

## Sneak Peak at Ate-Oh-Ate

Last weekend, I attended a preview dinner for Ate-Oh-Ate. A play on Hawaii's area code, this new restaurant is the latest venture by the owners of Laurelhurst Market and Simpatica Dining Hall, where the dinner was held. Co-owner Ben Dyer, who hails from the Big Island, confirmed that they plan to open their Hawaiian eatery on September 1 at East Burnside and 24th.

On a recent trip to Hawaii I tried Spam for the first time and swore I'd never taste it again. The pan-fried patty of greasy, gamey mystery pork ruined my breakfast of macadamia nut and coconut pancakes. But, for the first course of this dinner, I was treated to a second Spam encounter in the form of musubi, a popular Hawaiian snack featuring the processed pork product wrapped in seasoned rice and nori. I'll admit, the square-shaped sushi presentation was a much more palatable version. Perhaps the addition of egg omelet and green onion and a healthy dose of Sriracha sauce were to blame.

No dish is more unique to Hawaii's culinary heritage than saimin. Served as the second course, this dish of egg noodles swimming in dashi is a melting pot of Hawaiian culture. It can include elements brought to the state by Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Filipino, and Korean immigrants, such as gyozas or linguica sausages. Ate-Oh-Ate's version will include a local spin with Carlton Farms' pork belly, in addition to a peculiar bright pink tinged fish cake, and bonito flakes.

A smorgasbord of typical Hawaiian plate lunch components made for a fun-filled entrée sampler and was served family style. Kal-bi beef short ribs marinated in soy, sesame, and ginger, and breaded pork cutlets, known as tonkatsu, were accompanied by rice, a sesame slaw-like iceberg salad, and daikon kimchi.

For dessert we were served a retro pineapple upside down cake with the addition of li hing mui, a salted plum powder common in Hawaiian cuisine. The cake was moist, dense, and delicious and served with coconut ice cream.

Four courses unfolded dish after dish of inspired Hawaiian comfort food to look forward to at Ate-Oh-Ate. The restaurant will be open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week, at 2452 E. Burnside Street in Portland.