

# RESTAURANT REVIEW | Long Point Grill

## *Dishing out delicious meat and potatoes*

By Jeff Allen

**Long Point Grill**  
American/Eclectic – Casual  
Entrees: \$10-\$15  
497 Long Point Road  
Mt. Pleasant  
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Sal Parco must be one busy dude. His culinary empire multiplies with incredible alacrity. Add on a Death Star and he could take over the whole Mt. Pleasant universe. He's got a bakery, the ever-expanding chain of Mustard Seeds (aptly named), an Italian joint, the marvelous Boulevard Diner (an instant classic), and now the out-of-the-way Long Point Grill, which took over the former "Deputy Dog" truck-stop diner spot.

Unlike his more prominently placed ventures, the LPG, as it is called, is nestled among the containers at the business end of Long Point Road, barely beyond the gates of the industrial port operation. It would be an understatement to say that it's a bona fide neighborhood grill. Despite the dead-end address, it fills with the chatter of eager diners on a nightly basis. They come for the food and the convenience, and they don't leave dissatisfied.

The hallmark of Parco's touch resides in the preparation of good, reliable grub at reasonable prices. Meander into any of his establishments and one can expect to enjoy some of the best value in the metro area. Long Point Grill continues the theme, if losing a bit of the value proposition, serving up big, hearty plates in myriad styles.

The spectrum of dishes and ethnic influences circles the globe. Appetizers alone feature wild adventures in fusion: tomato pie (topped with a peach, \$7), rosemary chutney (\$7), fried calamari (\$7), goat cheese tostadas slathered with sour cherry compote (\$6), traditionally French mussels swimming in garlicky white wine (\$7), grilled scallops atop roasted corn, cucumber, and arugula (\$8), and a quesadilla that melds chicken, Monterey Jack cheese, cilantro pesto, and roasted corn — and that's just the starters! They also do a couple of soups, including a nice she crab model (\$6), a diverse group of dinner salads, a signature "LPG Burger" (\$7), complete with "cabernet onions," and a "Charleston Cuban" (\$7), which marries bourbon roasted pork and artichoke relish among the conventional fillings.



More multinational offerings — shrimp linguini (\$12), meatloaf (\$10), and "Ginger-Soy Grilled Pork Tenderloin" (\$14) — parade across the entrée portion of the menu. Specials like the Atlantic salmon, served up with fresh bean succotash and "chardonnay butter poached dry peaches" succeed brilliantly. In fact, much of what the LPG does well depends on a certain simplicity in the dishes — the "Grilled Marinated Hanger Steak topped with Crawfish Butter, roasted potatoes, and tiny green beans" (\$14) providing a perfect example. A good "work-night" entrée, it satisfies in ways that more engaging plates, at more expensive venues, cannot. The basic, unadorned slab of rich meat and potatoes speaks to the needs of the hungry stomach, not so engaging as to demand a thoughtful critique but delicious enough to make one look forward to the next visit.

All of this adds up to a bistro that could serve your entire family, including the grumpy old gramps and persnickety in-laws, at a discount to more pricey places downtown. It also provides a haven for those diners who are on the go and want a selection diverse enough to satisfy the nightly craving, no matter what mood you might be in. Perhaps that's the point. Parco trades innovation for coziness, he makes the everyday less mundane at the expense of innovation — and when the LPG does this, they excel.

It is when they venture out, with dishes like "Boneless Buttermilk Fried Chicken Breast with a collard green, parsnip, and rice egg roll then finished with a seasonal melon relish" (\$11) that the glass slipper cracks. The more verbose the description, the less successful the dish; they get away from what they do best. Fusion combinations of fruit compotes, exotic spices, and fried chicken just don't go over well at corner bistros with lower food costs. These dishes seem like cheesy and somewhat dated attempts at "impressive" haute cuisine. It's a good thing that they constitute a minority of the offerings, because when Long Point Grill sticks to the basics, it isn't bad at all.