. As both an outlier and, for the most part, a solid value, I find the Sea Breeze wholly charming.

The restaurant's best deal is the burger and beer for \$5.25. Now, other places offer occasional specials — or tastier burgers — but none so cheaply and regularly. It's available every day, from 4 to 7 p.m. The quarter-pound patty is frozen and pre-formed, and delivered on a tall bed of

shredded lettuce, tomato, onion, pickle and Thousand Island dressing. And though the bun was toasted, the roughage — as well as the ketchup and mustard — were chilled, making the thing lukewarm at best. The Thousand Island spilled out the sides, coating my fingers.

It was familiar, and it was a hearty burger and it came with a pint of Budweiser (or Bud Light, if you prefer). At a hair over five bucks, it's a value I can only trumpet.

At the upper end of the menu is the Sea and Steak (\$23.95), an 8-to-10-ounce rib-eye steak with choice of prawns or scallops. I opted for prawns, as well as mashed potatoes and gravy, and a cup of clam chowder. The home-made chowder, which the Sea Breeze is known for, arrived almost immediately, with a pat of butter on top, just beginning to melt. The base was thick, traditional and quite creamy. There were chunks of potato and plenty of clams, which were a little of the chewy side, and I made short work of it.

The main course arrived with a thick slice of garlic toast. The prawns, beer battered and deep fried, were shaped like little "T's" or "Y's," as the meat had been flayed. Such preparation created more surface area, essen-



The Seabreeze's burger is familiar, hearty and a good value.



The Seaside omelet came with hashbrowns and toast.

tially doubling the amount of crisp, oily breading. The breading covered the tails too, which was a little unnerving, as it was difficult to tell where the meat ended and the tail began. It was also quite salty. Sweet and sour sauce and an exceedingly bright tartar offered some balance, but I found the flaying a bummer.

The accompanying rib-eye steak was ample, about an inch thick, maybe more. Two ribbons of fat essentially separated it into thirds. It was a tad over-cooked and needed more salt and pepper, but the quality of the cut itself was nothing to be ashamed of. With whipped mashed potatoes and a thick, salty, beefy gravy, it was a whole lot of fatty, greasy food, very much capable of slowing blood-flow to near-nap status.

## mouth OF THE COLUMBIA

COAST WEEKEND'S LOCAL RESTAURANT REVIEW

Story and photos by THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA • [mouth@coastweekend.com](mailto:mouth@coastweekend.com)

### Sea Breeze Restaurant & Lounge

Rating: ★ ★ ★

84774 US Highway 101, Seaside  
503-738-7329

**HOURS:** 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday to Thursday; 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday.

**PRICE:** \$\$ — Entrées hover from below \$10 for sandwiches and burgers to above \$20 for steaks

**SERVICE:** Thoughtful and personable

**VEGETARIAN / VEGAN OPTIONS:** Meat is king at the Seabreeze.

**DRINKS:** Coffee, tea, juice, soda, full bar

#### KEY TO RATINGS

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