

## Table for Two: The Spice

by **jessica knight**

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The Spice has been serving authentic Thai cuisine in Ames since 2001. The small downtown restaurant is sleek and stylish, but relaxed. Owner Supote Methiyapun has 20 years of experience cooking in Thailand and other parts of the world, and brings fresh and traditional flavors to the Midwest.

**The service:** Our server said he was fairly new to the job, but he was very knowledgeable and quick with service without being pushy. Polite and a bit soft-spoken, he was attentive throughout our entire meal, even while taking care of several other tables around us.

**The atmosphere:** The décor is very minimal, but still warm thanks to richly painted walls. The theme is monochromatic, with white tablecloths under crimson napkins and dark wood booths. Hand-painted lights hanging over each table make the dining room feel more intimate. The Spice is pretty quiet, so use your inside voice.

**The menu:** Authentic Thai dishes, like Pad Kra Tiem Prik Thai (chicken or pork sauteed with cilantro and garlic in a black pepper sauce), Pad Ka Prow duck, and green curry salmon fill the menu. There is also a healthy list of vegetarian options, as well as noodle and rice dishes.

**The food:** It was hard to narrow our choices, so we tried a couple of the chef's favorites, labeled with a yellow star. We started with an order of Tung Tong, little fried bundles filled with minced pork, lemongrass, green onions and garlic, and tied with seaweed. The sweet Thai sauce that accompanied the appetizers added depth to their lightness.

My dining guest ordered the Sirloin Namtok - slices of grilled sirloin tossed with red and green onions, roasted rice crumbs, an assortment of herbs and chili in a sweet and sour dressing. The meat was tender, and the cilantro mixed in gave it great flavor. I went for the Panang Scallops, eight meaty rounds covered in a medium spicy panang curry sauce. In the middle of the plate, the bright green broccoli was tender but not wilted.

We couldn't resist dessert, and chose the Key Lime Calypso. The fluffy cake was decorated with a lattice pattern of chocolate around its edge, and its pretty lime green topping made it almost too cute to eat.

**The wrapup:** A great spot for authentic Thai food in Ames. Don't be scared by words like "curry" and "black pepper sauce," - these dishes have heat, but the spice is delicious.



Sirloin Namtok, slices of grilled sirloin tossed with red and green onions, rice, herbs and chili, at The Spice. Eric Rowley/Juice

### :: The Spice

Find it: 402 Main St., Ames  
 Hours: 11 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. and 5-9 p.m. Monday through Saturday.  
 Info: 232-0200; thespiceames.com  
 Payment: Cash or credit cards.  
 Our meal  
 Tung Tong, \$6  
 Panang Scallops, \$20  
 Sirloin Namtok, \$12  
 Key Lime Calypso, \$6  
 Diet Coke, \$2  
 Hot tea, \$3.75  
 Total with tax and tip, \$65

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