

Where time stands still

• By DEBBIE LAMPERT/eLuna.com

We have enjoyed Hungarian Blintzes Restaurant many times. We continue to return there because it is tried and true and dependable. We know the place, we know the menu, and we know that it never changes. Hungarian Blintzes has been in the same location for decades. At a time when there were hardly any kosher restaurants in Tel Aviv, there was Hungarian Blintzes.

When you get good and tired of pizza/pasta dairy restaurants, there is Hungarian Blintzes. No pizza, no pasta, just blintzes, hot and cold, sweet and savory. There are also salads if you must.

Hungarian Blintzes is a true mom 'n' pop shop. The patriarch of the family is the waiter, while mom runs the kitchen and son Avi manages the restaurant.

The family is originally from Georgia. In the 1980s, with the break-up of the Soviet Union, their entire community came on aliyah together. Their original restaurant was in Jerusalem. The First Intifada drove them out of the capital to Yirmiyahu Street in Tel Aviv, where they have been for 23 years.

The last two decades have not changed Hungarian Blintzes. The basic decor, the colorful embroidered tablecloths, and the blintzes menu, are all frozen in time. But it works and as they say, "If it aint broke don't fix it."

We recently chose to meet friends visiting from the US, at Hungarian Blintzes. The restaurant was the ideal venue for a long lazy lunch, catching up on the years. The background music is subdued, so we could hear each other talk and there was no hubbub of rushing lunch-grabbers. Our guests were charmed by the homely atmosphere, the warm welcome, and the simplicity of the restaurant, a pleasant change from busy restaurant chains.

For our main course, we chose the vegetable and cheese-filled blintzes. There are also sweet blintzes, which you don't have to save for dessert. There are two blintzes per serving, and you can mix any two kinds. Each order is served steaming hot from the oven



(Hungarian Blintzes)

in individual ceramic dishes. The savory hot blintzes are covered in a sizzling coat of cheese. You just want to dig in.

Avi has put his signature on the menu with some undocumented extras. He surprised us with a pitcher of delicious fruit juice, his original mix of lemon and clementine juice over ice. Sweet as it was, Avi said that the proportions favored the lemon juice.

At Hungarian Blintzes they know desserts. On this occasion, we did not indulge but on other visits we have ended our meal with a crazily delicious sweet dessert. If you come at the right season, you can enjoy the sweet blintzes with whipped cream and fresh strawberries, tasting like a better version of strawberry shortcake. This is one of the few restaurants that I would recommend visiting even if only for the dessert. On this visit, having eaten our fill, we ended our lunch with just a hot cup of black coffee topped with a dollop of whipped cream.

Nobody leaves Hungarian Blintzes without a l'haim. Shot glasses of white and dark chocolate liquor were delivered to our table and we clinked our glasses together in the hope that our visits will be more frequent.

Hungarian Blintzes

35 Yirmiyahu St., Tel Aviv

Tel: (03) 605-0674

Kashrut: Rabbanut Tel Aviv

Dairy, Vegetarian

Open: Sunday-Thursday, 12 p.m.-11 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Saturday, from the end of Shabbat to after midnight.

The author, the founder and CEO of eLuna.com, the premier English-language website for kosher restaurants in Israel, was a guest of the restaurant.