

Note: Those of you who have read my reviews know that I can be hard on restaurants. So I had decided to follow the rule, "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all," which is why you haven't seen many reviews from me. Well today I decided to heck with that! If you actually read something in a review that is positive, you can trust it is the truth.

Stumptown Diner

By
Kelly Justman

It was a great Saturday morning and we had just finished browsing through the wonderful hardware store in downtown Matthews (you really must go!) and Farmers' Market when my husband announced he was hungry. Unfortunately, Sante' was not open for lunch. Too bad, we were interested in trying it out. We decided to try the Stumptown Diner. It was relatively new to Matthews (January 2006) and seemed like a great place for a filling lunch.

The décor is bright and reminiscent of the 50's and 60's. There was a luncheon bar with old-style bar stools keeping with the theme. When we walked by the kitchen I saw three cooks by the grill. One that appeared to be working and the other two were flirting with one of the waitresses. No big deal.

We were given a brunch menu that offered fish, omelets, sandwiches, salads, and an interesting compilation of appetizers. I immediately ordered the jalapeno corn bread muffins. When our waiter brought them to us he said that they normally come this way but if we wanted them warmed, he would toss them in the oven. That was a yellow flag being waved. I touched the cool, somewhat soggy muffins and decided to take him up on the offer to warm them. You see, I say yellow flag because we hadn't even tasted, touched, or smelled them and the waiter was almost apologizing for the method in which they were served.

It went downhill from there.

Before I get into the bad I must say that our waiter was excellent. Very attentive and nice. He belonged in a better restaurant.

I ordered my son French toast for \$3.50 from the kid's menu. The description read that it came with whipped butter and marinated strawberries. When his plate was delivered with one slice of French toast sprinkled with powdered sugar, I immediately asked for the strawberries. We could live without the butter. The toast smelled great. My husband snuck a taste and said it wasn't that good. My son ate half of the one piece and most of the strawberries.

Our muffins came out and were okay.

My husband ordered the catfish (\$5.50) and fried potatoes (\$2.50) from the blue plate section. I ordered the Angus burger with cheddar cheese that came with fries and jalapeno slaw (\$7.50). We did a lot of waiting after that along with other diners in the restaurant. Our waiter kept giving us updates on our order, which was very nice.

My husband's meal had one piece of deep fried catfish, fries and fried potatoes. They must have thrown the fries in as a bonus. Our waiter offered to get tartar sauce as he noticed there wasn't any on the plate. My husband cut the fish in half trying to get to the thick part of the fish and said to me that he didn't think it was done. It wasn't. The middle was mushy, not flaky, and slightly pink. He ate around the edges.

My burger came out and I was excited to bite into it. The shredded lettuce that came with it was so sparse, it didn't even cover the burger. There were homemade pickles on it that looked great. I took a bite of the jalapeno slaw and tasted nothing but mayonnaise. No spice. Just cabbage and mayonnaise. I am a wimp when it comes to spicy food but this was ridiculously bland. The fries tasted old and even my son didn't want them. I then added mustard to the burger and flipped the top bun over onto the burger (it was facing down on the plate). There it was. The thing that ruined my appetite to a point that I did not want anything else from that place and walked out with my son. MOLD. Black round spores all over my bun. At home, I have cut mold off of bread in my kitchen and ate it. Heck I've had hair in my food and still accepted a new dish from a restaurant. However, if they actually took the time to toast the bun and serve it without noticing mold, what else were they neglecting?

My husband met me outside and said that he didn't finish his uncooked fish either. Stumptown Diner paid for our meal but the manager never came by to apologize. My husband did tip our waiter because he wasn't at fault and was the only one that apologized for the awful meal we were given.

In the restaurant world, the best cooks and managers work the Friday and Saturday night shifts. That said, this place may serve a nice dinner. But skip this place for anything other than that and dine at your own risk.

Stumptown Diner is located at 115 West John Street in downtown Matthews.