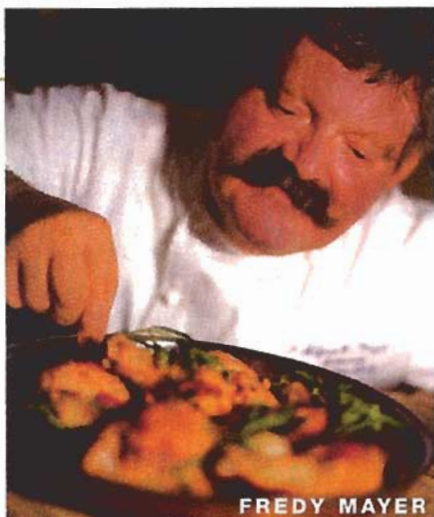


Morel's Fredy Mayer and the perfect chicken recipe.

fredy Mayer's reputation as a classical chef is so firmly established in this part of Florida that his small and charming Morel Restaurant thrives in spite of its unfashionable location in a humble strip mall. Once inside, you forget the street address and are enveloped by an intimate European dining experience.

Coming from a German family in the restaurant business, chef Mayer trained first as a pastry chef and then expanded his expertise, coming to Sarasota in 1997, to head the Longboat Key Club's culinary enterprises. Four years ago, Mayer bought Morel. Paula Mayer, who's British, runs the front of the house, greets guests and sees to every special need.

This Mayer family favorite chicken recipe was perfected by chef Mayer's mother, a professional chef in Bavaria. Now it's into the third generation as the Mayer daughters Alexis (a veterinarian) and Marina (a culinary arts student) prepare it often for their parents at home.



CHICKEN WITH SHERRY VINEGAR AND TARRAGON SAUCE

- 3 1/2 pound chicken, cut into eight pieces
- 5 ounces sherry vinegar
- 15 ounces medium dry sherry, such as Amontillado
- 12 whole peeled shallots
- 4 whole peeled garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons fresh tarragon leaves, torn into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon crème fraîche
- Salt and pepper to taste

Season chicken with salt and pepper, and fry until golden brown. Add shallots and garlic and brown. Turn down heat; add tarragon, sherry and vinegar. Simmer for about 45 minutes. Rotate chicken to allow for even cooking. Once it's cooked, remove chicken, shallots and garlic from pan. Add crème fraîche to pan drippings. Pour sauce over chicken pieces. Garnish with whole tarragon leaves or Italian parsley. Serve with roasted potatoes and a fresh vegetable. (Serves four).

MOREL

3809 S. Tuttle Ave
Sarasota 927-8716

favorite. What makes the combo so satisfying here is that chef cuts the French fries by hand, so thin that they're between a fry and a chip; and he cuts the New York strip steak himself, too. Favorites with the regulars are the pork tenderloin with a mustard vinaigrette (\$13.95), apple salad (\$8.95), tacos with either snapper or chicken, and the crawfish cakes (\$15.95). With each entrée you get a vegetable and a potato, rice or cole slaw choice. Once in a while, duck quesadillas with brie will show up on the daily special chalkboard. You definitely

want to order these.

Lately Greer is raving about his new seafood supplier, who has inspired several specials not currently on the menu. I say, trust him, because I haven't been disappointed with a Greer meal so far. The breads are from a Bavarian baker, and desserts change with whatever fresh ingredients are in season. Wines by the glass or bottle.

Whether your hunger dictates a snack with a beer, a sandwich, pasta plate, salad or a full meal, Greer's can gratify both plain and fancy palates. His dark

little haunt is informal, but there's nothing relaxed about Greer's standards concerning quality food and efficient service. This place is a neighborhood jewel. ■

GREER'S

6566 Gateway Ave., Sarasota
926-0606
Dinner: Monday through Saturday,
4:30-10:30 p.m.
Reservations accepted
Credit cards
Angle parking along the strip mall
Wheelchair accessible ♿

Sarasota Mag
November 2004