

### Hampton Roads is no stranger to dinner-and-a-movie establishments.

There is the [Commodore](#) in Portsmouth and [Cinema Cafés](#) throughout the area, all of which offer dining while watching movies. How could Cinébistro improve on dinner-and-a-movie experience?

Shortly after they opened, a good friend and I decided to investigate. One of the first things you'll notice is that Cinébistro is new and modern. Their eight theaters are smaller and feel like private screening rooms. The theaters are well appointed with comfortable leather seats. There is individual seating closer to the screen and love-seat seating towards the back. Of course, each theater features state-of-the-art sound and movie projection. All theaters have reserved seating, which is a plus if you're planning to see a popular new release.

In addition to the eight theaters, Cinébistro also offers nine lanes of bowling and a full-service bar and lounge. Both areas allow you to order from their full menu.

I do not use the phrase "full menu" lightly. Their offerings range from typical popcorn and candy to Bay Crab dip to Black Angus beef burgers to Pan-Seared Atlantic Salmon.



Bay Crab Dip

To prevent disruption during the movie, Cinébistro serves all food before the movie begins. Should you require additional food or beverages, you can make purchases at a station in the lobby. Unfortunately, we didn't arrive in the theater at the recommended 30 minutes prior to the movie's start time. Not arriving early put us in an uncomfortable position. All the food we ordered arrived at once. This is not to say the service wasn't excellent. All of the staff were gracious and attentive. Additionally, we were overwhelmed because the portions for the food we ordered were quite generous.

For my alcoholic beverage, I ordered a Watermelon Mojito, \$10.

According to their menu, it is made with Bacardi Grand Melon, Watermelon Pucker, muddled mint leaves, simple syrup and garnished with a watermelon wedge.

The drink was refreshing. The watermelon gives the feeling of summer calling you to sit outside and bask in the sun. My only suggestion would be to go a little easier on the Watermelon Pucker. Its addition gave a bit of an artificial aftertaste. Otherwise, I could have easily had several of these.

For our appetizer, we went with the Bay Crab Dip, \$12.50. They describe the dip as "Lump Crab and Three Bubbling Cheeses with Old Bay Dusted Soft Pretzels for dipping."

As someone who is no stranger to seafood or crab dip, I am selective. This dip did not disappoint. It had the right balance of cheese and crab. Its flavor and spices were rich without overwhelming. The crab pieces were large and tasted fresh. Where my friend and I disagree is in the use of the soft pretzels. I enjoy soft pretzels, but found them awkward for dipping. My friend felt they were a clever accoutrement to the dip. I recommend this dish.

For our entrees, I had Lump Blue Crab Cakes, \$22.50. Per their menu, the dish includes Broiled Lump Blue Crab Cakes on pan roasted Asparagus, with Oven Tomatoes and Tartar Sauce.

*Apparently, I was in the mood for crab.*

The crab cakes were divine. They were broiled to perfection, which gave them a nice crust. No soggy, overcooked crab cakes here. Like the crab dip, the crab cakes were well balanced. They were not heavy-handed with filler. If anything, the crab cakes were predominantly crab. This dish is superb.

My friend ordered the BBQ Pork Rib Stack \$16.50. Cinebistro describes their ribs as being made with their Signature Cherry Coca-Cola™ BBQ Sauce. He ordered Sweet Potato Fries to accompany his ribs.

The ribs were delectable. They were tender and literally fell off the bone. The sauce was tangy and appetizing, but not overused. The sweet potato fries are an ideal side dish.



Blue Crab Cakes

For dessert, I ordered Crème Brulee Trio \$8.50. This dessert features Vanilla, Raspberry, and Rum-Cherry Chocolate Crème Brulee.

I found this dessert to be disappointing compared to all the fantastic food that preceded it. The three crème brulee flavors were sort of bland. They lacked the rich sweetness that is the trademark of crème brulee. I say skip this dessert.



Deconstructed Peanut Butter Pie

Thankfully, my friend selected the Deconstructed Peanut Butter Pie \$8. This dessert contains a Graham Cracker Crust, Malted Chocolate Sauce and Roasted Banana Cream.

The taste I had of my friend's dessert made up for my disappointing Crème Brulee. This was tantalizing. The flavor combination was mouth-watering. The Graham Cracker Crust and Malted Chocolate Sauce created a unique contrast and texture. I would return to Cinébistro for this dessert alone. It was that good.

What's my overall impression?

Cinébistro is an outstanding entertainment experience. It has a definite upscale feel. They provided beautifully executed and plated dishes. This is not a budget evening out. There is a premium for the extra service and luxury Cinébistro provides, all of which are well worth the cost. I highly recommend visiting Cinébistro.

*Cinébistro is located at 4401 West Claiborne Square Hampton, VA 23666 (757) 325-8896. It is important to note that after 6PM*

*Cinébistro is 21 and up only with a dress code. Details can be found on the [Cinébistro website](#).*

### ABOUT THE WRITER

#### Anne K

I'd like to think I'm a multi-faceted creative individual. I am a graphic designer and photographer who enjoys a variety of creative endeavors. Sometimes I crochet, sew and play interior decorator. Once in while, I'll even whip up a tasty meal or two. Find more of my photography and adventures at [AdventuresofAnneK.com](#).

