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Specialties of the House

By A.K. Carroll



Lily Pad cocktail is paired with a fried shrimp spring roll Photos A.K. Carroll

Welcome to the Hunt for Happy Hour, a new series in which we seek to bring you the freshest and finest when it comes to discounted beverages and premium small bites in the Lamorinda area. This week we kick things off with Lafayette Metro, a French bistro with an Asian flair that is evident even in their happy hour menu, where bartender and chef alike are given some room to play.

There's something for every palate and every price range when it comes to the Happy Drinks and Happy Snacks on Metro's afternoon menu. Running from 3 to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, Happy Hour starts in the sleek inner bar, carries into an airy sunroom and extends throughout the restaurant, umbrella-decked patio included.

Whether you're getting an early start to ladies' night, catching up over a cold one or toasting the end of the work day, you'll find drinks and nibbles to suit the occasion. Bar manager Peter Doherty partners with chef Albert Rivera to bring you happy hour selections that are a combination of familiar and fresh, featuring seasonal specialties and customer classics.

In addition to \$5 house wines, \$5 wells and \$3 drafts and domestic bottles, the beverage menu also features a "Happy Drink," the bartender's choice of a specialty cocktail. Rotating almost daily,

the Happy Drink showcases special rifts on customer favorites, from a punchy blueberry Cosmo to a good old Rusty Nail to a fun and flirty Lily Pad, the latest house original to grace Metro's cocktail menu. Made with lemon juice, Cointreau, Venus Spirits gin and a housemade syrup of muddled strawberries, basil, lemon and sugar, this pretty pink drink is perfect for late summer sipping.

Perfectly paired is the Happy Snacks menu, a modest selection of small bites to satisfy your snacky side. Mainstay favorites are \$1.95 West Coast oysters, \$3 steak or chicken street tacos and the \$3 tri-tip slider, served on a traditionally chewy Acme baguette, oozing with cheese and slathered in spicy garlic aioli. Other items rotate based on the season and inspiration of Chef Rivera. One day you might find a crispy shrimp spring roll stuffed with Vietnamese rice noodles, cucumbers, carrots and spicy lime sauce, the next a tender and tangy beef rib, braised for four hours, dressed in a hoisin-sake-soy sauce with hints of ginger and Santa Rosa plums and served on a pile of savory sweet potato fries.

A French-style bistro with a bit of Asian flair, here's to Metro, a great place to get happy!

Metro Happy Hour

When: 3-6 pm, Monday-Friday

Where: Lafayette Metro, 3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Drinks: \$3 drafts and domestics, \$5 wines and wells, \$5 Happy Drink

Food: \$3-\$5 Happy Snacks

Recommended: Lemon drop and crispy spring roll



A draft of Racer 5 sits alongside the braised rib and sweet potato fries

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[back](#)

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