

Point Loma Fish Shop is right at home on the Peninsula



Two spicy Dorado tacos go well with a local craft beer at Point Loma Fish House. / Photo by Thomas Melville



The Point Loma Fish Shop is now open at 1110 Rosecrans St. / Photo by Thomas Melville

Seattle lays claim to the world's largest private residential yacht, the 2014 NFL championship and approximately 154 percent of the nation's total annual rainfall. It also boasts Pike Place Market, the world's 39th most visited urban attraction and a critical marker for the city's fishing trade. Ancient mongers rule the roost from 5 a.m. every day, gruffly hawking regional salmon and ahi favorites as though their lives weigh in the balance (because they often do).

The folks at Point Loma Fish Shop don't keep such ungodly hours. Neither do they seem to be under a death watch while their managers push product as though their lives weigh in the balance (because they often do). But this eatery has one critical feature that handsomely competes with that at Pike Place – the unmistakable aroma of fresh catches and the nearby sea that yields them.

One flurry at your nostrils and lungs, and you'll know you're in the right place.

That translates to a clutch of delicious menu entries, featuring no fewer than 11 types of fish and several marinades to choose from, ranging in size from a simple taco to a near-elephantine plate. Crab cakes, stews and sashimi rule the hours, with the favorites featuring coconut shrimp (my choice, as I couldn't reconcile the name at first) and the TKO Taco, a mahi mahi affair that goes ideally with shredded cabbage, cheese and the house cilantro.

As you might imagine, clam chowder is a staple here – and as you might not, you can get yours in an enormous bread bowl, which is exactly what it says it is.

Jasmine rice, a long-grain variety that actually has an odor, comes with the coconut shrimp and is also available as a side, along with onion rings, coleslaw and seaweed salad. If you can find a more generous side portion in this city, you win the franchise that serves it.

You can celebrate with one of the Fish Shop's raft of tap beers. I chose a very light little blonde number from downtown's Resident Brewing Co., owing to the hyperlocal angle that Fish Shop likes to project.

That idea was advanced by exceptionally pleasant manager Genevieve, who obviously mistook me for some kind of royalty. She delightedly pitched the eatery's \$1 oysters on Thursday nights, the Tecate draft specials, the kids menu and the fact that dogs are welcome on the patio if they're cool.

One guy came in with his family and a big poodle-terrier mix while I was there.

The dog was an ideal guest, smiling and waving as I finished my meal; the little boy was delighted to make a new friend as I scratched him about the head.

Genevieve has a culinary school background she compiled in New York, and although she's happy to trade stories about the city that truly never sleeps, she's also nuts about San Diego's skies, which are ice blue about 84 percent of the year. Seattle will have to make do amid its leaden yonder – but a splendid corner eatery like Point Loma Fish Shop would certainly help. Marvelous meal.

Point Loma Fish Shop

WHERE: 1110 Rosecrans St.

WHEN: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days.

Info: 619-756-7778, thefishshoppointloma.com