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by Craig LaBan



Nick Weinstein (left), owner of Margate's Dune, and chef Jason Hanin are serving what is easily some of the most sophisticated food down the Shore.

The kitchen at Margate's **Dune**, meanwhile, is already in the groove. After three years in this simple BYOB space beside the Dairy Bar, owner Nick Weinstein and chef Jason Hanin are serving what is easily some of the most sophisticated food down the Shore, with the inventive touch and quality of ingredients I'd expect at some of Center City's best BYOBs.

The narrow, 70-seat room is clad in casual beach chic: distressed wainscoting, old-time Shore photos, votives flickering from sand-filled mason jars. But it's the sharp contemporary cooking that caught my eye. Dune bills itself as a seafood restaurant, and has rightfully earned a following for solid bistro efforts like mussels steamed with Champagne-chervil butter. A grilled bluefin tuna steak, over white bean salad beneath a crisped blade of lavender-braised pork belly, was as good as tuna gets.

But Hanin's nonfish efforts were equally impressive. The cracked wheat salad was an exquisite composition of textures - with candied pecans, juicy black grapes, and the various snaps of asparagus and cucumber. Duck breast streaked with currant sauce was given earthy depth with white polenta and sauteed wild mushrooms. And a rack of lamb was spectacular, the miso- and chile-marinated meat playing off the sweet corn sauce essence, hearty braised kale, and an adorable little Japanese fingerling sweet potato.

Dune may now be one of my ideal Shore-side BYOBs. But there are a couple of other new bistros nearby from veteran chefs that someday could join that list.

*If You Go*

**Dune**, 9510 Ventnor Ave., Margate, 609-487-7450; [www.dunerestaurant.com](http://www.dunerestaurant.com), BYOB.