

OAHU'S

Top Restaurants

CHEF SPOTLIGHT: Chef Francesco Valentini

Some times we all want an exquisite meal prepared for us, but we don't want to go out. You have a party coming up and have no idea what to do about food? The answer is to call Francesco Valentini. The only full time private chef on the Oahu, Francesco caters to some of the most well-known and well-respected people on the island. He can cook you an authentic Italian dinner for 8-14 people and have you dreaming that you're in Italy. It's quite a service to have Francesco come into your kitchen. He'll meet you before hand to discuss the menu, any allergies or diet concerns you may have, and he does the shopping himself. He shows up with his own pots and pans (and dishwashers, bartenders, and waiters if you want) and makes all the pasta by hand. If he starts speaking or singing in Italian, don't worry, he hails from Siena, Italy where he has his own bed and breakfast. If you would like more info on Francesco Valentini, visit his website at www.chefvalentini.com.

MICHEL'S AT THE COLONY

2895 Kalakaua Ave. | Diamond Head | 923-6552

One of Honolulu's few "on the beach" fine dining restaurants, Michel's offers French inspired continental cuisine. You can watch the sunset and literally touch the sand in a beautiful, romantic setting, but don't get the wrong idea, no t-shirts and shorts at this beach restaurant. Men definitely should consider sporting a collared shirt. At Michel's the staff really does know as much as they think they do, and GM Philip Shaw is the quintessential host. Try the potato crusted Onaga on sautéed orzo & spinach with sweet raw shrimp, tomato coulis and a light garlic pink sauce. Wash it down with a glass of Delamotte Champagne. Cost-fat wallet. Hours-nightly from 5:30pm. Valet parking.

HY'S STEAKHOUSE

2440 Kuhio Ave. | Waikiki | 922-5555

This classic old world steakhouse boasts the only wood burning kiawe grill in Honolulu, and they make a killer martini. Both Thaddeus, the Bar Manager, and Bob, the GM, have been with Hy's since 1977, and has seen the restaurant perfect their signature kiawe grilled porterhouse steak. Try it with a chilled Glenlivet straight up. If this were Boston, men would probably need to wear a coat and tie, but in Honolulu, a collared shirt will do. The old boys club feel makes women feel like ladies and boys like men. Cost-fat wallet (you know the cost of beef). Hours-nightly from 6pm. Valet parking.

RUTH'S CHRIS STEAKHOUSE

500 Ala Moana Blvd. | Restaurant Row | 599-3860

This new world steakhouse is a worldwide franchise, and recent renovations added sophistication and sass. A hip new outdoor bar and lanai are in the works. Your après golf clothes could work, but not shorts. Their specialty is the Surf & Turf (Maine Lobster and petite Filet Mignon), and try their dirty Bombay Sapphire Martini straight up. After dinner check out Oceans Nightclub or catch a movie for \$1. Cost-fat wallet (again, the cost of beef...not to mention the lobster). Hours-nightly from 5pm. Validated parking garage or valet.

PADOVANI'S - Alana Doubletree Hotel

1956 Ala Moana Blvd. | Honolulu | 946-3456

Former Executive Chef at La Mer, Chef Phillipe Padovani brings his French inspired Pacific Rim dishes to Honolulu, and he recently opened a Padovani's in San Francisco. The wine bar is a great place to go for happy hour, and make it a point to try a glass of Clos Du Val, Michel Redde Sancerre or Clos Pegase from their cruvinet. If you're staying for dinner, start with the Hawaiian Oysters Mignonette with mirin and ginger. Follow it with the Poached Moi in lemon grass broth with tomatoes, button mushrooms and asparagus. In the wine bar, anything goes for fashion, but in the restaurant you should definitely dress up. Cost-wine bar, skinny wallet, restaurant, fat wallet. Hours-Wine Bar Sunday-Thursday 4:30-11:30pm Friday & Saturday 4:30pm-12:30am. Padovani's Downstairs-Breakfast 7-10am Lunch 11:30am-2pm Dinner 6-9:30pm. Valet Parking.

