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HOME IS WHERE HARRY'S IS:
A New York Classic Comes To
West Palm Beach

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Old Mr. Johnson cocktail

Home Is Where Harry's Is

A New York Classic Comes To West Palm Beach

By **Alona Abbady Martinez**

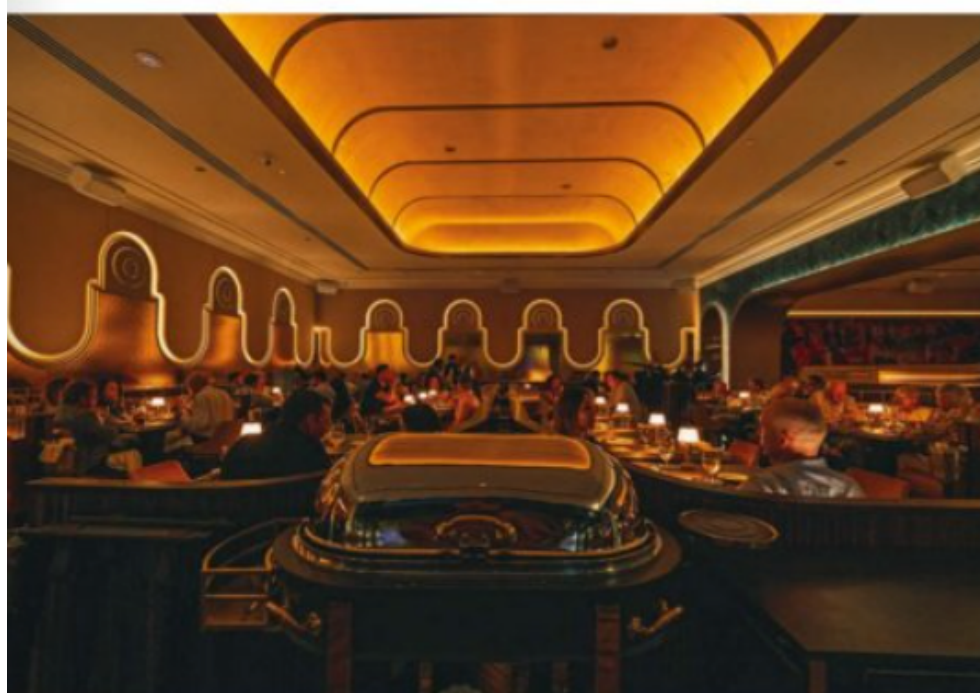
THERE'S A BUZZ AT HARRY'S WEST PALM BEACH THAT IS PALPABLE BEFORE you even walk inside. Old-timers familiar with the original New York location in Manhattan's Financial District know they are in for a treat. Newcomers like me note that, by the swarm of fashionably dressed West Palm Beach foodies waiting to be seated, it's bound to be a memorable night.

After all, Harry's is a New York City institution. Founded by Greek immigrant Harry Poulakakos and his wife Adrienne in

1972, it rose to legendary fame for its martinis and 28-day in-house dry-aged steaks. Now overseen by son Peter, the new South Florida location is representative of the Sunshine State's allure for renowned restaurateurs to grow roots in.

Like the original eatery, the West Palm Beach location has serious old-school vibes. Located on trendy Rosemary Avenue, it sports a handsome interior cast in warm golds and deep reds with dim lighting to add to the intimate feel. Diners can opt for one of the plush booths or tables or head to the bustling bar. There's a mural of the Wall Street restaurant and a lush tropical patio for those craving an al fresco dine.

On the dinner menu, expect Harry's classics like tableside Caesar Salad and Beef Wellington. Besides the eponymous nod to its founder, Harry's pays homage to Harry Johnson, known to have written the first book on bar management in 1882. Hence, it only seems fitting to begin with a sampling of the stellar cocktails. Harry's Famous Martini is a must-have for first-timers.



Prime Bone-In N.Y. Strip



Market Oysters on the half shell

It is available in an individual portion or served in a decanter for parties of up to three to enjoy. In fact, there's a generous selection of drinks to be shared, a handy option for larger parties ordering the same cocktail, or for those not wanting to wait for a refill. Other signature drinks include Old Mr. Johnson (Bulleit Rye Whiskey, Dry Curaçao, Ancho Chile, Cream Sherry and Angostura Bitters) and Malena (Moët Chandon Champagne, Nolet's Silver Dry Gin, vanilla vodka, passion fruit, piña syrup and fresh lemon). The extensive wine list (curated by Harry) and whiskey lockers (available through exclusive membership) draws serious imbibers to this spot. For those skipping alcohol, mocktails like Figs & Spice, featuring Seedlip Spice 94 Non-Alcoholic Spirit, a blend of allspice and cardamom, house fig syrup, Sūpāsawā and London Essence Club Soda, is a fabulous choice.

Begin the meal with traditional appetizers like Market Oysters on the half shell, Jumbo Shrimp Cocktail or Jonah Crab Cake rémoulade. Our server suggested the Baked Clams Genovese and the Hand-Cut Steak Tartare. The tartare was delightful, accompanied by the expected slices of toast as well as butter lettuce leaves: an ideal vessel to enjoy each bite.

When choosing the first main course, the Beef Wellington served

with Harry's Truffle Sauce is a must. Wrapped in a flaky puff pastry, the medium-rare beef is buttery soft and packed with flavor, even before drizzling it with gravy. For those that fancy lamb, Harry's Colorado Lamb and the Lamb Curry, served with Basmati rice, are both stellar choices. Of course, you cannot go wrong with steak here, with selections like the Prime Bone-In N.Y. Strip (dry-aged for 28 days), Wagyu Ms-7 Filet Mignon from Australia or Prime Porterhouse Steak for two (also dry-aged for 28 days).

A sucker for pasta, my guest ordered the Squid Ink Linguine with shrimp scampi and couldn't have been more pleased. The depth of flavor in the black linguine served as the ideal backdrop for the succulent, sweet shrimp. In true steakhouse manner, there are lots of sides, from familiar Yukon Gold Whipped Potatoes to Spinach (wilted or creamed) to Escarole & White Beans. We opted for the Polenta Fries with truffle aioli: crunchy slabs the size of Jenga pieces gave way to a creamy interior that, when dipped in the sauce, left me speechless. Roasted Asparagus with blistered tomatoes and Sautéed Garlic Broccolini are reliable greens that pair well with any main dish.

You may want to explore the dessert menu before ordering your meal in order to best pace yourself. I did and must admit, everything from the Apple Tarte Tatin to the N.Y. Style Cheesecake to the Traditional Crème Brûlée sounded divine. I cannot resist anything with coconut, so, upon spotting the Coconut Cake with passion fruit sorbet, my decision was made. When our server brought out the towering, white slice, I felt my heart skip a beat. One bite proved it was everything a coconut cake lover could hope for: airy, sweet (but not cloyingly so) and with just the right amount of coconut.

If I lived closer to Harry's, I'd probably be on a first-name basis with the waitstaff, much to the chagrin of my wallet. Still, the restaurant's charm, elegant cocktails and superb food are well worth the drive.

Harry's is located at 384 S. Rosemary Ave., West Palm Beach. For more information, visit harrysbarrestaurant.com or call 561-834-5010.