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Find fine dining, relaxed fare at Lookout Mountain eateries AULD ALLIANCE · CAFE 136 · CANYON GRILL · LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN PIZZA CO.

Find fine dining, relaxed fare at Rising Dawn, Ga.,
restaurants on Lookout Mountain

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CORRESPONDENT BY ANNE BRALY

Steelhead trout is among the fish specials served at Auld Alliance. Atop Lookout Mountain, unincorporated New Salem, Georgia, is not quite the sleepy community it once was, with its new golf course and resort, but the handful of restaurants in the area can charm most diners.

“The dining scene offers something truly special for both locals and visitors alike,” says Sandy White, president and CEO of Alliance for Dade, a chamber of commerce and welcome center serving Dade County, Georgia. “Whether you’re craving upscale comfort, heartwarming home-cooked dishes or bold, flavorful pizzas, each restaurant brings its own unique touch to the table.”

With options ranging from fine dining to relaxed fare, every meal becomes a part of an unforgettable experience.

“From cozy comfort to elevated dining, the New Salem community on Lookout Mountain offers something for every taste,” White adds.

Take a weekend drive along the mountain’s scenic byways or plan a weekend getaway to McLemore and taste the deliciousness that awaits.

AULD ALLIANCE

243 Cloudland Drive, Rising Fawn, GA

Hours: 5-10 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. staycloudland.com

High ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows bring the outside in and add drama to the resort's newest restaurant on the mountain bluff at Cloudland at McLeMores Resort, a Curio by Hilton property.

Chef Chris Cofino is a magician when it comes to creating dishes with an eye on flavor as well as presentation.

Opened less than a year ago, Auld Alliance takes its name from the partnership made between Scotland and France in 1295. The historic Auld Alliance played an important role in the quest for Scottish independence, the Hundred Years War and other footnotes in history.

As you walk through the entrance of the ground-level restaurant, beautiful cuts of beef hang in a refrigerated, glass-fronted aging case. The menu is made up of a rather ingenious Scottish-French fusion of dishes, such as Foie Gras Haggis with Vidalia onion cream or Highland Crepinettes, glazed meatballs with pomme purée.

There's always a market fish, in the case of a recent night when Steelhead trout was served with its crispy skin dressed with a pepper relish on a bed of roasted Brussels sprouts and small red potatoes — a beautiful plate.

With a lovely wine list, craft cocktails and an outstanding menu, Auld Alliance is the kind of restaurant where you want to take your time and savor every minute.

CAFE 136

12136 Highway 136

Hours: 6 am.-7 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Friday-Saturday, 6 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday.

Facebook.com/cafe136GA

Greg Cornelison opened Café 136 in 2020, right in the middle of the COVID-19 epidemic. It wasn't his first foray into the restaurant business. Through the years he's owned seven restaurants. That experience has taught him that the menu for his Cafe 136 clientele should mirror those of meat-and-three diners in the South, with made-from-scratch specials like chicken casserole and meatloaf.

"If the food is good, people are going to seek you out," Cornelison says. And they do.

Tables began filling early seven days a week when the café opens at 6:30 a.m. for breakfast. By 11 a.m., the menu changes from eggs, bacon and biscuits to hand-patted burgers, fresh hand-breaded chicken tenders, homemade chicken casserole, meatloaf and other diner fare. Some people just come in for dessert alone, though. And what draws them in? Mile-high amaretto pie.

Longtime Chattanoogaans may remember the amaretto pie at Mount Vernon restaurant, which closed in 2017.

With a wink to its former owners, Jeff and Cindy Messinger, Cornelison says his is "even better than Mount Vernon's." Other dessert favorites are strawberry shortcake, hot fudge cake and hot fudge sundaes.

"I keep just enough desserts on the menu to keep things interesting," Cornelison says.

CANYON GRILL

28 Scenic Highway Hours: 5-8 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday, 5-9 p.m. Friday-Saturday.

canyongrill.com

The new year brought changes to Canyon Grill, a landmark eatery in Rising Fawn.

For years, patrons wanting wine with dinner or a cold beer had to bring their own.

Now, a new bar occupies the former Yellow Room, a space reserved for private parties and larger groups.

"We felt like it was time to add a bar, and our customers wanted one," says Jessica Holland, who, with husband Johnny bought the restaurant from its original owners, Lawton and Karen Haygood, a decade ago.

The fully stocked bar is tucked into an area behind the main dining room, serving interesting takes on traditional cocktails, such as the Rude Cosmo, which uses tequila rather than vodka, and the Slashed Margarita, made with jalapeño and ginger-infused agave.

"We didn't want it to feel like a bar as soon as you walk in, but a hidden gem in the back," Jessica Holland says.

What hasn't changed at Canyon Grill is its menu of aged steaks, pastas and beautiful salads, as well as its fresh fish program that brings in fresh catches three times weekly.

And for dessert? Without question, the coconut cake.