

## **In View - by Frank Gabriel**

### ***Gabriel's Summer Sampler...***

*August 2007*

#### ***Laban late for dinner...***

I had to chuckle recently while perusing Philadelphia Inquirer food critic Craig Laban's latest manifesto/guide to summer dining at the Jersey shore.

Most specifically, his comments about Downbeach's superlative Dune, located near the intersection of Madison and Ventnor Avenues in Margate.

Not to suggest that the highly overrated Laban - who, as an aside, is actually being sued over one of his recent, caustic columns - found anything wrong with Dune. In fact, just the opposite is true; his praise was effusive, detailed and accurate.

It's just, well Craig, as is often the case with the Philadelphia media as they relate to us silly bumpkins down here at the Jersey Shore, you're about two years overdue.

I, for one, reviewed Dune for another local publication, shortly after opening, in October of '04. At that time, I properly prognosticated monumental things to result from the dynamic team of chef Jason Hanin and owner/front manager Nick Weinstein.

The fact of the matter is, Dune, in my not-so-humble opinion, has become the single most consistent dining experience in the Cape/Atlantic region, no small feat for such a humble, unimposing operation.

And while I appreciate the mighty Laban corroborating my prescient thoughts, his article also filled me with a sense of dread and trepidation. I can practically see it now; cadres of fussy Philadelphians queued up outside the place, making it difficult for regulars like myself to get a table. (Much gnashing and grinding of molars.)

Of course, this is all grand news for Messieurs Hanin and Weinstein.

Not so good, however, for you and me.

And, as usual, another member of the esteemed Fourth Estate of The City of Brotherly Love demonstrates a keen, razor-sharp grasp of the completely and utterly obvious.

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