

## **Amore Breakfast**

*Restaurant Review By Alan Ilagan*

It is rare for me to frequent the same restaurant twice while on vacation ~ usually I want to try a little of everything. However, after spending one morning at Amore Breakfast I couldn't help but go back for more ~ more of the delicious food and more of the gregarious staff. Owner Leanne Cusimano, she with the perpetual smile and unforced friendliness, has created a sumptuous selection of breakfast treats, all served in a warm, welcoming atmosphere, perfect for the cool mornings of Ogunquit.

Due to its well-deserved popularity, there is often a wait, but it is most definitely worth it. Besides, the hungry anticipation is rather conducive to getting to know your future fellow diners. Once inside, a black-&-white checkered motif runs subtly through the space, which is vaguely reminiscent of a comforting 50's kitchen. Light wood paneling lends a comfy warmth, and along with the standard tables and booths there is a small sit-down counter where folks can eat and talk with the owner. (In case it hasn't been made obvious, Ms. Cusimano is a major component of Amore's charm, handling busy mornings with plucky aplomb and convivial care.)

There are a number of exceptional egg offerings, most notably a multitude of variations on eggs benedict. The Oscar de la Renta, featuring asparagus and crab, and the lobster benedict both looked especially appealing, but on my first day I went for the traditional version as a timid taste test. Arriving with a decent portion of home fried potatoes, remarkable for their herbs and seasonings, the eggs benedict was simple but stunning, with two perfectly cooked eggs, Canadian bacon that wasn't too greasy, and a heavenly Hollandaise sauce.

On our last day in town, we tried what may very well be Amore's crowning glory ~ the black or blue French toast special. We had saved it for our final visit, and what a reward it turned out to be. (The "black or blue" refers to whether one wants blackberries or blueberries as their topping. We chose the latter ~ Maine blueberries being some of the best on earth.) Needless to say, it went above and beyond what we had been expecting ~ thick slices of lemon-bread French toast with a cream cheese filling, covered in fresh, sweet blueberries, and served with a heaping dollop of whipped cream. The shot of maple syrup was almost unnecessary.

Sadly, I didn't have enough time to try much else (one could feasibly eat a different egg entrée every day for almost a month), but when I return I know exactly where breakfast will be served. Amore Breakfast makes getting up early a little bit easier and a whole lot sweeter.