



## Food! Food! Food!



Ok there's one thing I have to get out of the way first: *Nude! Nude! Nude!*

This is what greeted us on an unassuming block of La Cienega, just above the Beverly Center. And this is what flashes on a marquee above the, er, club one door north of The Cadillac Cafe.

You'd think owners Marc and Jon Keel and designer Rad Ish would have reconsidered reopening their restaurant (remember it from 10 years ago?) in the same location but, hey, maybe the next door neighbor's patrons love the great food, too. I know we did.

We parked on the street just south of the restaurant to avoid potentially embarrassing questions from our inquisitive sons (free parking is also available in back). Inside the cozy 68-seat café, the decor is Diner—that is, if the Jetsons went retro. Ish imbued the place with a futuristic feel, from the gleaming bright blue bar counter to the sleekly upholstered booths to the eclectic, upbeat, but not too loud, music. (Incidentally, there's not a Caddie in sight.)

From the small yet adequate wine list I selected a Tanglewood Chardonnay, my husband imbibed a micro-brewed Apollo Space-Crafted Ale and the kids sipped Cokes from the original-style bottles. We



The Cadillac Cafe's Fondue For Two provides fun for all.

took the edge off our appetites with the Cadillac Fondue for Two (\$8.95)—generous enough for our family of four and a big hit with Tyler, 9, and Kyle, 6, who delighted in repeatedly spearing a piece of apple, roasted potato or baguette and dipping it into the black pot bubbling with a tasty blend of brie, smoked gouda, Monterey Jack and Parmesan cheeses.

The café's futuristic retro theme includes some twists-on-the-traditional dinner entrées like Original Turkey Sundae (\$8.50) consisting of roast turkey and garlic mashed potatoes, topped with pan drip gravy and cranberry sauce; and Burnt Meatloaf Plate (\$9.50), an herb and oven-blackened version of the classic

with marinara sauce, and the requisite potatoes and veggies. But the kids were in the mood for the Fruit Marinated Grilled Island Steak (\$10.25) with mild Cuban-style black beans and fried bananas on the side. All was polished off with gusto—except for the colorful skewer of corn, zucchini, tomatoes and peppers. I had the Linguini with Steak Strips (\$12.95), a heaping plate of pasta and tender meat slices in a delicious light cream sauce, all festively dotted with red peppers and scallions. My husband, Kevin, had one of the specials, Grilled Ahi Tuna (\$14.95), which he devoured before I could steal a bite (he said it was excellent, and then finished the kids' vegetables).

After such a savory meal, the chocolate bread pudding, a house specialty, seemed way too filling. We shared a slice of spicy Pumpkin Praline Pecan Pie (\$3.95) and called it a night.

Then we walked decidedly south on the boulevard, past a Mohawked, tattooed man who, fortunately, was not *Nude! Nude! Nude!*

*The Cadillac Café, 359 N. La Cienega Blvd., L.A., (310) 657-6591. Open Mon. through Fri. 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Sat. and Sun. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. No children's menu.*

—Vivien Santana Hughes