

*Carol & Joe Davis***FINE DINING
DETECTIVES**

www.finediningdetectives.com

**Cattlemens: Prime Rib,
Steaks and More***Sizzling Prime Rib*

The Fine Dining Detectives decided it was time for a Steak dinner. We hadn't been to Cattlemens for too many years, so we made a reservation and brought some good friends. Can you believe that Cattlemens has been in Petaluma for more than 35 years now? It was started by Pete Gillham, Sr., and is now run by his son, Pete, Jr. The décor is reminiscent of the Old West, featuring antiques, ranch artifacts, and light country music. The Western motif reminded us fondly of the cowboy and cowgirl outfits we wore as kids.

We were seated in a large comfortable booth that could easily have accommodated six, so the four of us had plenty of room. Our room had booths

along the sides, plenty of room between tables, and a high ceiling. To the sides, there were more dining rooms and a large bar. Each area was separate, keeping the noise level quite low and making it easy to carry on a conversation.

Cattlemens offers an extensive menu, so we asked for help. Our waitress, Terri, who has worked at Cattlemens for five years, was very knowledgeable. She told us what she liked, helping us order. Casey, the manager, stopped by and gave us some suggestions as well. First we ordered drinks. A Fat Tire Amber Ale, a Skyy Vodka Cosmo, a Grey Goose and OJ, and a glass of Clos Du Bois Chardonnay were soon delivered to our table.

For starters, we were ad-

vised to have the Blue Cheese Garlic Bread, garlic bread with crumbled blue cheese. It was a rich, tasty way to begin our dinner. The Artichoke Cheese Dip was delicious, consisting of artichoke hearts, parmesan, provolone and sharp cheddar, served hot and bubbly. Typically, you find this dish to be mostly mayonnaise, but Cattlemens' version has a purer taste, using only fresh ingredients. We even tried dipping the Blue Cheese Garlic bread in it. We also enjoyed the Applewood Bacon Wrapped Shrimp, served with a savory chipotle lime butter sauce that made the difference. The Jumbo Stuffed Mushrooms were another tasty appetizer. They were skillet baked and generously stuffed with Parmesan, fresh garlic, herbs, sourdough bread and a splash of Chardonnay.

All dinner entrees include a tossed salad served family style, hot fresh Sourdough French bread, twice baked or mashed potato and ranch-style beans which are made fresh daily. Our overall favorite entrée was the Prime Rib. It is slow roasted to lock in the flavor and is served au jus with homemade creamy horseradish sauce. There are three cuts, depending on how hungry you are. We had the 18 oz. Cattlemens Cut, which was really thick and wonderfully juicy. It was definitely the best we've had recently and stacks up very favorably with the great Prime Rib we have enjoyed at The House of Prime Rib in San Francisco.

The Porterhouse Steak is huge. It is a 2-pounder known as The King of Steaks and is served with Tumbleweed Onions. For those with a lighter appetite, there's a combo of BBQ Chicken -- which is a charbroiled skinless chicken breast with zesty BBQ sauce -- and Shrimp Scampi, 6 jumbo shrimp in house-made creamy scampi butter. For an extra side, try the Fresh Sautéed

Mushrooms. A sweet touch was the visit from the Ranch Style Bean Girl who served up piping hot beans from her pot like they did in the Old West.

The Wine List has nearly 30 choices, all reasonably priced. The Kenwood Zinfandel paired well with the Prime Rib. The Clos Du Bois Sonoma County Chardonnay was excellent with the Scampi.

We had just barely saved enough room to try the Desserts. The Cowboy Cobbler was served warm and a la mode. They say that it is Frontier size -- very generous and too big for one person. The peach and apple filling was tasty, and the nuts on the top crust add a wonderful taste. The Grand Canyon New York Style Cheesecake was also delicious. It, too, was plenty big enough to share. The cheesecake was light, creamy and dense but not too heavy. Strawberry sauce enhanced its excellent flavor.

Cattlemens is a Classic California Steakhouse serving Harris Ranch natural beef. They age and cut the beef onsite and offer up generous portions. We all enjoyed what we ordered and the service was efficient and genuine. All around us, couples and large parties were enjoying their meals as well. We went home with leftovers, full but not stuffed, looking forward to a return visit. Cattlemens'

slogans ring true: Straightforward Western hospitality and food prepared simply with old-fashioned care. Now we know why the parking lot is always full.

CATTELEMENS

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BestSteakintheWest.com

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Monday-Friday 5 - 10 PM

Saturday-Sunday 4 - 10 PM

Reservations Recommended

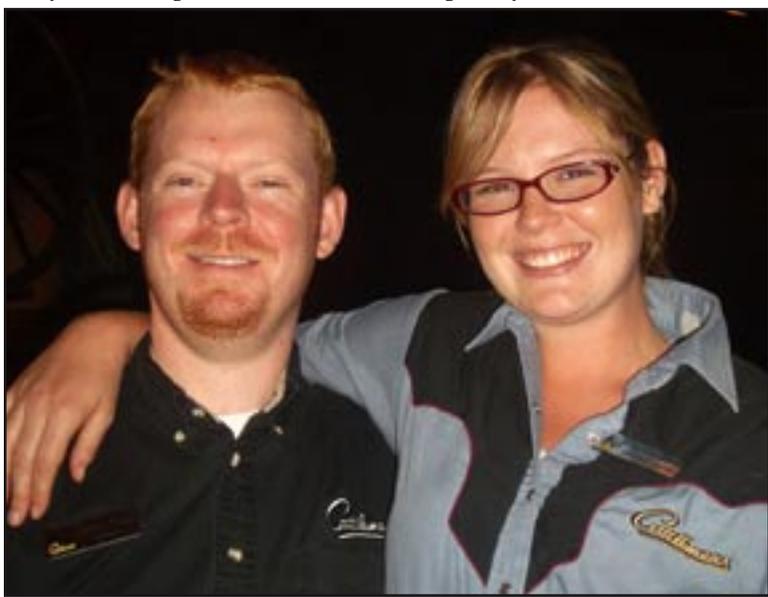
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The Ranch Style Bean Girl*Jumbo Stuffed Mushrooms**Casey and Terri provide Pure Western Hospitality*