

# FUN DINING WITH DENNIS AND MICHELLE

**All dining experience that pairs Fun 101.3 radio show hosts Michelle Cruz and Dennis Mitchell with local restaurants.**



**IN THIS 36TH EDITION** of Fun Dining with Fun 101.3 morning hosts Dennis Mitchell and Michelle Cruz, the secret's out at Stoner Grille. The place is packed on a weeknight as live, acoustic music plays through a world-class sound system, putting our hungry DJs in a good mood.

The new Manheim Township restaurant takes its name from the Historic Stoner Farm at Overlook Park, where the original Stoner Barn stands. Since 2014, the revitalized event space, restaurant, and mini golf course at Stoner Commons has been under new ownership by Gene and Anneliese Pelland.

## DRINKS

Bar manager Julien Clement mixes up a vodka martini for Michelle while Dennis orders a Firestone Union Jack IPA. "I'd normally get a cocktail here," says Dennis. "Julien knows how to make a drink."

After the first round, Dennis follows his instincts and orders a Stoner Farm Cider from the bar's chalkboard menu. A warm, house made, spiced apple cider spiked with Crown Royal is brought to the table. "That's a really good find right there," says Dennis after trying it.

Michelle is looking for something less sweet and

more vodka. A handcrafted, pear and elderflower vodka martini made with St-Germain is presented. "He gets me," says Michelle after the first sip.

## STARTERS

Chef Frank C. Brown, Jr. greets the table with a warm smile and lays down some hot appetizers. First is the baked crab dip, made with artichoke, spinach, and cheddar jack cheese, and served with bright green and white corn tortilla chips. "Look at those chips," says Dennis. "So green!" He digs in and detects a dusting of Old Bay seasoning on the tortillas.

Next is a plate of buttermilk-battered asparagus and Portobello fries with two dipping sauces. The veggie fries are coated in a crispy crust and accompanied by creamy honey mustard and horseradish dipping sauces. "I never want to have regular fries again," Michelle declares. She takes a bite of a breaded asparagus spear and laughs as it comes out of its battered shell. "I'm trying to put it back in!" she says.

"That's what she said," Dennis jokes. He then eyes both appetizers and warns the table, "I think I'm gonna marry these two. Yep, they're getting married." Dennis dips an asparagus spear in the crab dip and says, "Here's what's great about this: you can dip one end in, take a bite, and turn it around and you're not double dipping."

Our radio show hosts find their groove as live music starts to play. They admire the acoustics in the busy room. "The sound is really good," says Michelle.

"The owner is from Claire Brothers, so the sound better be good," says Dennis.

## MAINS

Full plates of fish tacos and crab cakes with a delectable vegetable medley are brought out from the kitchen and placed on the table. Michelle is already a big

fan of the Stoner Grille crab cake, calling it the best in Lancaster. "I don't know that there's a better one in town," she says. "Everyone wants to claim to have the best crab cake. Stoner Grille isn't claiming it. They're just making it." The 90-percent lump crab, 10-percent

claw, 0-percent filler cake is served broiled in all of its buttery goodness.

The Rocko Tacos are made with grilled rockfish filets, blackened and loaded up with a cucumber wasabi dressing, Stoner's mango salsa, cabbage, and diced tomatoes in a soft tortilla with a crispy, cheddar jack crust. "The shell's amazing," says Dennis. "It's crispy, and they put this amazing cheesy crust on the outside. I feel like I need to eat this as slow as I possibly can just to make it last longer."

## DESSERT

Options for dessert are presented on a large platter with

a generous preview of some tough choices. The opera cake is a dark chocolate tiramisu served in a berry sauce with vodka. The cheesecake is topped with caramel sauce, as is the carrot cake. The triple chocolate torte is said to be Stoner Grille's top seller, while the gluten-free coconut cake brings up the rear with a raspberry sauce on top.

Dennis and Michelle go with the cheese cake. It arrives at the same time owners Gene and Anneliese stop by to help clear empty plates and ask how everything is. Dennis takes a bite of his cheesecake topped with caramel sauce and leans back with a dreamy look on his face. "It's everything I imagined, and more," he says, adding, "You could put caramel on a shoe and I'd eat it."

"Everything was amazing," says Michelle. "That crab cake though!"

