

The Post Office Café

For almost forty years, the Post Office Café has been a premier South Shore restaurant. You will enjoy your visit for lunch, dinner, or just drinks, because this restaurant is the whole package: excellent food, a complete bar with lots of specials, your choice of seating – bar, booth, or table – an efficient and professional wait staff, a warm and welcoming ambience, and special events almost every night, all at reasonable prices. Leave it to the Lessings to make certain you have a great dinner and evening out.

When you enter the classic brick building, which once served as a post office, you will see the original teller windows that separate the booths from the bar. Carved carousel horses are also a part of the décor. The atmosphere is casual, yet sophisticated.

Manager Mike Lessing, Jr. greeted us and told us about the Lessing history. He is the sixth generation of the family to work in the business that started in 1890 with a small restaurant on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. That restaurant was one of the first to distribute Coca-Cola in New York. Mike said he started on the ground floor of the family business, working in the kitchen at age ten as a dishwasher. Later, he gained experience working for the Union Square Hospitality Group, spending three years in fine dining restaurants before taking on responsibility in the family business.

While we were talking to Mike, our waitress, Jess, brought our first course, two “share” plates. I chose the Southwest Chicken Spring Rolls with corn, black beans, and cheddar cheese accompanied by a tasty remoulade-style sauce.

This dish served with a cold beer is about as good as it gets. Sticking with the southwest theme, my friend chose the Grilled Chicken Quesadilla accompanied by sour cream, guacamole and pico de gallo, that flavorful blend of fresh tomato, onion, and pepper. Perfectly grilled crispness on the outside with melted cheese, chicken, pepper, and onion on the inside, this dish is a specialty of the house.

I asked Mike Lessing, “What is the secret to the Lessing’s success?” He replied, “The hard work of family members!” He went on to tell us that 15 family members work in the business, which employs approximately 2,000 people in six states. Lessing’s now owns ten restaurants on Long Island and 17 catering facilities, plus a burgeoning franchise called Blaze Pizza. They own the Metro-Atlantic area of the franchise, which includes Long Island, Westchester, and Connecticut, and have opened six pizza restaurants so far. The first restaurant opened in Jupiter, Florida.

We finished talking to Mike just as the main courses arrived. My selection was from the specials menu, Swordfish over key lime risotto surrounded by a grilled fresh vegetable medley. Swordfish can be tricky to cook properly, but the chef did this perfectly. The fish was moist, tender, and juicy, enhanced by the key lime risotto.

My friend decided on the Root Beer Braised Beef Short Rib with horseradish-chive mashed potatoes, marble-sized carrots, and pearl onions in a rosemary-cabernet reduction. This hearty fare, offered on what was a cool spring evening, proved to be exactly what she was hoping for. The meat was



130 West Main Street, Babylon
Phone: 631-669-9224

Hours: Open every day for lunch and dinner
Monday - Thursday: 12:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.
Friday and Saturday: 12:00 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Sunday: 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Cuisine: American, Full Bar
Catering: On site and off
Complete menu, take-out available
Three Course, pre-theater dinner (daily 5 p.m. through 7 p.m.)
Children’s menu available

Ambience: Lively, sports/pub-like bar with separate, quieter dining area, Large Screen TVs
Parking: Street parking and parking lots in rear

Reservations: Accepted for parties of 7 or more
Price range: Reasonable to moderate
Credit Cards: Yes



Manager Mike Lessing, Jr. with photos of the first restaurant in lower Manhattan

tender and flavorful with a hint of sweetness.

We finished our dining experience with a shared slice of New York Cheesecake garnished with whipped cream and a generous portion of fresh strawberries and blueberries in a delicious compote.

The Post Office Café features a good selection of beer, wine, and cocktails, as well as an extensive beverage list with lots of inventive libations. They also do flights of wine, with three different pours for \$12.00, with names like “The Jetsetter.” The idea is to allow you to compare three different wines for a reasonable price.

In addition to the great food and drinks, there is always something special going on at the Post Office Café. Thursday brings “Steak Night,” with a prix fixe menu for theatergoers heading to a live performance at Babylon’s new Argyle Theatre. The popular Sunday brunch is from 11:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. Tuesdays there is “Musingo” from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., a game in which people play BINGO by identifying songs of a particular era to win prizes and free drinks. DJ Robert Walter of “Top Hits” Entertainment oversees the two hours of fun. In the summer there is “Lifeguard Night,” with special drinks, and we can’t forget Margarita Mondays.

For all the Fire Islander visitors reading this, remember The Post Office Café is a convenient stop within walking distance of the Babylon LIRR station. Hope to see you there, because we will be going back! ■