

Travel Talk – Tuckaway Tavern

by Chase Binder

Bud and I enjoy a great meal out with friends. Oh, we don't classify ourselves as foodies, gourmards or connoisseurs of the latest trends in food and drink by any stretch. We just like to gather 'round a table with pals, begin the chat-fest and dig into food that's good enough for everybody to go wide-eyed and silent when the first forkful hits the taste buds. Yum!!

We shouldn't have been surprised to find that Tuckaway Tavern and Butchery in Raymond fits the bill. After all, a quick glance at their website (www.thetuckaway.com) illustrates award after award...after award. They've even been featured on The Phantom Gourmet.

Awards might get us in the door, though, but a place has to deliver that "je ne sais quoi" to really get our attention. Tuckaway had us at hello. When we walked in the door staff was in the process of hanging a spooky Halloween goblin from the ceiling. They were all smiles and giggles, said welcome and suggested we take a spin around the butchery while they got our table ready.

Turns out that the tavern is just one aspect of the business. The Butcher Shop, a convenient few steps from the hostess's podium, has an immediate wow factor. Gleaming glass cases stretch on and on, filled not only with



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the best-looking cuts of meat and poultry you have ever seen (and I do mean ever!), but also homemade chicken salad, their iconic marinade steak tips, freshly ground steak and ready-to-cook burgers, delightfully plain or seasoned with fresh ingredients ranging from garlic and basil to jalapenos and mozzarella. And get this—they have an entire section of hand-crafted sausages!

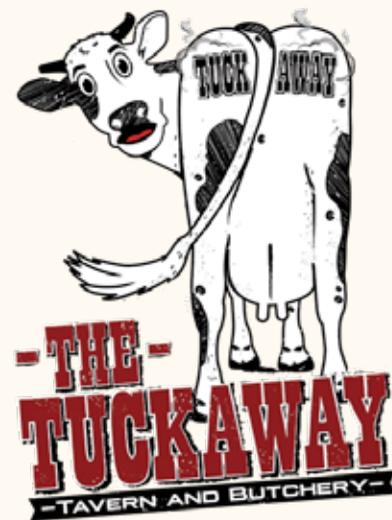
But wait...there's more! The walls in The Butcher Shop are chock full of gourmet items to inspire even the most timid cook. If you can make it past all this, you'll find The Craft Beer and Wine Shop—fully loaded, as they say, with local and hard-to-find beers and wines.

Now back to our meal! We only had time to buy a few things

before they showed us to a great round table (my favorite configuration for dinner conversation among 6-8 friends) and introduced us to our server. She was patient, welcoming and wonderfully helpful with the fun and slightly edgy menu—think items named Turkey Balls or a flagship burger called The Whole Tuckin' Farm.

I'll cut right to the heart of things. Bud went for the 16-oz Boneless Rib Eye at \$22. Bud was born and bred in Omaha, Nebraska, and has "meat-lover" hard wired into his DNA. He said it was the best rib eye he had ever had—and he did mean ever! He couldn't eat it all and carried home the doggie bag like it was precious cargo. I went for the Petite Filet Mignon at \$24—if you can call 8 oz. petite. Not only was it superb, but the chef knew exactly how to do my "Pittsburg or Black and Blue" order—charred on the outside and rare, rare, rare on the inside. I'll just say one word: perfect! The rest of us ordered items ranging from the steak tips to ground steak and the table had smiles all around.

Some might call this a restaurant review, but I'll beg to differ. First, restaurant reviews are bit outside my wheelhouse. Secondly, Tuckaway isn't just a place to grab a meal. It's a destination. We'll go back for sure!



IF YOU GO

Tuckaway is immensely popular. They **do not** take reservations.

SOME STRATEGIES:

Visit their info-rich website www.thetuckaway.com before you go.

Call 244-2431 to get the scoop on specials like 2-for-1 lobster roll day.

Arrive mid-week 2-3 for late lunch/early dinner for best chance of minimal wait.

Plan to shop while you wait (they refrigerate food while you eat) or just bring your Kindle.

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"FOR THE LOVE OF MUSIC: A TRIBUTE TO TIMI YURO"

Submitted by "The Music Lady"

Who, you might ask, is this month's featured musician, Timi Yuro?

To put her talent and her legacy in perspective, she was Elvis Presley's favorite singer. She collaborated with Willie Nelson on several recordings. She co-wrote a few songs with Burt Bachrach, she made a recording with Johnny Ray, and she opened for Frank Sinatra in Las Vegas. She was often referred to as "the little girl with the big voice".

Maybe it will jog your memory of Timi Yuro when you think back about some of her biggest hit recordings. Her first hit song was in 1961, when at age 21 she recorded "Hurt". This was followed by "What's A Matter Baby", "Smile", "I Apologize", "All Alone Am I", "I Believe", and many more. She performed in venues from London to the Netherlands to the USA. She had a powerful, deep, almost masculine contralto voice and sang with a heartfelt, soulful style, often with the occasional sob or chuckle. Her emotion drew you in. You felt the words of her songs right along with her.

If this rings a bell in your memory, listen to a few of her YouTubes and you'll hear why she has had a lasting effect on the American popular music stage. Maybe you'll agree with Elvis Presley. Timi Yuro might be one of the most overlooked and under-rated singers of her generation. She was a uniquely accomplished singer and songwriter. She died in 2004 of throat cancer. We remember you today, Timi Yuro.

