



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2009

## Sanfords Restaurant

Revisiting the neighborhood where I grew up never ceases to amaze me. When I left Astoria over 30 years ago there was a coffee shop on Broadway called Sanford's Cafeteria that back then was already there for over 55 years and a mainstay of the neighborhood. So it was great to see a CBS TV review of the new and improved Sanfords Restaurant. Brothers Chris and Gus Karalekas reinvented the place which was passed down to them from their father John Karalekas. John envisioned the Contemporary American culinary style and fresh ingredients and Chris (a Sommelier) selects the wines.



The exterior draws you in, is warm and inviting, and once inside is strikingly modern and tastefully done in warm tones with comfortable lighting.

We started with a bottle from Tuscany, the San Felice Il Grigio Chianti Classico 2005, made from 100% Sangiovese, aged 12 months in Slavonian oak casks, showing deep ruby colors, aromas of violets and red berries, flavors of ripe cherries, raspberries and plum, smooth tannins and crisp acidity. This wine is special to me having visited the vineyard during a cycling trip in 2006.

One of the appetizer house specialties were amazing, Butternut Squash Raviolis in a toasted almond sage cream sauce. They were out of the Florentine spring rolls in an herbed spinach-feta mix, but we'll save that for next visit. Next was the Tuna Tartar sashimi with sesame soy marinade, layered guacamole and wasabi aioli... beautiful!

Our main courses ranged from the Pecan crusted ahi tuna over orzo with grape tomatoes and wasabi to the organic free range rotisserie chicken, fresh herb rub, sweet potato mash, and seasonal vegetable medley.

On to our second bottle this time from Spain, a Lan Rioja 2005, a Crianza tempranillo showing bright ripe black cherry, fruity aromas, rosewater, and a bit of oak with light tannins and a fresh acidity.

Let me just say that this is just scratching the surface... the wine list is extensive and their markups are very reasonable, and the menu has loads of categories to choose from, soups, appetizers, quesadillas, salads, pasta, entees, sides, sandwiches, burgers and desserts... also VERY reasonable.

If you haven't been back to the old neighborhood in a while, well,