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## Terrapin a mix of refined, hip

Amy Winn

Terrapin Bistro

6426 Montgomery St., Rhinebeck; 845-876-3330

Recently, a new friend, just moved to the area, asked me to pick the spot for our late-evening date. He had only one request, that it be "a lounge, not a bar. Someplace nice."

Easy, I thought: Terrapin Bistro in Rhinebeck.

Sharing a building with its more formal big brother restaurant, but in a completely separate room, the bistro is a chic, refined spot for food and drinks, even past the usual dinner hour. It's a space that is simultaneously friendly and casual and sensual and romantic.

The peaked ceiling is dramatic and mood-setting. The granite-topped bar undulates along the side and back of the room. The lighting is beautifully flattering and goes a long way in helping to create a sensual atmosphere.

The music choices are very sophisticated and timeless - BB King to Amy Winehouse - and kept at a volume that easily allows conversation.

Two rows of tables, on either side of a banquette, can accommodate parties of any size, so it's perfect for couples or larger groups. There are a couple of deuces and the bar seats about two dozen. In my experience, it has not been too busy, but especially on weekends, you might want to call ahead.

If it's too late for dinner but not yet last call, and you can afford more than a slice of pizza but less than a full steak dinner, Terrapin is miles nicer than any diner anywhere, and definitely worth the extra mileage.

The "in crowd" - Patrons wear everything from dressed-up jeans to post-gala black tie in here,

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The bistro area of Terrapin in Rhinebeck is a little more casual than the restaurant half of the establishment.

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and neither would be inappropriate. Twentysomething sophisticates coolly sip wine next to couples far closer to retirement than college. All configurations of friends and lovers are cheerfully accommodated by the delightful staff.

Hey, bartender - About a half dozen each of white and red wines are available by the glass for \$5-\$10. Bottle beers include microbrews, ranging from \$4-\$7. Five taps offer pints at \$4-\$6. Specialty cocktails start at \$8. The full range of spirits including single malt scotch, aperitifs, bourbon, cognacs, brandies and more.

Eat this - Although it shares some items with the dining room's menu, the bistro menu is more casual and has a lower price point. However, offerings are likewise delicious and beautifully presented. The specialty and custom sandwiches are \$5.95-\$9.95; appetizers and salads run \$4.95-\$9.95; larger plates run \$8-\$15.95. A half-dozen desserts are available in full or half portions. Note: The menu does change seasonally.

First in or last out - Open all day, the bistro kitchen operates until 11 p.m. Monday-Thursday, midnight Friday-Saturday and 10 p.m. Sunday. Hours are expected to be extended during the summer season.

Net news - [www.terrapinrestaurant.com](http://www.terrapinrestaurant.com).

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