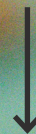




## FACTS:

- » RENT OUT THE **SPEAKEASY ROOM** TO ENJOY DINNER WITH A LARGE GROUP.
- » SNITCHES IS OPEN TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY FROM 5 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT.
- » WHEN AVAILABLE, MOST INGREDIENTS ARE FROM LOCAL FARMERS.



THE COCKTAILS ARE JUST AS THOUGHTFUL AS THE FOOD MENU. WE TRIED **SON OF A SNITCH** [SMOKED SCOTCH, AVERNA, CARPANO ANTICA, AND FIG FOAM], **THE RATTLETRAP** [PLATA TEQUILA, PEACH, CARDAMARO, AND COCCHI AMERICANO], AND **THE MELODY** [VODKA, ELDERFLOWER, GRAPEFRUIT, AND APEROL].

# Try It

# SNITCHES

By Alana Snyder

AS WE PLANNED OUR TRIP, I DID MY TYPICAL CHECK IN WITH LOCALS TO SEE IF THERE WERE ANY NEW RESTAURANTS TO STOP BY. ASSUMING THERE WEREN'T, I ABOUT LOST IT WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT NOT ONLY WAS THERE A NEW RESTAURANT IN DEADWOOD, BUT IT WAS A "MOLECULAR GASTRONOMY" EXPERIENCE.

To give you a little heads up if you're unfamiliar, gastronomy is the art or science of cooking, and it's a game changer if you have the chance to do it. We had reservations the second evening of our trip, and they wanted us to block off at least two hours to get the full feel of **Snitches**.

Snitches? In the **Tin Lizzie Gaming Resort**? It kept getting better.

As Tin Lizzie already gives flapper-era vibes in general, we assumed by the restaurant's name that it would follow suit with a 1920s vibe. We were correct--and we were pumped.

If you know me, I love a good theme, and I've been pretty open about it in this column. The walls were "*Great Gatsby* blue" and had gold accents, and the host was dressed to the nines.

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As we were seated, we noticed all of the marketing and signage had quotes and mentions of the chef.

As we received the one-page menu, I got goosebumps. I'm lucky enough to have gone to several **Michelin** star restaurants thus far in my life, and this gave me those vibes. It was simple, yet meticulously detailed. And there were only a couple of options under each section: **Starter, Pasta, Main,** and **Dessert.**

How do you begin? Well, we were told **Chef Tucker** was going to come out and not only wanted to talk about the food menu, but also had his (creative) hands in the drink options, as well. Executive chef and general manager **Tucker Walton** walked out to greet us. I felt vibes that he was the most intimidating, yet the most approachable human I've ever met.

"I oversee all the front of house, I choose all the wines, all of the cocktails," he said, with his hands casually crossed on his lap. Was this a power move?

On purpose or not, we felt it. We asked him several questions, including how this intimate, unassuming restaurant behind lottery machines (it's the truth, and it's awesome) came to be.

"Basically this is my opportunity to hopefully show South Dakota and Deadwood a real food and dining experience," he said. "Midwest comfort food isn't a problem, but I wanted something more tangible and real."

As jazz music swooned throughout the place, he told us of the importance of his start-to-finish process.

"Flavor, seasonality, and freshness are really important to me," said Walton. "This is my shot at being creative, and I'm honored to have this opportunity. Someone just kind of handed me the keys to a gutted, old burger kitchen and let me create this."

As we were told previously, Snitches is for tasting and reveling in the moment.

"We want people to have an experience, and we don't want people to come in just to eat dinner; we want them to experience something more elevated; and not in a pretentious way. I just hope you can taste the love and care that went into every aspect," he said.

# TRY IT

Here are a few items I'm excited to try next...

## STARTER

→SEASONAL SOUP

→SEASONAL SALAD

## PASTA

→AGNOLOTTI

→TAJARIN NEGRO

## MAIN

→DRY-AGED WAGYU

→VEAL CHEEKS

## DESSERT

→CHOCOLATE TERRINE

→PANNA COTTA



He talked of the majority of the menu being handmade, like spending 10 hours making pasta, butchering rabbits and whole sides of ribeye, hours making braises, and breaking down chicken and fish.

“Most things I’ve done in the kitchen are the first time I’ve done them,” he said. “My mind is creative and is constantly going. It might take me 10 minutes to write the menu, but executing it is extremely different.”

We learned guests can pick whatever they want from the menu, or they can craft their own full-course experience. Patrons can pick four courses for \$60, and they can add wines to complement each dish a la Chef Tucker’s choice for \$90.

We asked for his guidance, but we chose random items from the menu. First up were the **Quail Legs** (honey, chili threads, and fermented vegetables) and the **Scallops** (roasted corn espuma, black rice, and roasted fennel). I raced to finish the scallops, and then we all cleared the plate.

“They were dynamite,” said 605’s **John Snyder**. “They’re seared perfectly.”

With the quail, John legit sucked the meat off the bone, and 605’s **Taylor Hanson** wrecked the vegetable medley. The chili sauce was a hit with everyone.

“The breading is super fresh and light,” said John, “and the quail isn’t too gamey.”

For pasta, we tried the **Pappardelle** (parsley, slow-braised Iowa rabbit, and Parmigiano-Reggiano) and **Jidori Farm Chicken** (kabocha squash, local mushroom, roasted cherry, and foie gras demi). I had never really had rabbit before, and it didn’t even cross my mind as I ate it.

“This is good comfort food,” said Taylor. “I would lick the plate.”



We also raved about the sauce on the chicken and the squash that was paired with it.

**Salmon** came out (celeriac, sorrel and basil pesto, leek, and black garlic) and with all of the flavors, no bite was the same.

“It’s crispy on the outside but not on the inside, which is hard to do,” said John.

Taylor added, “This is the best salmon I’ve ever had. Don’t tell my mom or dad.”

Thinking we were done, Chef Tucker asked if we could handle dessert. We heard about the **Pistachio Cake**. This includes pistachio, olive oil, goat cheese, coriander, and blood orange. While it was a flavor profile you wouldn’t normally expect, it was incredible.

At the same time, we had the **Oak Roasters’** special medium-roasted blend for Snitches called **Spill the Beans**. It brought us back to life for a night out.

## BOTTOM LINE:

Like **Skogen Kitchen** in Custer (give me all of the free meals for life already), this is a bucket list-type of destination. While you wouldn’t expect a restaurant behind lottery machines to be classy, it is the epitome of that. Call for your reservation, because it’s limited seating, and it’s amazing.

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### ATMOSPHERE

While it’s very small, it’s definitely its own thing. It reminds me of the tiny restaurants with fascinating back stories and extraordinary menus that you might come across on a trip to Europe. I can see either having craft cocktails there with friends, or having a four-hour dinner with close ones that I’ll never forget.

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### VALUE

Your jaw would drop after what I’ve told you. Starters range from \$8-\$22 and main dishes are \$22-\$38. Homemade pastas start at \$12. That’s nuts! The most expensive thing on the food menu is \$38, and at that point you might as well do the tasting menu.

✓✓✓✓

### TASTE

This is a full-on moment, where you need to be ready to indulge with one another and talk about what’s happening in your mouths. We ended up spending over three hours in Snitches, and it was something I’ll never forget.