



Guide Rating - ★★★★★

Kevin Rathbun Steak- Atlanta Restaurant Review

By Joy Johnston

Disclaimer: Management secured my reservation for this dinner and I was provided a tour of the restaurant, however this was not a media-comped dinner.

Birthdays are always a good reason to indulge, and as my big day approached, my eyes and stomach zeroed in on the new kid on Atlanta's culinary block: Kevin Rathbun Steak. Of course, the Rathbun name is quite familiar to Atlanta diners, as we have enjoyed his namesake restaurant and his wine and small plates sensation Krog Bar for years now. Rathbun is one of the most popular "celebrity chefs" in town and for good reason. He serves up consistently superb cuisine without an air of pretension. Rathbun, from all accounts I've read, is truly a friendly, sincere guy with a passion for good food in a welcoming environment.

So a steakhouse from the Kansas City native would seem to be a sure-fire bet. Kevin Rathbun Steaks is within walking distance of Rathbun's and Krog Bar, in the Inman Park neighborhood of Atlanta. Complimentary valet drop-off is well-marked, and lets you off right at the walkway that leads to the front door. Heavy doors open into a den of frenetic activity. To the left is the bar, which is usually buzzing. Straight ahead is the hostess desk, which is well-staffed. I received a brief tour of the facility before being seated. There is an outdoor patio area that looked like an inviting and relaxing place to sip on a cocktail and escape the din of the inside bar. The view is of the future [Bellline](#).

There's also a downstairs area that has a sizeable library of Kevin Rathbun's cookbooks (which patrons are welcome to peruse), and a private dining area with a flat-screen monitor. I can see plenty of Atlanta's movers-and-shakers reserving this room for business dinners.

We were seated in one of the booths, which afforded us a great view of the dining room, which is decked out in stacked wood and the open kitchen. There are a lot more tables than booths, so if you are celebrating a special occasion, call ahead to try to snag one of these, as they are very comfortable and roomy. As the booths were against a wall, it helped keep the noise down to a manageable level.

Maybe I've just grown immune to Atlanta's notoriously loud dining rooms, but I didn't think the noise level at Kevin Rathbun Steak was as bad as some other reviews have made it out to be. True, I'm sure my experience would be different if I had been seated at a table in the middle of the dining room. While steakhouses because of their usually hefty price tag are a popular special occasion destination with a spouse or date, I've never considered them particularly romantic in nature. To me, steakhouses are a place to enjoy good food and good wine in a snazzy environment. Kevin Rathbun Steak does not disappoint by my definition.

As with any good steakhouse, the menu is huge. The wine list is lengthy as well, with excellent picks in the more affordable range, not something you will find on most steakhouse wine lists. We chose the John Duval "Plexus" GSM (\$81/bottle) which was really solid once it opened up a bit.

One almost has to plot out a strategy at places like this. Don't fill up on heavy appetizers because you want to leave plenty of room for steak. A heavy side dish can also cause one to fill up too quickly. Luckily, the menu here has a great balance of lighter, healthier appetizers and sides as well as more traditional, indulgent offerings.

While I don't indulge in bread anymore, the bread service here is unique, in that mustard along with butter is served to compliment the rolls. My dining companion enjoyed the mustard and caraway seed rolls as a nice variation from the usual bread-and-butter routine.

Originally, I was planning on ordering one of the sashimi selections, but because I found the dining room a bit on the chilly side, I switched to a hot appetizer. I started with a rich corn risotto with parmesan cheese (\$6.50), which arrived to the table piping hot in a homey serving dish. I've read some other reviews around town in which the diner felt this dish had too much black pepper. I found the dish to be fairly heavy on the pepper, but not in a way that distracted from the other savory flavors. The risotto was cooked perfectly. This dish is a great example of pairing a homestyle dish and adding just the right gourmet touches to make it unique.

My dining companion ordered the Serrano ham wrapped asparagus (\$8.50). These were delicious, and are a good appetizer to share as well. Again, this is a simple, rustic dish, but the quality of the ingredients and the skill in the kitchen make them standouts.

On to the star of the show, the steak, procured from the prestigious [Allen Brothers](#). If two or more people in your party want steak, the dry-aged Porterhouse (\$64 for two people) is the way to go. Available in portions for two to four people, this selection allows you to get both filet mignon and New York strip cuts of the cow. The steak is cooked to order, and pre-sliced in the kitchen (but still served on the bone). You get to choose what sauce accompaniment you want with it. We chose the black truffle butter, which was a little extra but worth it. Our steak arrived at medium-rare as requested, and was so tender you could almost cut it with just a fork. The steak had lots of flavor and very little fat and gristle. We thought we would have to take some home with us but somehow, we polished off the entire thing at the restaurant.

For my side dish, I chose one of the lightest offerings, the garlic spinach in olive oil (\$6.50). It was the perfect dish to compliment the meat. My dining companion decided to go to the other extreme and order the popular french fries with bleu cheese fondue (\$6.95). This would be a good side to share as they are quite filling.

Alas, there was no room for dessert but we enjoyed espressos instead.

While I have read some reviews stating that service was sub-par, we found service to be quite good at Kevin Rathbun Steak. While there were dedicated servers for each table, all of the servers seemed to be working as a team, glancing at all tables as they walked the floor, and taking care of an issue even if it wasn't their assigned table. The staff and kitchen handled my [gluten-free needs](#) without a hitch and seemed educated on the issue, making menu suggestions that were spot-on.

Packed on a Thursday night just weeks after opening, I don't think Kevin Rathbun Steaks really needs a slew of 4- and 5-star reviews to be successful, but I expect the restaurant to receive plenty of well-deserved accolades.