

FROM LISA'S BLOG 'MY OWN SWEET THYME'

21 JULY 2008

## Prospect, Crater Lake and Orange Balsamic Vinaigrette



### Rogue River Drive

From **Ashland** it was a short scenic drive along the Rogue River to Prospect, Oregon, just south of **Crater Lake**. We had reservations at **The Prospect Historic Hotel Bed and Breakfast** for the evening and planned to drive north to Crater Lake the following day. The Prospect Hotel seemed like an interesting place to stop over for the night. It was **built in the late 1800's** and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The hotel has entertained many famous guests over the years, including President Theodore Roosevelt and statesman William Jennings Bryan.

When we arrived that evening we found that our reservations at the hotel's Dinner House were still an hour away so we checked in, dropped off our things, and went for a walk in the direction of the waterfall trail recommended to us at the front desk. We walked down the road in front of the hotel then into the woods and soon heard the sound of rushing water. Just as the mosquitoes began biting we spied Pearsoney Falls in the long shadows of twilight. We took some quick photos then kept moving to escape the bites.



### **The Prospect Historic Hotel Dinner House**

Back at the hotel we got ready for dinner. We walked downstairs and were seated in the dining room. Hungry, following our walk, we looked at the menu eagerly. It offered several entree choices as part of a fixed price dinner that also included antipasto, fresh baked bread, a green salad, and a choice of Iced Hazelnut Cake, Cheesecake or a Brownie for dessert.

The antipasto was nice. The olives and vegetable sticks gave us something light to snack on as selections were made and we waited for our dinner. The bread was fresh and hot and the Wild Green Salad with Orange Balsamic Vinaigrette was delicious. It was composed of a pretty assortment of mixed greens and mandarin oranges and was topped with toasted walnuts and feta cheese.



For our entree we selected Lemon Dill Roasted Salmon and 'Shroomed Vegetarian Linguine.



The Roasted Salmon was served with sherried rice, and a garnish of lemon and chives, as well as a Veggie Wedgie Frittata dotted with swirls of sour cream and chives. The presentation was invitingly homey, and the salmon itself was moist, flavorful and satisfying.



The 'Shroomed Vegetarian Linguine was delightful. This recipe, developed by Karen, co-owner of the Prospect Hotel, features a "delightful blend of mushrooms, Kalamata and Greek olives sauteed in garlic, onion and sherry." This is added to linguine that has been tossed with a delicate cream sauce and topped with flavorful slices of sauteed portabella mushrooms. The sauce was not too heavy or thick as some pasta sauces can be. It was smooth and creamy and redolent of exotic earthy mushrooms and tangy olives. It was so fine that I ate well past the point where I should have stopped to save room for dessert.



The meal came with a choice of desserts. We ordered the Cheesecake and the Iced Hazelnut Cake even though the waiter enthusiastically recommended the Brownie. Luckily the servings were not overly large though both were augmented by a scoop of ice cream. The cheesecake was good but the Iced Hazelnut Cake tasted of a delicious mixture of smooth sweet frosting and crunchy toasted hazelnuts which gave it a rich full flavor. It was a nice way to end the meal.

## Zane Gray

After dinner we went to our room to read and plan for the next day's travel. We found that the room we were staying in was called the Zane Grey room because this prolific author of western novels was once a guest at the Prospect Hotel in its earlier days of operation. Some of his books, "Rogue River Feud" for one, were even set in this area. A few copies of his books were left in the room for guests to enjoy.

We were up early the next morning, coaxed from our bed by the early morning sunshine peeping through our window. There was coffee in the front room and breakfast was served to guests in the dining room. More coffee, juice and a fruit salad was brought out as we settled at our reserved table.



## Wizard Island

For the main course we were served a somewhat unusual egg dish that we were told was shaped like Wizard Island, the volcanic cinder cone that rises above the surface of Crater Lake. It was served with breakfast potatoes and wheat toast.

The Wizard Island Eggs were quite good. They most resembled an upside down **Strata** cupcake topped with picante sauce, a flourish of sour cream and a sprig of parsley. It was both tasty and filling.



Satisfied by our generous and whimsical breakfast we went out to sit on the front porch for a while. The air was already growing warm with the promise of a brilliantly hot day. It was sweet to know that soon we would leave for Crater Lake where there was still snow on the ground.



### **A Twig Porch Swing**

I stretched out in a twig swing hung in the corner of the Prospect Inn's ample wraparound porch. As I sat there a faint breeze tickled my cheek. I found that with a very slight amount of movement I could keep the swing barely rocking from side to side as I watched the cars and the people walking toward the waterfall trail down the road while I wrote on my laptop.



I watched one couple linger in front of the building as the woman sketched the historic hotel. Her companion stood beside her, waiting, watching, occasionally remarking. I watched her with admiration through the twigs of the swing as she quickly picked up one colored pencil from her tin and then another. She finished and after a nod of approval from her friend they went inside.



The porch was comfortable and quiet as I worked on my writing. The only sounds were a bird singing nearby, a sprinkler oscillating in the yard across the road, the sound of a pick up truck receding in the distance and the rhythmic whir of someone pedaling a bicycle past the inn, making some effort, some percussion to the song of a quiet summer day.

## A Recipe

As we collected our things to leave I made sure I had a copy of the recipe our waiter had given me the night before. When I told her how much we enjoyed our dinner and asked if they would be willing to share a recipe she gave me a copy of one of their Dinner House favorites: Orange Balsamic Vinaigrette.

# Orange Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing

3/4 cup balsamic vinegar  
3/4 cup orange juice  
1/3 cup sugar  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper  
4 cups olive oil

Mix the first 4 ingredients in the bowl of a food processor until well blended.

Turn the food processor on and while it is running slowly pour the olive oil, in a steady stream, into the mixture. Process until thick and creamy.

Refrigerate. Remove dressing from the refrigerator 1/2 hour before you are ready to use it and blend again just before using.

Makes 30 servings.

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