

## TOM COLICCHIO'S CRAFTSTEAK (Strip) Steakhouse

MGM Grand

(702) 891-7318

mgmgrand.com

Sun.-Thurs., 5:30-10 p.m.; Fri., 5:30-10:30 p.m.; Sat., 5-10:30 p.m.

Expensive



### JACOBSON

OK, I admit it. I haven't eaten at Craftsteak for more than two years. During that time, Tom Colicchio established himself as a national celeb and a TV fascist, sending young dewy-eyed hopeful chefs to doom on his TV show "Top Chef" and reducing the egos of famous chefs such as Rick Moonen to rubble on "Top Chef Masters" (where Moonen was given the heave-ho by legendary crybaby prima donna Markus Samuelsson). His MGM restaurant hasn't suffered, thankfully. It's still the best place in Vegas for a healthy piece of grass-fed beef and one of the only places in town to eat delicacies such as hen-of-the-woods mushrooms and other exotic produce Colicchio keeps on his menu. The bar has a legendary list of fine spirits, especially Scotch and Cognac, and the dining room boasts one of the most modern and urban feels in Las Vegas. Craftsteak has had many chef changes over the years, but the food never changes. The boss is such an *éminence grise*, his presence is never

far away, despite the fact that he's almost certainly on a golf course or around a TV studio, not in an actual kitchen.

### CURTAS

It used to be just "Craftsteak," but given the popularity of "Top Chef," combined with the more aggressive marketing brought on by the Great Recession, it's now Tom Colicchio's Craftsteak. For most restaurants, the recession has meant cutbacks, reductions, and enticing customers with the occasional bargain or early-bird special. For Craftsteak—or, excuse me: Tom Colicchio's Craftsteak—his celebrity means you'll pay dearly for the privilege of basking in his (absentee) aura. By dearly, we mean: \$64 for an eight-ounce Wagyu flat-iron steak or \$36 for a 12-ounce hangar. Mere mortals shouldn't even think of eating a premium cut. Slightly more affordable are the beautiful heirloom vegetables, fungi, and tubers that comprise the right side of the menu. Tokyo turnips, anyone? Most of these veggies are so good you'll be tempted to compose a meal without any protein in it and you'd be making the right decision. The wine list is broad, thick, and deep, but no one without a trust fund can afford the bottles. In a town full of ridiculously priced lists, this one may be the worst.

### MANCINI

Forget about John's whining about the prices of his precious vino! Drinking wine here is for wimps and old ladies! Cut to page 69 of the 100-page wine list and order yourself a real man's drink! What sets Craftsteak apart from the billion other great steakhouses in town—other than the celebrity chef with his name on the door—is the spirits program. We're talking 18 pages of Scotch and more than 20 bourbons. If you feel a little overwhelmed, the sommelier has put together 10 different Scotch flights, each of which offers three-quarters-of-an-ounce pours of three varieties, side by side, for anywhere from \$17 to \$1,215.

### Author Picks

Flight of fine Scotch; Wagyu hangar steak; grass-fed beef; anything but the overpriced wine