

## **Foxcroft Wine Co North Hills**

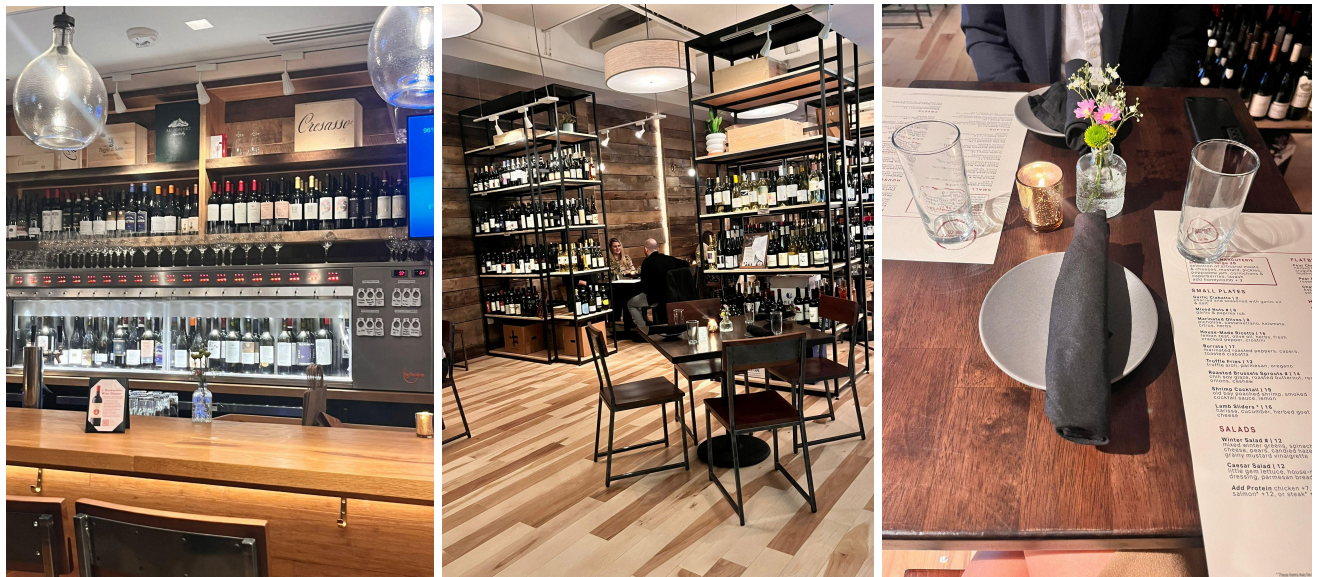
Atmosphere: 5/5

Service: 4/5

Presentation: 4/5

Taste: 5/5

Price: 4/5



There is excitement building around the restaurant world in North Hills, and it is easy to see why when you consider one of the new additions to its ranks is Foxcroft Wine Company. Located at the corner of Six Forks Road and Lassiter Mill, Foxcroft inhabits the storefront of former North Hills staple Midtown Grille, which closed its doors for good in 2022. If there was any pressure for the new kid on the block to fill the shoes left by Midtown Grille, it certainly isn't showing for owner Conrad Hunter in his first venture outside of the Charlotte area. Hunter and his concept of a "wine bar and full-service kitchen", is something you won't find very often in the Raleigh area (it's only counterpart being Barcelona Wine Bar in the Warehouse District), making Foxcroft Wine Co a must try adventure if you enjoy good food and even better wine.

### **Atmosphere: 5/5**

On presumably the busiest night of the week, Saturday, the ability to carry on a conversation and move through the space freely were definite pluses for the overall experience. A large bar on the right side of the dining room complements the space well without being too obtrusive. Wine shelves scattered throughout the restaurant act as functional partitions between table

groups, creating intimate spaces and providing for excellent noise control. The lighting and architecture inside created a warm atmosphere where you could easily get lost in the rhythm of the evening, sipping and savoring instead of hustling and bustling.

#### **Service: 4/5**

The only reason this was not a 5/5 was because our waitress was clearly new, and with that comes the typical growing pains of any new job. She was great, despite her lack of experience (stumbling over some words and relying on a written list of recommendations for wine instead of from memory or personal knowledge) which speaks to the level of training that each member of the wait staff must go through before starting out on their own. I was very impressed with her timeliness and effort to accommodate our needs, trademarks of a good manager who is detail oriented in training their staff. Beyond our waitress, everyone on staff was moving and shaking, working hard to get to their tables but not rushing or in a hurry to do so. I did not witness any idol staff members during our hour long meal, something that is uncommon these days when sitting in a full service restaurant.

#### **Presentation: 4/5**

The food was plated well and presented in a way that was pleasing to the eye. The only critique on this front would be to break up the monotone colors of the dishes plated (both our plates revolved around a single color palette) and perhaps some variety in the dishware used. Again, the presentation was really good, just wasn't off the charts.

#### **Taste: 5/5**

Who cares about presentation when the food and wine are delicious though, right?! That was the sentiment felt at our table after taking our first bites and sipping our first sips, quality was not sacrificed on this occasion!

What was ordered:

Garlic Ciabatta to start.

Steak Frites: NY Strip prepared medium rare with house-cut fries and garlic herb butter.  
Paired with a Montsant Vallformosa “Cap de Pera” at the recommendation of our waitress...her recommendation did not disappoint.



Rigatoni: house-made pork sausage, tomato cream, tarragon, breadcrumbs.

A glass of Riesling Red Tail Ridge “Good Karma” was chosen not so much as a pairing, but for the taste enjoyed as a precursor to the entree.





The house-made seasonal dessert which happened to be a Creme Brulee that evening.



The Garlic Ciabatta was the perfect combination of crispy and soft, something about having good bread with wine seems to heighten the experience. Highly recommend ordering this app.

The NY strip was cooked exactly to temperature and was pre cut into manageable slices which made fumbling with a steak knife not an issue. The herb butter on top added a nice accompanying flavor without overpowering the taste of the meat. One item I thought was missing from the dish was an aioli sauce for dipping the fries into, but otherwise this was executed well. Another big recommendation.

For the Rigatoni, make sure you are a tomato cream fan before ordering. If you are, then this bright and rich sauce will satisfy your taste buds as it gives off big comfort food vibes. I would recommend asking your server what wine pairs best with this dish because it could be tricky to find a good one on your own that complements this flavor palette.

The seasonal dessert was our big surprise for the evening, simply because one typically doesn't go to a wine bar hoping for a knockout dessert option. The fact that the Creme Brulee was made in house (can't stress the importance of this enough) was a big selling point. A lot of restaurants in the Raleigh area do not make their own desserts, so this is a nice feather in the cap of Foxcroft Wine Co., and certainly an unexpected one. Big brownie points on the dessert front.

### **Price: 4/5**

This was a tough one to rate and maybe a more appropriate rating would be 3.5/5. Why was this tough to rate? Well, I had to consider what is Foxcroft's main draw (wine, duh) and on that front, they price very well. Standard practice for pricing wine by the glass is at 85-100% of the wholesale cost for the bottle (you charge \$15 a glass from a \$15 bottle of wine) and this assumes a 5 oz pour. At Foxcroft, they fall closer to the 85% side of the scale and they have 6 oz pours instead of the standard 5. Since wine is their primary product, I felt giving them a 4/5 for pricing was appropriate, with a point being lost on food pricing.

Both entrees were priced above competitors in the area, even at a restaurant of comparable stature just around the corner who sells Steak Frites with a better quality cut for \$7 cheaper. Likewise the Rigatoni at \$25 was priced higher than any pasta dish listed on a similar starred Italian restaurant's menu in the area. Now, doing your due diligence on pricing can be beneficial, but at the end of the day, don't let a few dollars on food be the only reason you don't give Foxcroft Wine Co. a try, especially with a good pricing model for their wine pours.

Foxcroft's mission statement reads:

"Foxcroft is on a mission to make wine approachable and enjoyable for everyone. Our highly trained wine savvy staff is eager to guide you toward that perfect bottle to either be enjoyed at home or in our warm and laid back environment"

After visiting Saturday night, I have to say they held true to vision and environment as I enjoyed several free tastings while carrying on pleasant conversation despite the dining room being at max capacity. This writer can confidently say they are eager to go back for more and I am sure you will share the same sentiment if you give this wine bar a go.