

Café Mayan

Delicious, affordable Sunday brunch

By K.A. Esposito Contributing Writer



Café Mayan owner Omar Sagastume stands at the omelet bar during Sunday brunch. PHOTO/K.A. ESPOSITO

Region - The season's first snowflakes were falling as my family and I settled at a table in front of a window for Sunday brunch at Café Mayan. With Christmas music playing softly, a fire burning in the open brick oven, and subtle decorations, the café set a holiday ambiance no Scrooge could resist.

We all needed to fuel up to begin our seasonal scramble, and Café Mayan, besides setting mood, also sets a terrific table. For a mere \$9.95 each, we had our choice of a wide variety of food at the selfserve, all-you-can-eat brunch.

First, you should know that "self-serve" is a bit of a misnomer. Our server didn't take orders or set full plates before us. Nonetheless, she was very attentive, from telling us about the buffet and offering suggestions to filling special requests. And she did it all with many smiles.

Owner Omar Sagastume was also attentive, greeting and seating customers, explaining his menus, and generally making everyone feel welcome. It was clear the café has many regular customers as several stopped in for the café's rich coffee and a chat with Sagastume.

We started slowly. I took half a full-size blueberry muffin and several small tarts, while my son went with straightforward toast and jam. The muffin was sweet and soft, almost dessert-like. The tarts, one prune, one strawberry and one apricot, were dollops of jam wrapped in a tasty crust that balanced the sweetness of the fruit.

My son, who prefers jelly to the fruit spreads we use at home, was perfectly happy spreading various flavors on his bread. My husband tried the meatball soup, and was pleased with the chunks of vegetables, noodles and tiny meatballs swirling in a fragrant broth.

We then headed for the omelet bar, where Sagastume held court with fresh eggs and dishes of ham, red pepper, mushroom, mild cheese and summer squash. My husband went for everything, while my son stuck to his favorite: ham, cheese and mushrooms. I chose pepper, cheese and squash.

Watching Sagastume expertly swirl and toss the eggs was a pleasure, but not anywhere near as enjoyable as the light, fluffy omelets that resulted. The side dish of hot, spiced potatoes with bits of onion and pepper deserved a far more sophisticated name than home fries, but whatever you call them, they were delicious.

My son loved the smoked bacon, which was excellent, but my vote went to the pork loin, sliced and cooked in a wine sauce with mushrooms. Rare roast beef was ready to be sliced on demand, too.

On the sweeter side, Café Mayan gives an unusual take on the traditional pancakes and waffles. The sweet potato pancakes were dense and flavorful. The ginger-cinnamon Belgian waffles offered a seasonal flavor and were perfect with whipped cream, although syrup was available.

By the last taste of waffle, I was pleasantly full, but my son soldiered on. He enjoyed the chocolate cake with fluffy white frosting, but his favorite is always carrot cake, and Café Mayan's moist, chunky slice covered in creamy frosting was no exception.

By the time we finished, we were relaxed and fortified to begin our holiday errands in good spirits.

Café Mayan is located at 135 Westborough Rd., North Grafton. Call 774-551-0006 or visit www.cafemayancoffee.com