

Downtown Phoenix's New Restaurant; The Arrogant Butcher

Written by Written by Melissa Larsen / Photographed by Cassandra Tomei

Whether it's a casual Italian grinder you're craving or a charcuterie platter with foie gras and house-made mustard, Downtown Phoenix's new The Arrogant Butcher puts "pow" in power lunch.



CityScape in Downtown Phoenix has really made an impact on the metro's power lunch crowd, and The Arrogant Butcher—one of the locale's several new restaurants—is no exception, judging from the midday crowd that lines up outside the door. The Arrogant Butcher opened earlier this year under restaurateur Sam Fox's umbrella of successful eateries. Throughout the last handful of years, Fox has opened thriving feasting spots throughout the Southwest, including the Valley's own True Food Kitchen, Modern Steak, NoRTH, Olive & Ivy and many more. And thanks to a diverse menu, a cool location, industrial-chic interiors and a slick cocktail list, The Arrogant Butcher is bound to make a mark among Fox's booming array of restaurants.

Before you even set your sights on a menu—as with any Fox Restaurant Concept—your eyes are already feasting on the CityScape restaurant's cool design elements, both inside and out of the 7,500-sq.-ft. space. Cozy patio seating, surrounded by contemporary planters, welcomes guests as they approach the entrance; above, retro-inspired lighted signage and an awning fitted with yellow-and-white fabric can be seen. Once inside, guests are treated to even more aesthetic awesomeness thanks to the space's metal-and-steel bar crowned with a zinc top and suspended shelving where spirits are on display; rich tones like brick red, chocolate brown and mustard yellow; salvaged Douglas Fir flooring; a stunning picture wall; and a glass-enclosed exhibition-style kitchen.

The Arrogant Butcher's lunchtime bill of fare features approachable eats alongside a few more sophisticated items (think a Sloppy Joe and pâté of foie gras, chicken liver and black truffle, respectively). Among the short list of starters are some real stars, including the soft pretzels and fondue and the naughty-but-oh-so-nice potato fritters. The nuggets of soft pretzels don't suffer from being over-salted and are delicious even without being dunked into the ooey gooey provolone fondue that accompanies the dish—but it certainly doesn't hurt. The potato fritters, with their crispy, deep-fried exterior and warm center of bacon and cheddar, are cooled down a dollop of chilled truffled crème fraîche. The only problem with the aforementioned appetizers is that they are bite-sized, making it hard to stop popping them in your mouth. The starter lineup also includes a few seafood-based selections, including black mussels and crispy rock shrimp, as well as design-your-own cheese and charcuterie plates.

For their midday meal, power lunchers have a choice of several salads, sandwiches and entrees. The grilled chicken club was towering (towering to the point that the sandwich was easiest enjoyed with a fork and knife) with ham, bacon and havarti cheese, though it was the delectable bun that stole the show. While the club sandwich was large enough to share, the crab cake "Louie" salad was on the small side, featuring two thin crab cakes alongside a zesty, delicious—yet petite—array of greens, white asparagus, avocado, corn and more. Apart from its size, the salad also underperformed as a large portion of an avocado shell and shards of crab cartilage were left in the dish. Next time, the short rib stew, paired with green chilies, cornbread and a fried egg, and the turkey-pastrami sandwich featuring a pretzel bun are on our must-try list. The Arrogant Butcher certainly doesn't disappoint when it comes to a happy ending. The dessert menu spotlights such dreamy-sounding eats as a warm peanut butter cup and blueberry cheesecake. After just a spoonful, the Hot Chocolate Cake and the salted caramel pudding will undoubtedly put a smile—and perhaps a whipped cream mustache—on your face. The Hot Chocolate Cake features a Chantilly cream and was one of the moistest cakes that's ever graced our taste buds while the salted caramel pudding was nearly too good to put down. As another nod to The Arrogant Butcher's industrial-chic streak, the desserts were coolly served in mini mason jars—just enough to share but not too much to inflict guilt if you finish off the sweet stuff all by yourself.

TO LEARN MORE The Arrogant Butcher

2 E. Jefferson St. Ste. 150, Phoenix.
602.324.8502, www.foxrc.com.

Chef: Clint Woods

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Closed Sundays.