



Tamarind Shrimp With Israeli Couscous

Shrimp appetizer makes unfamiliar flavors approachable for Detroit-area diners.

By Allison Perlik, Senior Editor

When it comes to crafting his menu, Jeremy Grandon thinks small. He has to, as chef-owner of Jeremy Restaurant & Bar, a compact bistro in Detroit-area Keego Harbor, Mich. The year-old eatery seats just 75, and space is at a premium in the 1,000-square-foot kitchen where Grandon cooks his contemporary American cuisine.

The constraints suit his menu philosophy: "It's better to make a few things well than try to cater to everyone," he says.

The chef's typical bill of fare is brief but varied. Kitchen storage space is limited, so Grandon's inspiration often comes from simply taking stock of ingredients on hand. Such was partly the case in his creation of a new appetizer: tamarind shrimp with Israeli couscous, carrot-orange vinaigrette and fresh-mint garnish.

Grandon's methodology when composing recipes matches the menu's simplicity. To avoid compromising dishes with too many tastes, he rarely uses more than three distinct flavors. Once he settled on a shrimp-based appetizer (a suggestion from his wife and business partner, Paula), finding two complementary flavors became the next objective. Carrot-orange vinaigrette proved an easy choice.

"We don't have the stove space to do a lot of stocks, so we come up with interesting ways to make sauces," says Grandon, who often relies on oil- and juice-based vinaigrettes.

Carrot juice is among his favorites, appearing in everything from curry sauce to soups and, most recently, in carrot-orange vinaigrette accompanying a mahi mahi entrée. The chef rotated the fish dish off the menu and swiped the vinaigrette for his shrimp creation. Next, he decided on a glaze based on tamarind paste, which provides a complex sweet-and-sour flavor that marries well with the tang of the orange.

Grandon often incorporates tastes from Asia, the Mediterranean and other regions into his dishes. The tamarind glaze includes anise, cardamom, cloves and cinnamon for an Indian influence, while the couscous (tossed in the vinaigrette with fennel, carrot, red peppers and red onions for color) lends Middle Eastern flair.

He garnishes the dish with mint to finish with a refreshing counterpoint to the strong base flavors. The appetizer sells for \$11, comparable to similar dishes at local competitors and in keeping with the restaurant's policy of maintaining an affordable menu.

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JEREMY
Restaurant & Bar

DISH: Tamarind shrimp with Israeli couscous and carrot-orange vinaigrette

COMPOSITION:
Grill shrimp, toss

with tamarind glaze and arrange around vinaigrette-dressed couscous in center of plate. Garnish with chopped mint.

MENU PRICE: \$11 **FOOD COST:** 22%