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Published: Dec 30, 2008 02:42 PM

Modified: Dec 30, 2008 03:15 PM

Revolution has inventive menu

New Durham eatery offers prices that range from thrifty to splurge

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By Greg Cox

Correspondent

I just knew the times were right for a revolution, and now I've got the evidence to back it up. Jim Anile, formerly executive chef at Il Palio, has finally opened Revolution (107 W. Main St.; 956-9999;), his much-anticipated restaurant in the historic Baldwin's Department Store building in downtown Durham.

Anile says the name for his restaurant was inspired by its revolutionary guiding principle of providing "everyday fine dining:" food that's worthy of a special occasion, offered at affordable prices that make regular visits a reality, and served in a setting that's conducive to both.

To that end, Anile and his partner, chef de cuisine David Bernstein, have developed an inventive menu of contemporary global cuisine with a wide range of prices suited to just about any budget.

Depending on your mood and the thickness of your wallet, you might order from the list of entrees priced under \$20, with options including Thai sweet potato and black mushroom curry, beer-braised mussels and frites, and herb-stuffed venison chorizo. Or you might splurge on the seafood bouillabaisse or dry-aged Kobe New York strip steak you'll find among the options under the "Second Mortgage" heading. Or you might just opt to nibble your way through a few small plates and selections from the raw bar -- Hawaiian ahi tuna poke salad, say, and lamb ravioli in mint pesto, and Chinese style roast suckling pig.

Revolution's wine list is true to its owners' manifesto, too, offering a selection of 50 wines from small production vineyards, all priced under \$50. The restaurant is open Monday through Saturday nights, the bar opening at 4 p.m. and dinner service beginning at 5:30. Sunday brunch will be added in the coming weeks.

The partners encountered numerous delays in opening their restaurant, many of them typical of retrofitting a historic structure for a contemporary restaurant. From the looks of the dining room decor, which seamlessly melds sleek urban design and vintage elements inherited from the 1927 structure, it appears that all that hard work for the cause of the Revolution has finally paid off.

This just in: Looks like another revolution may be brewing in Durham. I just got a press release announcing that The Cuban Revolution (), a Rhode Island-based chain, is finalizing a deal to open a location in the former Symposium Café spot on the American Tobacco Campus. Stay tuned for details.

Greg Cox is the restaurant critic and food writer for The News & Observer. He can be reached at ggcox@bellsouth.net. Read the [Epicurean blog](#) for more updates.

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