



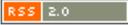
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## The CineBistro Primer

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THE CITY OF Richmond, VA has many, many secrets. Although CineBistro has been a part of the city's thriving restaurant/movie industry for well over a year, it remains one of Richmond's best kept secrets. Quite a few people have discovered it, but there are still quite a few more who have no clue that it even exists. Today, we'll uncover the secret.

First, what is CineBistro? It's an upscale dining experience paired with first-run movies. Located in Stony Point Fashion Park, CineBistro has been open for business since October of 2010. It's quite unlike any place you've ever been, so prepare to be amazed when you arrive. The biggest obstacle when deciding to go to CineBistro is figuring out where the entrance is located. When you approach Stony Point from Chippenham Parkway, you'll see a large lighted CineBistro sign. This impressive bit of metal, glass, and halogen gases draws you to the back of the facility. The entrance is on the far side of the mall near Lens Crafters. If you don't see Lens Crafters, prepare for a long walk. Before disembarking from your automobile, make sure that you have a legal form of identification with you. One of the most popular features of CineBistro is that you must be at least twenty-one years old to enter the building. There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule -- ever!

Once inside, you'll notice that this is NOT your grandparents' movie theater. The brick work, decor, and lighting are very impressive. There are LCD screens above the concierge desk that display the showtimes for each movie currently being shown along with small video clips from each movie. There are six theaters inside the building, which gives you a few options. It should be noted that the best way to purchase tickets is online. CineBistro has reserved seating and since space is limited, the sooner you reserve your seats, the better the chance that you get to see the movie that you want while sitting in the seat that you want. Whether you purchase your seats in advance or online, you'll be presented with an electronic version of the seating chart for the theater, so that you can pick your seats. There really aren't any bad seats, but everyone has their own preference with respect to where they'd like to sit. The front row comes equipped with ottomans so that you can prop your feet up and make yourself at home. You should also be aware that CineBistro gift cards cannot be used to purchase tickets online.

By now, you should have noticed that there is a magnificent bar to the right of the main lobby. It's probably one of the most impressive bars you've ever seen. You'll also notice that there is an amazing

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array of liqueurs, liquors, cordials, aperitifs, digestifs, beers, and wines. If the sun has set, you'll notice two classic black and white feature films are being projected onto the brick walls behind the bar. Eventually, you'll also notice that there are bartenders there ready to answer questions and create beverages that should be imbibed. No, this really is not your grandparents' movie theater. The bar area provides the perfect place to begin your CineBistro experience. It has the same menu as the one available in the theater as well as any of the chef's specials and an exclusive bar-only menu. What's more, whatever you purchase at the bar can be taken into the theater if you don't finish enjoying it before it's time for you to be seated. The bar offers a wide array of custom cocktails and the staff is quite capable of recreating the classics as well as those fad drinks that all the kids are drinking these days.

The trick to making your experience at CineBistro unforgettable is to follow one simple rule: Arrive at least 30 minutes before showtime. This allows you to be seated in the theater with enough time to order the things you'd like to enjoy during the movie and have them delivered to you at your seat before the movie starts. There is no in-theater service during the movie, so it's imperative that you arrive within the thirty minute window to ensure that you get what you need before the feature begins.

So, how does it work? You'll be shown to your seat by one of the members of the staff. You'll marvel at how amazingly comfortable the seats look. Then you'll discover, first hand, that your observation was on the mark. Once you've been seated, a member of the wait staff will give you the following details. Everything on the menu is available. You have the option of ordering bottles of wine or pitchers of beer. Keep in mind that, whatever you order, CineBistro does not course meals in the theater. So, if you order an appetizer, entree, and dessert, those items will all arrive at the same time. It sounds inconvenient, but since there is no in-theater service during the movie, it's the only logical way to pull it off. There is a 17.5% gratuity added to each check. This service charge helps to compensate the servers, food-runners, and bartenders who help make your experience enjoyable. Your check will be presented as soon as your order is placed. Again, this is done so that no one is in the theater interrupting your movie going experience.

If you're wondering what happens if you need a refill or more food during the show, wonder no more. You can ALWAYS go to the bar to get refills on soft drinks, more cocktails or a bottle of wine, food, or concessions. If you order food, you'll be given a pager so that you can return to the theater until your food has been prepared. This is also the procedure that you'll follow if you miss the thirty minute window. The bartenders can order whatever you want from the menu, including concessions. You'll be given a pager, so that you can proceed to the theater until your food has been prepared. There is a wide variety of candy and, yes, there is also popcorn. It is a movie theater after all. It should be duly noted that popcorn and soft drinks can have unlimited refills during your visit.

If you'd really like to get the most out of your CineBistro experience, here's an insider's guide on how to have the best experience possible. Let's say that your movie starts at 6:00 P.M. Arriving even earlier than 5:30 P.M., for instance 5:00 P.M., allows you to start out with a cocktail and an appetizer at the bar or in the cocktail area. When your show seats at 5:30, you can order your main course and a bottle of wine in the theater. After the show, enjoy a dessert and a digestif or cocktail in the cocktail area or at the bar. CineBistro is not a typical night out, so why not pull out all the stops and make it a night to remember?

In addition to first run movies and upscale dining, CineBistro does all sorts of special events. Live simulcasts of the New York Metropolitan Opera take place on Saturdays during opera season. Live performances of the Philharmonic Orchestra are also simulcast there as well. If you remember the great run that the VCU Rams made during the NCAA Basketball Tournament last year, imagine how cool it would have been to watch it on the big screen in one of the theaters. Many don't have to imagine it because they were at CineBistro for all the action. On Super Bowl Sunday, many enjoyed the big game on the big screen. Soon, the Oscars will be celebrated at CineBistro and the event will be shown live on the big screen. Another important note: live television events are shown free of charge and tickets are given on a first come, first served basis on the day of the event. Each Tuesday, CineBistro does a wine tasting. Wines from their impressive wine list are selected each week to be sampled by those who attend. Theaters can be rented out for private parties as well. Contact their management staff for more information. One last tease: you can play Xbox 360 or PlayStation/3 on the movie screens -- seriously!

So, there you have it, CineBistro -- unreeled!! As I said at the beginning, CineBistro has been in Richmond for well over a year. Surprisingly, people are still discovering it for the first time. Many of them have declared that they'll never watch a movie anywhere else again. Don't be the last to make that declaration. As always, whether you're enjoying a first run movie with your favorite meal and adult beverage in a big comfortable seat alone or with friends, please do so responsibly. Until next time...prosit!!!

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