

Friday, August 12, 2011

## Reviewed: Live Organic Food Bar

Searching for a place to have dinner with my friend Taylor the other night was a bit of a challenge. I can't eat gluten, and she's recently started eating a raw diet. Doesn't leave too many options. Fortunately, I live right around the corner from **Live Food Bar**, a raw and gluten free HAVEN.

Live is set in one of Toronto's many odd little houses in the West end, right at the corner of Dupont and Spadina. They have done an excellent job with the tiny space. It was a warm night so we requested to sit on their intimate back patio, adorned with paper lanterns and hanging panels of fabric. I was intrigued to see they had cocktail menu and immediately ordered the Cucumber Collins. The drink that arrived was definitely not as I expected. It had been listed as a cocktail with soda and lime, and I was anxiously awaiting that refreshing spritz of good ol' CO2. The drink that came was certainly not light or refreshing by any means. Imagine a thick cucumber smoothie served in a martini glass. I suppose the waitress could see the reaction on my face, because she whisked the drink away to whip up something more to my taste (and more along the lines of how it was described on the menu).

Meanwhile, Taylor and I poured over the menu. Live has a fairly extensive menu with both raw and cooked options. The good news for me was that EVERYTHING on the menu is gluten free! We hummed and hawed, and finally decided that we would have to split two things.



We started with the antipasto platter (\$16). It was absolutely delicious, and definitely

my favourite of our two dishes. Crispy flatbread was served with tapenade, hummus and chevre on top of a bed of cherry tomatoes, arugula and artichokes. I have quite the soft spot for food platter, so this dish really hit the spot, not to mention the fact that it was beautifully presented.



Our next choice was the raw soft shell tacos (\$14). Two corn tortillas were filled with spiced ground walnuts, guacamole and tomato salsa. The walnuts had a good, meaty flavour, but I found the dish to be a bit heavy. Definitely one for sharing. The cashew cream served on the side, however, was to die for, and at the end of the meal we were both practically licking it out of the container.

All in all it was a great experience. The waitstaff was pleasant and helpful, the atmosphere was relaxed and the food was delicious. I will certainly be hurrying back to try some of their salads and burgers. There are so many options, and it is so nice to look at a menu and not be limited for choice because of gluten.

Oh and that cocktail? The waitress brought me another and it was perfect! Light, refreshing, crisp...everything a Collins should be. If you are a raw foodist, vegan, gluten free, or just want a tasty meal, check out Live Food Bar!

Rating: 4