

La Cage Brasserie sportive's takeout service has become a true discovery for diners

MtlRestoRap

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Last February, just a few weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, I was so excited to attend the grand opening of the new *La Cage: Brasserie Sportive* (www.cage.ca) at the former *P.F. Chang's* location at Rue des Jockeys near Decarie Blvd.

Formerly known as La Cage Aux sports, the two level, 317 seat restaurant barely had a chance to attract a following and showcase its \$1.5 million makeover before shutting its doors. Featuring a completely modern look, designed to offer an immersive experience in this legendary sporting atmosphere, there are several giant screen walls, not to mention three new private rooms, perfect for business meetings or groups. The open kitchen concept adds a nice touch.



Lobster tacos

Groupe Sportscene President and CEO Jean Bédard slowly began to open the 37 La Cage properties in Quebec in June. The company also owns breakfast restaurant

L'Avenue on the South Shore, *P.F. Chang's* at Carrefour Laval and Moishes Steakhouse. The latter just had its iconic property on St. Laurent Blvd sold. It will resurface sometime after the pandemic is over at a new venue. Besides its restaurant operations, Sportscene is active in the sale of La Cage and Moishes branded products in grocery stores and of ready-to-eat meals.

I was a regular at P.F. Chang's on Decarie until it was transformed into a La Cage and I had developed a nice relationship with managing director Emile Haykal. So I was delighted when he was charged with overseeing the new La Cage in the same location. A finer restaurateur you could not find.

La Cage has transitioned marvelously to the present situation by launching "La Cage – Chez vous," an enhanced offering of delivery, take-out and ready-to-cook meals.

I have been enjoying the food and ambiance of La Cage restaurants for decades. That was not the case for my wife, daughter, and mother in law or father in law. None of them had ever tried the food. La Cage rebranded and changed their menu five years ago and it has brought in a new crowd; families just like mine.

For my mother in law and father in law, bag number one was dropped off containing a Blitz (100 percent Canadian beef patty) with lettuce, tomato, red onion, and mustard only and a fresh Atlantic salmon, served with croutons. They were pleasantly surprised, so much so that they will order the exact same things next time out. In my household, we ordered an appetizer of three lobster tacos, a green salad, two salmon poke bowls and a salmon tartare meal, coming with fries and a salad.

We miss a lot of things about Moishes, so it was a treat to order the famous Moishes millefeuille for dessert.

The tacos were fantastic, so it was a pleasant surprise to be treated with some ready-to-cook kits created by executive chef Louis-François Marcotte.



A salmon poke bowl at La Cage Brasserie Sportive

Meanwhile, Haykal added some P.F. Chang's favorites to the Decarie menu for a short time. It was enough of a reminder that many clients now head to Laval to pick up wonton soup, dumplings, vegetarian spring rolls, dynamite shrimp and wonderful sushi.

La Cage Brasserie Sportive Decarie is located at 5485 Rue des Jockeys, Montréal, QC H4P 2T7. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday (11 am to 11 pm) and Saturday & Sunday (4 pm to 11 pm). You can order via lacagechezvous.com, ubereats.com or doordash.com or call 514-731-2020.

Reuben's Deli & Steakhouse makes a COVID-19 comeback for take-out and delivery via Deville

Foodies like myself sure do miss certain restaurants which have remained closed since the start of the pandemic. A case in point is Reuben's Deli & Steakhouse (<http://reubensdeli.com>) on St. Catherine Street. The Tzemopoulos family have also been operating the iconic spot for more than 40 years now under the RD3 Restaurant Group, which also includes Deville Dinerbar (www.devilledinerbar.com) and Anton & James on Stanley Street.

Devil reopened last summer and has an excellent take-out and delivery process in place. And while the doors to Reuben's have not been formally reopened, the Tzemopoulos brothers have found a clever way to bring it back. Now you can make an order via Uber Eats or takeout, with everything prepared in the Deville kitchen.

From the moment I learned about this development, I could barely contain my excitement. I was pleasantly surprised to see practically a full menu of Reuben's favorites available so I arranged a pickup of multiple items to enjoy over a period of several days at the office for lunch.

I arrived at 12:15 pm on a weekday the Double D Pop Up Shop window and everything was ready and so neatly packed.

There was a grilled karnatzel, with some pieces of toasted pumpernickle bread and mustard; the smoked meat mac and cheese; the roast beef melt with fries (my personal favorite of sliced roast beef served on thick grilled rye bread topped with roasted garlic mayo, sauteed onions and melted Swiss cheese); the original Reuben sandwich (a savory grilled sandwich served on thick sliced pumpernickel, piled high with a half-pound of sliced smoked meat, melted Swiss cheese, sauerkraut and Reuben's secret sauce); and for dessert a huge piece of Deville's chocolate food cake (minus the ice cream), the big easy beignets and a Pepsi to wash it all down.

Now let me tell you I spread this treat over the course of four days. It is something I would highly recommend to someone who is looking for a treat, be it working from a regular office or even from home. The Reuben's menu also includes salads, steaks, honey crunch chicken strips, salmon, ribs poutine, steak cut onion rings, fried pickles and more. Of course also have the option of making selections from Deville, which I did for dessert.

Devil Dinerbar is located at 1425 Stanley Street. You can call 514-281-6556 or go directly to Uber Eats.



The smoked meat macaroni and cheese is just one of Reuben's specialties

Mike Cohen's restaurant reviews can be seen at www.MtlRestoRap.com