



Reverie With Rudolph

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Surrounded by the progressive panache of the late Paul Rudolph, hungry admirers can digest mid-century musings at a namesake restaurant in The Sarasota Modern hotel.



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Enthusiasts of the mid-century maverick needn't feel famished whilst enjoying a meal surrounded by subtle tributes to Sarasota School of

Architecture's master of mindful design. Rudolph's restaurant comes to SRQ attached to its newest boutique hotel, intriguing creatives, foodies, entrepreneurs, locals, bloggers and visitors alike. "The Sarasota School of Architecture plays a lot with the contrast of light and dark spaces," says John Markunas, general manager of Sarasota Modern. Suddenly, you recognize a familiar theme as you round the corner from the stark darkness of the bar/lounge area into Rudolph's bright dining room filled with bouncing natural light. Meanwhile, a 25-foot airwall opens onto the outdoor patio to bring the outside in—inspired by Paul Rudolph's environmental and vernacular designs.



BEETS REIGN SUPREME IN THE RUDOLPHS SALAD, FEATURING BEET-CURED SALMON, ROASTED BEETS AND BEET PUREE. PHOTO BY WYATT KOSTYGAN.

Shedding light on the food and beverage items on hand, Rudolph's comes alive in the mornings as a hangout coffee shop. Locals are highly encouraged to stop in off the streets for a frothy latte, grab a fresh-baked croissant and sidestep from their standard downtown cafe. Donuts, biscuits, bagels and pastries are made in-house daily, while hotel staff have become christened baristas, trained specially by Bandit Coffee Co. out of St. Pete, which also supplies Rudolph's with its single-origin roasts. AM hours spent here mean immersing yourself in the visionary vibes of the swanky yet chill milieu—making friends with the hotel staff, feeling inspired by the thoughtful decor while working through emails on your laptop—ultimately bucking the taboo around hanging in the hotel as a non-staying guest. “We’re breaking that stigma,” says Paul Romero, director of sales and marketing at Sarasota Modern. “We want that coffee shop environment and we want the locals to know it as that.” Past 4pm, Markunas mentions, outside guests and locals are invited to come in free of charge to enjoy the Juice Bar out on the patio. Find light bites, fresh-pressed juices and handcrafted cocktails such as the ‘Umbrella House,’ cheekily garnished with a tropical parasol served poolside.

Moving in to the evening, Rudolph's restaurant opens its airy dining room for a fully immersive menu that fires on all cylinders. Executive Chef Jennifer Salhoff, hails most recently from Philadelphia's Le Meridien Hotel—appointed to take on the modern ingenuity of Sarasota's rich history of design and relocate her own culinary flair here. “The techniques that they're using back there are just mind-boggling,” Markunas says of Chef and her team, whose outside-the-box experimentations have ultimately induced the rebranding of the kitchen to “the lab.” “I don't really consider this a normal

restaurant kitchen,” mentions Chef. “We’ll start on a dish and it’ll go completely left field. We somehow end up on the other side of the road with it, but that’s what I love the most—we just have complete creative freedom to play around and make some pretty crazy things happen.” Practicing a lot of sous-vide and molecular gastronomy, the team is continually building out Rudolph’s ever-evolving, nouveau menu that changes like the tides—further integrating diners’ artistic experience with an always fresh and new queue of contemporary culinary styles.



THE DIMMED AND MODERN MILIEU OF THE BAR AND LOUNGE AREA CALLS FOR COCKTAILS. AN INVERTED ALLIGATOR ON THE CEILING OFFERS THAT FINAL FLORIDA TOUCH. PHOTO BY WYATT KOSTYGAN.

“With the menu, we really tried to encompass the creativity of architecture,” says Chef Salhoff. “That’s not to say we’re building bridges on the plate, but they are very visual—a lot of height, a lot of texture, bright colors and playing on different temperatures.” The Charred Octopus dish comes plated with a bright purple tentacle on a svelte black plate, with pickled vegetables for acid and texture, and bright yellow dots of saffron emulsion—but that’s only after the octopus has been sous-vide for six to eight hours for extreme tenderization, and then charred in a super-hot cast iron pan with a squid ink risotto and preserved lemon. Florida game meats like Wild Boar Shank, soy-braised then paired with tahini cauliflower puree, caramelized baby bok choy and fennel jus, as well as Popcorn Gator snacks in buttermilk and hot sauce marinade with a black pepper aioli, make appearances on the menu. Seafood dishes take on a whole new level with creations like the Snapper Crudo, smoked with grapefruit and garnished with fennel pollen, fresno pepper and sea salt, collected from Siesta Key waters and curated in-house by Sous-Chef Jess Zellner. Additionally, the Rudolph’s Salad embarks on a coastal design of beet-cured salmon, plated boldly and colorfully with roasted purple and golden candy cane beets, goat cheese fritters and arugula. Be sure to savor this one first visually, then fundamentally.

“Literally everything on the menu is made in-house. There is not one product that we bring in that is all ready to go,” says Chef Salhoff, along with mention of plans to partner with local farms, such as Sutter’s Dairy and Egg Farm to implement charcuterie boards, as well as Rudolph’s housemade ice creams for desserts like the Waffle-wich, a Belgium waffle topped with blueberry goat cheese gelato and almond crumble. Before calling it a night,

head over to the bar for a truly local tribute—an exclusive Brut IPA integrating champagne hops, made in collaboration with Darwin Brewing Company. Or dive into the curated wine menu killing the game in both quality and quantity, as well as a symphony of original craft cocktails such as the Ringling Rio, Poolside Gossip and Midnight at the Marina—all just as dizzying as the massive alligator casually hanging upside-down on the ceiling. **SRQ**



CHARRED OCTOPUS, SOUS-VIDE FOR UP TO EIGHT HOURS AND SERVED WITH SQUID INK RISOTTO, SAFFRON EMULSION AND PICKLED VEGETABLES. PHOTO BY WYATT KOSTYGAN.



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