

dining DUCHESS™



RANDI AILEEN PRESS

Eating is a journey, and I'm on a quest for the most wonderful tastes in South Florida – and especially Broward County.

As another foodie has written, "To find your own food adventure, you'll need to become a traveler, not a tourist. After all, the tourist is led; the traveler seeks."

So, let's begin an adventure! Here's what I did last month...

GIRAFFAS PEMBROKE PINES

155 North Hiatus Rd.
Pembroke Pines, FL
33026
954-703-2884
www.giraffas.com

Sunday to Thursday
11 a.m. until 10 p.m.
Friday and Saturday
11 a.m. until midnight

FAST FLAVOR

BRAZILIAN "FAST CASUAL" IS BROWARD COUNTY'S BEST-KEPT SECRET



Many people have a mindset that Brazilian food consists mainly of meat, but that notion is changing with new, "fast casual" dining concepts such as Giraffas. While the steaks and burgers are grilled to perfection, the quinoa salads with shrimp or salmon are delicious offerings for pescatarians – and the mouth-watering desserts rival fine dining establishments.



Giraffas opened more than 30 years ago in Brazil and has expanded to more than 400 locations since then. In 2007, it made it to South Florida, with a concept involving healthier, fresher and more varied dishes with a higher level of service in a wait that usually doesn't exceed 8-10 minutes. Diners order directly at the counter, and the food is delivered to their tables on real plates with silverware.

The staff greets you cheerfully as you enter the restaurant and assists you with a menu consisting of classic burgers, Brazilian specialties, chicken and salmon dishes, and a variety of unique sauces and spices. The chicken, beef and shrimp stroganoff are wonderfully traditional, and you'll enjoy the rich flavor served with white or brown rice.

Farofa (made with Brazilian seasoned toasted manioc flour, eggs, bacon, onions, and parsley) accompanies a traditional 10-ounce picanha steak. The picanha cut is authentic Brazilian and comes from the "cap" (or "culotte"), which lies above the top sirloin and rump areas. The flavor is incredible.

Red meat is central to Giraffas menu, but fish lovers will be delighted when they order the salmon or tilapia. The 8-ounce fresh fish was perfectly grilled and touched lightly with Brazilian vinaigrette, then served with grilled string beans plus black beans and rice. The quinoa and the mix of greens, shrimp, small bruschetta, and balsamic dressing was delightful and fresh. This was a creative way to incorporate quinoa.

If burgers tempt you, try the Giraffao Filet, which comes with cheese, bacon, egg, lettuce, tomato, and either giramayo, horseradish or chipotle sauce. It goes down smoothly with an Itaipava, a Brazilian beer.

Whatever you eat for dinner, leave room for dessert. The Petit Gateau is a warm chocolate cake with coconut or vanilla ice cream, and you can finish dinner with an espresso, latte, cappuccino, or even *pao de queijo* (cheese bread).

Giraffas has a children's menu and four locations that include Pembroke Pines, Pinecrest, Midtown Miami, and North Miami. **LM**