



Mahi Frances-style with lemon and capers in white wine-butter sauce, three cheese risotto (parmesan, asiago and mozzarella) and shrimp cakes on sautéed mushrooms in tomato coulis with basil oil served at Crust.

RESTAURANT NEWS & REVIEWS

Crust adds to Miami River trendiness with pizza and more

BY LINDA BLADHOLM
JULY 12, 2016 12:31 PM

The Place: At year-old Crust near the Miami River, the pizza crust — made to stand up to delivery and takeout — is thick with crisp, puffed golden edges. It holds plenty of cheese and toppings in three sizes (personal, medium and large). But unlike at most pizza places, there is also a full menu of Italian-American-inspired dishes, from risotto and pastas to meatball and eggplant parmesan sandwiches and entrees including pecan-crusting trout and chicken Milanese. The space respects the former 1950s house with Deco pillars and black-and-white walls covered with gilt-edged mirrors, Venetian masks and a lantern-style central chandelier to create a rustic Tuscan trattoria feel.

The History: Husband and wife owners Klime and Anita Kovaceski both have roots in Macedonia, the landlocked Balkan country bordered by Greece, Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria and Kosovo. He is from Ohrid, Macedonia, and went to a French culinary institute in Opatija, Croatia, near Italy, where he earned a master's in hotel and restaurant management, then was an executive chef at Jama, a Yugoslavian restaurant in Amsterdam that in 1984 transferred him to an

outpost in North Miami Beach. The veteran chef owned Crystal Café in Miami Beach for 10 years, sold it, then worked all over the United States as a restaurant consultant for 10 years. She grew up in Sydney, Australia, studied communications at Canberra University and did advertising in healthcare. Her parents both emigrated from Macedonia. Her father is the oldest serving Macedonian Orthodox priest in Australia and married the couple three years ago in Miami after they met through a mutual friend.

The Food: The unusual combination of pan-fried breaded shrimp cakes with sautéed mushrooms in tomato coulis with basil oil makes a good starter. A signature pie combines creamy gorgonzola blue cheese with bits of fig and scraps of prosciutto for a play on sweet and salty. There's also funghi pizza with Portobello and button mushrooms, goat cheese and white truffle oil and pizza with grilled octopus and roasted red peppers. Or custom-build your pie from a choice of sauces and toppings. Entrees include seafood risotto with a touch of cream; linguine carbonara with bacon and mushrooms; grilled salmon with Kalamata olives, diced tomatoes and herbs with spinach risotto; and lamb chops with fig demi-glace and mint risotto. Finish with limoncello and mascarpone cake with white chocolate curls on top for a taste of the sweet love story that embodies Crust.

You Didn't Know This: In Australia, one can find pizza topped with saltwater crocodile or snails marinated in wild lime and ginger or mascarpone, caramelized leeks, smoked pork belly, pear, provolone and peppadews (sweet South African peppers).

IF YOU GO

Place: Crust

Address: 668 NW Fifth St. Miami.

Contact: 305-371-7065, crust-usa.com

Hours: 5 p.m.- 10 p.m. Sunday and Tuesday-Thursday; till 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Prices: Appetizers \$11.95-\$13.95, salads \$8.95-\$10.95, sandwiches \$13.95-\$15.95, pizza \$11.95-\$23.95, entrees \$16.95-\$22.95, desserts \$3.95-\$8.95