

Fresh, Light, and Delicious Year-round

by *Rebecca M. Alvin*

Victor's Restaurant

It's not unusual for the face of Provincetown's restaurant scene to change. Every summer, new places come in and old ones disappear. But for the most part, eateries new and old close down in the fall, leaving year-rounders just a handful of dining options off-season. So, it is a great boon to the town that one of our newest restaurants, Victor's (175 Bradford Street Extension) plans to keep its doors open year-round.

"There's a lot of people that stay year-round [on Cape Cod]," owner Victor DePoalo explains, adding that the off-season menu will be "heartier".



Victor's Chef Mike Fennelly
and Owner Victor DePoalo

DePoalo has lived in town for roughly five years now. He originally came to work on a building project, while he was still living in Boston, but now recalls, "I was just going to spend the summer, and I fell in love with it. And then I said, 'I'm not going [back]'."

Although he did briefly own a small diner in Schenectady, N.Y., his background is as a builder, not a restaurateur. "I'm not a chef... I'm a contractor," DePoalo admits. "Now I have an amazing chef."

DePoalo teamed up with artist/chef Michael Fennelly to create Victor's with a very clear concept. The idea is for tapas-style small plates, portioned for sharing family-style, enjoyed in a comfortable, fun atmosphere.

"We kind of knew it was the up-and-coming thing, and nobody in Provincetown had done it," DePoalo explains.

The menu is diverse, and each item is prepared to not only taste great, but also be pleasing to the eye. "I gave him a place to display his food," DePoalo explains. "He's an artist... each one of his plates, they're beautiful."

A variety of seafood options are included on the main dinner menu. There are Local Baked Stuffed Clams, Crispy Calamari, and Crispy Coconut Shrimp, as well as more distinctive dishes like seafood cakes, served with local greens, guacamole, and corn salsa; or Seared Salmon wrapped in

banana leaves with a hot passion fruit glaze and a side of quinoa.

Two very popular seafood items are the Grilled Local Oysters and the Lobster Spring Rolls. The former are served with a luscious barbecue sauce and pancetta, while the spring rolls are a lighter option, chock full of lobster and served with a chile-lime sauce. This is all not to mention the awesome raw bar at Victor's, which is available from 3 – 10 p.m. daily.

But it's not all about the ocean here. There are heartier meat dishes, including the Classic American Burger, consisting of two cheeseburger sliders; an organic turkey burger; and the delectable Braised Short Ribs. This last item is served over quinoa, with a meaty, rich port sauce, tomatoes, carrots, onions, and herbs, in a kind of stew. Although it is a small plate serving, in keeping with the restaurant's concept, this one is a bit larger and more filling.

Other dishes from the main dinner menu include chicken wings, chicken quesadillas, various salads, Green and Yellow Pasta Ribbon, and the intriguing Deconstructed Ahi Tuna Napoleon, which consists of fresh ahi tuna, crispy wontons, balsamic-soy vinaigrette, wasabi mayonnaise, avocado, and sprouts.

There are several side dishes available, as well, and specials every night, which run the gamut from comfort foods like pulled pork to lobster risotto. All of this is served by a competent, happy staff.

"I have an amazing staff," DePoalo boasts. "Everybody is excited about being here, in a new place."

The atmosphere at Victor's is also different than your typical Cape Cod restaurant. DePoalo explains, "For me it's about a clean, crisp look, yet still having that Cape Cod edge to it, or vice versa."

The tables are simple and unadorned; no tablecloths, no fancy settings. The dining room is technically not very large, but the cathedral ceiling and sparse design concept make it feel much bigger and a tad more sophisticated than the norm around here.

In addition to a fine dinner, Victor's offers delicious desserts as well, matched by excellent Fair Trade organic coffees. Some examples of desserts include Chocolate Pot de Crème; Crème Brûlée served with a deliciously delicate oatmeal lace cookie; and Strawberry-Rhubarb Cobbler served with crème fraîche.

As the summer season winds down, with Labor Day upon us, it's nice to know some of the summer's freshness will stick around. DePoalo says the plan is to keep the restaurant open off-season, Thursday through Sunday, and to continue the popular weekend brunch they've been offering Saturdays and Sundays, as well. Look for the new, heartier menu at Victor's toward the end of September. Until then, enjoy the lightness.

Victor's Restaurant is located at 175 Bradford Street Extension, on the corner of Bradford and West Vine. The bar and raw bar open at 3 p.m. and dinner is served from 5:30 – 10 p.m. nightly. Brunch is also available from 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Visit www.victorsptown.com or call 508.487.1777 for more information and to confirm hours off-season.

