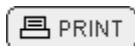


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BEST USE OF AN EGGPLANT

Zest

Oh, how we adore aubergines, whether in eggplant Parmesan or in that Mediterranean eggplant dip known as baba ghanouj -- but in a cheesecake? Actually, it's not so odd, as a cheesecake can be either sweet or savory, and the eggplant cheesecake served at Zest is an example of the latter. The creation of chef/co-owner Rich Rathert, who has run restaurants in Colorado and the Virgin Islands as well as here in the Valley, it's a creamy concoction of roasted eggplant mashed into a bowl of cream cheese, eggs and so on, with the resulting "cake" bathed in a roasted tomato-eggplant-balsamic vinaigrette sauce. It makes an outstanding appetizer for this quaint new eatery just north of Indian School Road, and if Rathert could figure out a way to make one the size of Tempe Town Lake, we'd be more than delighted to wade right in, face-first. Yum.

Details

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