

MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

Coast Weekend's local
restaurant review

Bigfoot's prices conjure up myth of top-tier cuisine

Review and photos by
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The rustic, cabin-like, Wild West interior of Bigfoot's Steakhouse is paired with myth: a breezy fascination with the namesake animal. The menu is presented as a four-page newspaper in which dishes are interspersed with tales of legend. Included, of course, is the iconic, blurry photo of a hairy beast walking upright in the woods.

Regardless of what is or isn't tromping around out there, much of Bigfoot's fare represents — or covets — the frontiersman's diet: meat and potatoes. Or, rather: meat, meat, potatoes and potatoes. Portions are piled up, sized for the working man and priced to match.

Indeed, the bill at Bigfoot's can be as intimidating as the Sasquatch herself.

And herein lies an impasse with the Seaside restaurant I just can't see my way around: The prices can be as high as anywhere in the region, but the food is resolutely average, both in its ingredients and execution. Bigfoot's top tier is a tough sell.

The flagship steaks come from the Midwest and boast of being grain-fed. The prime rib, depending on size, hovers from the mid-to-high twenties. A bacon-wrapped filet mignon tops out the menu at \$31.75.

Of the steaks, a server guided me to the Big River New York Strip (\$28.25). Ordered medium-rare, the not-quite-boot-heel-sized strip arrived closer to medium. It was plenty juicy,



Prawns and Halibut Dijon

buttery, plainly seasoned, with a river of fatty tissue running along one edge. It was red meat, plain and simple, not quite overwhelming and not quite extraordinary. While serviceable, it came up short for what I was paying. At \$20, I might feel differently.

The strip came with bread, choice of potato (baked, mashed, fries or rice pilaf) and veggies. All together, the entrées can add up to a substantial amount of food, but the accoutrements, by and large, felt more like afterthoughts. The salads weren't much different than the premixed type you get in a bag: iceberg lettuce with a few carrot shavings, plus out-of-season tomato, a slice or two of cucumber and croutons (aka the vapid, outmoded "chef's salad").

And since we're using the word "chef," let's talk about it: Bigfoot's doesn't feel like it's shepherded by one. There's no nuance or developed flavor to speak of. Rather, it's design by committee, purveyors and a bottom line.

The Prawns & Halibut Dijon (\$29.75) tip-toed a similar line. The fish was flaky and clean but short of astonishing. The sizable



Happy hour food: twin sip sliders and a pair of snowshoes



Big River New York Strip with steamed broccoli and rice pilaf

slab was covered in a creamy, tangy, white wine Dijon sauce and topped with mushrooms, tomatoes and three prawns. Thanks mostly to richness of the sauce, it was more decadent than the steak.

The mashed potatoes were regular ol' mashed potatoes. On a bed of mushy, overly-sweetened spaghetti squash the veggies — a melange of cauliflower, baby carrots, onions and zucchini — were an ice cream scoop short of dessert, way too sugary. The alternative to the squash medley,

steamed broccoli, was under-seasoned, sapped of any flavor.

Bigfoot's menu unfurls in anodyne sprawl. There's fish and chips, pasta, chowder, sandwiches, wings and more. There are burgers, of course, one of which is questionably presented. The weight of the "32oz. Yeti Special Burger" seems to correspond not to the (16-ounce) patty but the whole burger, which stacks ham, bacon, egg, cheese and veg.

As one patron at the bar mentioned, "Everything is so big." Alas, it's often as much filler as

BIGFOOT'S STEAKHOUSE

Rating: ★★

2427 S. Roosevelt Drive,
Seaside, Ore. 97138

503-738-7009

Hours: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Sunday through Thursday, 11
a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday through
Saturday

Price: \$\$ – top-tier values are
out of whack

Service: Friendly, familiar with
the locals

Vegetarian / Vegan Options:
It's a steakhouse

Drinks: Full bar

KEY TO STAR RATING SYSTEM

- ★ Poor
- ★★ Below average
- ★★★ Worth returning
- ★★★★ Very good
- ★★★★★ Excellent, best in region

killer.

Searching for portions and prices that were more manageable, I dipped into the happy hour menu, available everyday from 4 to 6 p.m. in the bar. Here, too, the value was broken: The two salty, French dip sliders were puny, near the size of pocket watches, but cost \$4.50. They should've been half that. The Pair of Snowshoes (\$4.50) — potato skins with taco-seasoned ground beef, cheese, tomatoes, salsa and sour cream — were less egregious but hardly a happy hour deal where you can't believe your luck. (A drink purchase is required for happy hour food.)

Oddly enough, the drinks at Bigfoot's are priced reasonably. As such, the bar area can be bubbling with locals, sharing Seaside's news and gossip or watching a game.

But considering the oft-lack-luster ingredients and shallow preparations, the food prices at Bigfoot's — especially on the big-ticket items — are at odds with reality. **CW**