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# Absolutely Nirvana: Nirvana Grille, a top Laguna Beach restaurant

LAGUNA BEACH RESTAURANT | FEBRUARY 5, 2011 | BY: CORI SOLOMON |

8 photos

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## RATING FOR RESTAURANT



Traveling the short distance to quaint and relaxing [Laguna Beach](http://www.lagunabeachinfo.com/) for a weekend get away from Los Angeles must include a stop for dinner at [Nirvana Grille](http://www.nirvanagrille.com/). Dining at the Nirvana Grille is an experience unto itself. In fact you will be in Nirvana after a meal at Nirvana Grille. For local residents this is a favorite Laguna Beach restaurant. Many frequent the restaurant

due to the ambience, extraordinarily delicious food and the exuberance of the chef and owner, Lindsey Smith-Rosales.

Lindsey's charm and devotion to her culinary craft permeates the restaurant and your whole dining experience. The food is a mixture of east meets west with a farm fresh and organic infusion.

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What's appealing about Nirvana Grille are the variations on the menu, which includes many vegan and vegetarian dishes. Nirvana Grille is an ideal restaurant for those with allergies and dietary issues because Lindsay loves to adapt and adjust her menu to fit your needs. She has one gluten free patron that she keeps a special desert in stock for whenever this person dines. How many [restaurants](http://www.examiner.com/restaurants) (<http://www.examiner.com/restaurants>) go that far to accommodate a patron's needs?



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The Poached Wild Halibut a wonderfully delicate entree served at the Nirvana Grille  
Photo credit: Photo By Cori Solomon

Being a Laguna native, Lindsay did her part to help the recent flood victims of Laguna. During the week of Jan 11 – 16, Lindsay donated all the profits to the victims of the recent catastrophe.

Nirvana Grille has an ongoing community give back program. Diners ask to receive a card the first Sunday they dine in a given month. Diners can enjoy dining on as many Sundays as they desire during that month and Nirvana Grille marks their card. At the end of the month the card is turned in and Nirvana Grille will donate on behalf of the diner 10% of the pre-tax food bill to any organization/charity of the diners choice.

Nirvana Grill had a nice wine list that includes many French wines. On the night of our visit we had a Laboure' Roi 2009 Les Sanglier Pinot Noir Reserve from the South of France. This was a smooth and balanced wine that complimented our dinner.

Our meal began with a Salad of Arugula, Spinach and Baby Greens with Shallot Vinaigrette and Roasted Tomato and Sweet Corn Soup. The later was a savory soup with tomato and a subtle taste of corn.

Accompanying this course was homemade sourdough bread. If you have never tasted freshly baked sourdough bread it is a must.

A fabulously tasty vegetarian dish is the Green Beans with Sautéed Oyster Mushroom & Smoked Sea Salt served on a bed of French Lentils, herbs and leeks.

Jumbo Seared Herb Crusted Scallops atop a Crisp Butternut Squash Risotto Cake served with Browned Butter and Sage is a marvelous appetizer. The scallops are tender and melt in your mouth.

For my entrée the Poached Wild Halibut with an Orange Cream Broth was adapted by removing the cream and included Tarragon, Tomatoes, Leeks & Asparagus Ribbons atop a Bed of Jasmine Grain Rice made with Baby Garbanzos and Baby Daikon Seeds. The halibut was delicate yet light and had the most wonderful taste.

Two popular dishes that my husband got to sample were Pistachio & Dijon Crusted Chilean Sea Bass

and Pistachio & Dijon Crusted Rack of Lamb served with Wilted Rainbow Chard. Both were served over Caramelized Leek Mashed Yukon Gold and Tender Asparagus in Lemon Infused Olive Oil served with a Beurre Blanc. The Chilean Sea Bass is a very rich dish. The Rack of Lamb was my husband's favorite.

Nirvana Grille is one restaurant you must save room for desert. There is one desert considered the most popular and you have never tasted anything like it. The Grand Mariner Glazed Seasonal Fruit served over House Made Goat Cheese Maple Ice Cream. On our visit it was served over pineapple. This is a very rich desert. What is so wonderful are the chunks of goat cheese creating a texture and taste of white Chocolate with a hint of Maple. This desert came about when Lindsay's fig tree had a bumper crop one year. Creating an appetizer with the figs, goat cheese and maple and knowing this combination worked, Lindsay decided to transform the idea into a desert that would both satisfy her patrons and use up the figs.

For a desert on the lighter side there is the Blackberry Cabernet Sorbet with its refreshing strong Blackberry taste served with fresh strawberries.

Reservations at Nirvana Grille are a must.

**[Nirvana Grille \(http://www.nirvanagrille.com/\)](http://www.nirvanagrille.com/)** has two locations:

303 Broadway Suite 101, Laguna Beach

949.497.0027

24031 Marguerite Pkwy Suite C, Mission Viejo

949.380.0027



**Cori Solomon**, LA Epicurean Travel Examiner

Cori Solomon, a native to Los Angeles, is a Real Estate Broker with Prudential California Realty, an animal artist (<http://corispawtraits.com/>), and a writer who is currently owned and loved by 3 Salukis, and a cat. ...