

The Columbus Dispatch

Restaurant review | Houlihan's: New approach offers a mix of modern fare, comfort food

By [Jon Christensen](#)

For *The Columbus Dispatch* • Thursday June 6, 2013

The modern decor and slimmed-down menu indicate a new concept for Houlihan's. The restaurant, which the chain opened in March at Kingsdale Shopping Center in Upper Arlington, is the prototype for what Houlihan's plans to roll out in other states.



ABIGAIL SAXTON FISHER | DISPATCH PHOTOS

Seared scallops, served with designer greens atop risotto

The Kingsdale unit marks the first presence for Houlihan's in central Ohio since its exit from the market six years ago.

The new menu addresses a number of concepts that have become prominent during that time — including organic, small plates; and gluten-free and vegetarian options. But what Houlihan's terms “classics” are still there, to comfort and fill.

Parmesan fries (\$5.95) are cut from skin-on spuds and have excellent potato flavor, in part because of the good-quality oil in which they're cooked. They're sprinkled with grated cheese and served with three dips: a garlicky aioli with truffle-oil overtones, ketchup reinforced with chili and a less-impressive cheese-flavored mayo.

The veggie mini-burger (\$4) isn't pasty, gaining texture with whole black beans, diced carrots and other vegetables. It is topped with melted cheese and lettuce mixed with a ranch-style dressing.

Houlihan's
3150 Tremont Rd.
UPPER ARLINGTON
KINGSDALE SHOPPING CENTER
ZOLLINGER RD.
NORTHWEST BLVD.
FISHINGER RD.
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

[View Larger](#)

HOULIHAN'S
3150 TREMONT RD.,
UPPER
ARLINGTON
Contact: 614-326-2449,
www.houlihan.com
Hours: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays; and 11 a.m. to midnight Fridays and Saturdays
Rating: *** (out of five)
Price Range: \$13.05 to \$20.95 (entrees)
Ambience: open; attractive
Children's menu: available
Reservations: accepted
Accessibility: good
Liquor license: full
Quick click: The new concept has variety and reliable execution.

The similarly topped Black Angus mini-burger (\$4) also has good texture and a fine chargrilled flavor.

The well-made crispy mushroom flatbread (\$8.50) has truffle oil to give an upscale taste to the mix of portobello, shiitake and oyster mushrooms.

The successful Asian-influenced chicken wrap (\$9.95) has plenty of regular and black sesame seeds and a sweet, soy-hinted sauce to season the chicken and shredded carrot. Also provided is a roasted-sesame sauce to add before wrapping the mixture, along with wonton strips, in large leaves of lettuce.

Providing a section of fresh lime with the chicken tortilla soup (\$3.95) is a nice touch. A squeeze of the lime perks up the Southwestern flavors (minus chili heat) of the shredded chicken and corn-tortilla strips.

Entrees include a well-executed array of large scallops that are aggressively seared before being placed on a rich, lemony risotto that occasionally has pieces of asparagus. It's served with designer greens and basil-flavored olive oil (\$18.95 regular, \$13.95 small).

http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/life_and_entertainment/2013/06/06/new-approach-offers-a-mix-of-modern-fare-comfort-food.html