

Waimea Ranch House
65-1144 Mamalahoa Hwy
Across street from Ace, next to Keck HQ

{written 2008 or so}

{I do believe this place went out of business. Did I call it or did I call it?}

I like the Waimea Ranch house. The food is simply divine and the service... oh, it sucks. I mean, the service is like unbelievably bad, atrocious. This restaurant is never going to get one star, let alone three. Don't ask me what's wrong with the place. I don't know, but if I had to guess, I'd theorize that the owner is in the midst of a nasty divorce, his cocaine habit has gotten out of hand, or he's got brain cancer and it's nibbling away at his commonsense. Granted, I've never met the man--or the woman for that matter--so I don't know, but it's got to be something. *{And this is what's known in the trade as a joke, not to be taken seriously, etc.}*

I went in the other day and we sat at the bar. Half of the restaurant is this white tablecloth affair and the other is this backwoods bar type thing. You know, the kind of place that has four walls, and what passes for décor is a beer sign. I'm exaggerating a little. The place is actually decorated OK, but the point is half the place is this fine dining--wine with your meal--type place, and the other is a bar. It's just a flat out a bar. People go there to drink. Alcohol is the main draw, and what do you suppose these wizards of enterprise at the Waimea Ranch House let happen? They let their liquor license expire! I kid you not. Don't most restaurants that serve booze make like 25% of their money on the stuff, and you know that number has to be even higher for a bar, but this place just up and lets its license expire. How can that happen? It would be as if McDonalds ran out of

hamburgers. “Oh, yeah, about that, we forgot to order them...”
Can you imagine it?

The point is, if they can't be bothered to renew their liquor license, you just know they can't be bothered with little things like special orders, getting your side order of bread (\$2) to you before the dessert course, or anything like that. You show up, they give you a menu, you tell them what you want (no substitutions please, none, nada, don't even ask) and then they bring you the food. That's it. They might come around and ask you how everything is, but they don't really mean it, and basically it shows.

Still, I like the place. I actually prefer it to some of the bigger name restaurants in town. You can get a hamburger in the bar for \$10, or you can get a Fantastic! steak in the tablecloth covered dining area for \$30. Actually they'll sell you a steak in the bar, but what they won't do is sell you a hamburger in the dining room. Oddly there's plenty of room usually available in each. No need to make a reservation, but hey, don't think that an empty dining room will prevent them from looking you over and copping an attitude as they try to figure out where to put you. No matter. Take the bad service as part of the décor, because the food is simply divine. Top notch. It really is amazing. My other theory about the chef is that he's got like this out of control cooking habit. I mean like he's got it bad. He just needs to cook, so the only reason he has the restaurant is to support this cooking Jones. Sure, maybe it doesn't make that much sense, but go there, eat, and you'll understand.

Bottom line, the service is through the toilet. Simply the worst. It's like they heard about that Soup Nazi guy in NY, and said, Yeah, now that's how you run a place, great food, crappy service, and the customer's will come running.

Anyhow, without being too redundant the food is great, wonderful, and fantastic, while the service sucks, and if you want a glass of wine it'll be awhile, because they forgot to renew their license. Who lets their liquor license expire?

{Yeah, went out of business. Have no idea what happened to the owner... if anything. Maybe he was an out-of-towner, showed up incognito at his place one day, tried to order a shot of Jack to kill the pain, realized they'd up and let the license expire, and said, "That's it!" As he/she/it pulled the plug.

Or, and this is perhaps more likely, they let the license expire, because they knew they were going to close the place on account of the land being worth, well, I'm guessing millions. Enough to retire on, anyhow, for simple folk like me, that is.}

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