

Restaurant Ratings: ★ poor; ★★ fair; ★★★ good; ★★★★ very good; ★★★★★ excellent

Piggy Bank sates barbecue cravings

Theresa J. Marquez
Poughkeepsie Journal

Downtown Beacon has been going through a reincarnation and there are many opportunities for a great meal. The Piggy Bank, housed in what was once a bank, stands out when it comes to ambience and down-home-style barbecue.

We enjoyed a great meal in the contemporary surroundings of lovely stonework, fixtures and lighting — all of which could be labeled as art — right along with actual artwork throughout the dining room.

Initially, our server repeatedly came to our table wanting to know if we were ready to order, so we settled on shrimp and salad to start.

More than one dozen boiled, then chilled shrimp (\$11.95 for one-half pound, \$17.95 for a full pound) encircled the plate. The menu listed "in our garlic marinade and served with a cocktail sauce." We anticipated a light and garlicky sauce paired with a traditional red cocktail sauce. Instead, these delightfully tender morsels were swathed in the house barbecue sauce, which presented notes of sweetness and a bit of tang.

Our second appetizer was the Goat Cheese Salad (\$9.95). A combination of mesclun and salad greens was mixed with slivers of red onions, chunks of cucumber and grape tomatoes. It was liberally scattered with a crumble of mild, creamy goat cheese and bits of walnuts lightly coated with a mild spice blend. With the balsamic dressing, it made for a satisfying salad despite having to pull out greens that were slimy and well past their prime.

Catfish (\$15.95) is available broiled, blackened or battered

The Piggy Bank

★★★★ (Good-to-very good)

448 Main St., Beacon; 845-838-0028; www.piggybankrestaurant.com.

Hours: Sunday-Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; closed Wednesday. Daily specials offered for all courses; reservations recommended for larger parties; Visa, MasterCard, American Express accepted; vegetarian meals available; handicapped accessible.

Price range: Lunch, \$6.95-\$22.95; dinner menu, \$6.95-

and deep-fried. We opted for the blackened preparation and were treated to a fantastic dish. The Cajun-style seasonings were applied with a re-

\$22.95; children's menu available.

Directions: From Poughkeepsie, drive south on Route 9 about 13½ miles. In Fishkill, turn right onto Route 52; continue west about 4.5 miles. Turn left onto Main Street in Beacon. The Piggy Bank is about one-tenth of a mile on the left side of the road. There is off-street parking behind the restaurant.

Ratings Breakdown

Food ★★★★★

Ambience ★★★★★

Service ★★★

Value ★★★

served hand — the balance of spices and fish was perfect.

Accompanying this dish were two stellar side dishes. Nicely browned, hand-cut fries



Poughkeepsie Journal
The place for down-home-style barbecue in Beacon.

filled half the plate. The other side was a small bowl of scrumptious collards that still had a bit of tooth to the greens. They were cooked in authen-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

BBQ: Beacon's Piggy Bank packs punch with pulled pork

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

tic Southern style with small bits of pork with an ample portion of the cooking juices.

For meat lovers, the Pig-Out Platter (\$22.95) is the way to go. Choosing three out of the five protein options was difficult. We narrowed it down to the pulled pork in Carolina sauce, the quarter rack of pork spare ribs and barbecue chicken. A choice of two sides from a selection of more than a dozen also accompanied the entree.

A small mound of pulled pork was moist without being overly sauced. The Carolina sauce was tart from the vinegar, but also sweet from the brown sugar. Smoke flavors were dominant in the ribs. There was only one slight fault to this almost flawless dish. The breast meat on the barbecue chicken was on the verge of being dried out. Other choices available were beef brisket and grilled bratwurst.

The Piggy Bank offers a limited wine menu and several beers by the bottle and on tap. There is also a good mix of specialty drinks. Not finding anything on the wine menu we felt would pair well with spicy catfish or barbecue sauce, we decided to indulge in the house mixed drinks. The fruitiness of the Georgia Sunrise (\$8), (amaretto, peach schnapps, orange juice, grenadine and sour mix) paired wonderfully with both the catfish and barbecue as did the Creole Lemonade (\$8). This blissful concoction was a mix of Absolut Citron, Jack Daniel's, triple sec, 7UP, crème de cassis and sour mix.

On the evening we visited the freezer was not working, which eliminated about 90 percent of the dessert menu. The "famous" key lime pie seemed like a safe bet, but we should have passed. It had off flavors that were unappealing and not a great way to end the meal.

Considering how persistent our initial server was at

the beginning of the meal, once our order was placed, he failed to come back to our table. The runner was the only person we saw after that and not frequently enough, as we sat with dirty dishes piled around us. It was also disconcerting when we realized all the tables around us had been served warm cornbread, an aroma that wafted over and tantalized us.

There have been several evenings since then I wished I lived closer to Beacon — a pulled-pork sandwich from The Piggy Bank sure sounds good.

The Poughkeepsie Journal pays for the meals that are the subjects of restaurant reviews and reviewers do not identify themselves prior to the end of the meal. Theresa J. Marquez, Web producer for the Poughkeepsie Journal, graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in 2005 with high honors. She has worked for *Cooking Light* magazine and is a local personal chef.