

Barneys New York's Fred's Restaurant

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Fred's, the restaurant with a simple name at Barneys New York, offers simple yet sophisticated dishes to those shopping around for delicious Italian-American fare.



Come January, most people avoid the shopping mall. For the past two months, many have spent their weekends stalking parking lots for a prime spot and elbowing their way through crowds in search of Christmas presents. However, the opening of Fred's at Barneys New York, one of the most anticipated additions to Scottsdale Fashion Square during last fall's new wing debut, has given Valley dwellers a reason to brave the mall this month.

The Scottsdale outpost is the third member of the Fred's family, with the other two locations residing in Chicago and, naturally, New York. (By the way, the eatery was developed by Fred Pressman, son of Barneys New York founder Barney Pressman.) The restaurant spotlights local influences in its food via ingredients from Arizona farms, as well as in its aesthetics, with the Frank Lloyd Wright- and Paolo Soleri-esque design elements. The dining room is chic and understated, and we think the same can be said for the cuisine.

The Italian-American bill of fare includes fresh pastas and pizzas, farm-to-table salads and several meat and seafood plates. As for sides and starters, we sunk our teeth into the piping-hot Belgian pommes frites, which were accompanied by three finger-licking dipping sauces. Our favorite was the garlic mayo that was so addictive our attempts to try the fries sans sauce were futile. On a more healthful note, there was the delectable Mark's Madison Avenue Salad, a chopped salad—featuring lettuce, beets, mushrooms, peas, peppers, onions, white beans, green beans and more—topped with Italian tuna. The dish was plentiful, fresh and flavorful, made even more so by the addition of the tasty tuna. (We heard that this salad was created when Fred's managing director, Mark Strausman, improvised it for a customer who couldn't decide on a dish.)

The pizzas and pastas were the real stars of our lunch. The pizza topped with prosciutto, arugula and shaved Parmesan cheese was a winning selection, especially thanks to the crispy, blackened thin crust. For more hearty slices, the Italiano pizza, with hot and sweet sausage, is said to be a don't-miss for meat lovers. Fred's heaping plate of spaghetti and meatballs was our table favorite. With just a glance, there was nothing spectacular about this traditional menu item; our taste buds, though, told a different story. The hearty meatballs, concocted of veal, beef and pork, were so moist and delicious that we wished the dish had come with a few more to enjoy.

We had to pull ourselves away from the spaghetti to dig in to two of Fred's most popular desserts, the flourless chocolate cake and the fruit cobbler. The presentation of the sweet slice was as memorable as its rich, yummy taste: It was edged in crunchy chocolate candies, topped in fresh raspberries and drizzled with sweet raspberry sauce. The cobbler, which features seasonal fruit, was even more amazing. The warming dish was both sweet and tart and bursting with soft apples chunks and a dollop of vanilla gelato. With such approachable yet high-end eats, Fred's is one name we won't soon forget.

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