

The Vienna Restaurant and Historic Inn



INNKEEPERS: LISA AND JONATHAN KRACH

LOCATION: 14 SOUTH ST., SOUTHBRIDGE

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RATES: \$135 TO \$185 PER NIGHT

While most bed and breakfasts in New England tout their acreage, owners Lisa and Jonathan Krach boast the proximity of the Vienna Restaurant & Historic Inn to downtown Southbridge.

“People hear about a B&B and think country estate. The Vienna is fashioned more like Europe’s boutique hotels,” says Jonathan Krach.

The Kraches bought the Vienna in 2003, after Gabriel McCarthy, an expert in historic restoration, bought the house to save it from being burned down and was at a loss for what to do with it.

“It was built in the early 1800s, and until about 1900, it was a single-family home,” Krach says. At the turn of the century, it was converted to an eight-family tenement. Over the next few decades it declined, at one time becoming a place where crack cocaine was dealt. Southbridge eyed the house as a site for a test burn, but McCarthy snatched it up.

“McCarthy asked me if I had any ideas of what to do with it, and I said, ‘How much do you want for it?’ ”

Krach, who had been in the restaurant business for 28 years, was excited to combine his food expertise with running an inn. He and Lisa wanted the Vienna to echo the nuances of Austria. “Vienna was a real cosmopolitan place where people from Europe and the East could meet and do commerce,” he says. “What we try to do here is have that same environment, where you meet and leave the hustle and bustle outside.”

The house features five two-room suites, with views of Southbridge’s famed Notre Dame Church and authentic German names, including Blumenzimmer, or Flower Room. Other details include writing desks, period photos and luxurious European bedding.

Krach also brought Old-World style to the restaurant menu. You’ll see wiener schnitzel, Hungarian goulash and other favorites, as well as an extensive wine cellar that includes 315 labels.

Southbridge itself is undergoing a renaissance, according to Krach, as new shops and entertainment venues are sprouting up. The Vienna plays host to international and domestic luminaries, including actor Bill Murray and Carroll Spinney, who plays Big Bird.



Above, the exterior of the Vienna in Southbridge. Left, Lisa Krach lights a candle in one of the bedrooms. Below, the recipe for a dish served at the restaurant, Veal-Jaeger Schnitzel.

Veal-Jaeger Schnitzel (Hunter’s Cutlets)

Mushroom Sauce

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil
- ¼ cup finely minced shallots or onion
- 3 cups sliced crimini, shiitake and chanterelle mushrooms
- 2½ cups veal stock
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- Sea salt and pepper to taste
- Splash of red wine
- A slice or two of bacon, coarsely chopped, to taste
- ½ teaspoon marjoram

Schnitzel

- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 16 ounces boneless veal loin (four 4-ounce cutlets)
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil

Garnish

- 1 tablespoon minced parsley

- 1.** In a two-quart saucepan, melt butter, add oil and sauté shallot until transparent. Add mushrooms and stir occasionally until mushrooms are tender. In a separate bowl, combine the veal stock, a splash of red wine, marjoram and ¼ cup of flour. Gradually stir stock mixture into pan. Bring to a bubble and stir continuously until thickened. Set aside, and season with chopped bacon and salt and pepper. You can make the sauce a day or two ahead and reheat as needed. The longer this sits, the better it tastes.
- 2.** Pound cutlets to ¼-inch thick. Mix ⅓ cup flour, salt and pepper. Dredge both sides of cutlets and set aside. Heat oil in a 12-inch skillet and cook the veal two minutes on each side, turning once, until browned. Remove to paper towels to absorb excess oil, then place on serving platter.
- 3.** Pour the mushroom sauce over finished schnitzel. Garnish with parsley.

