



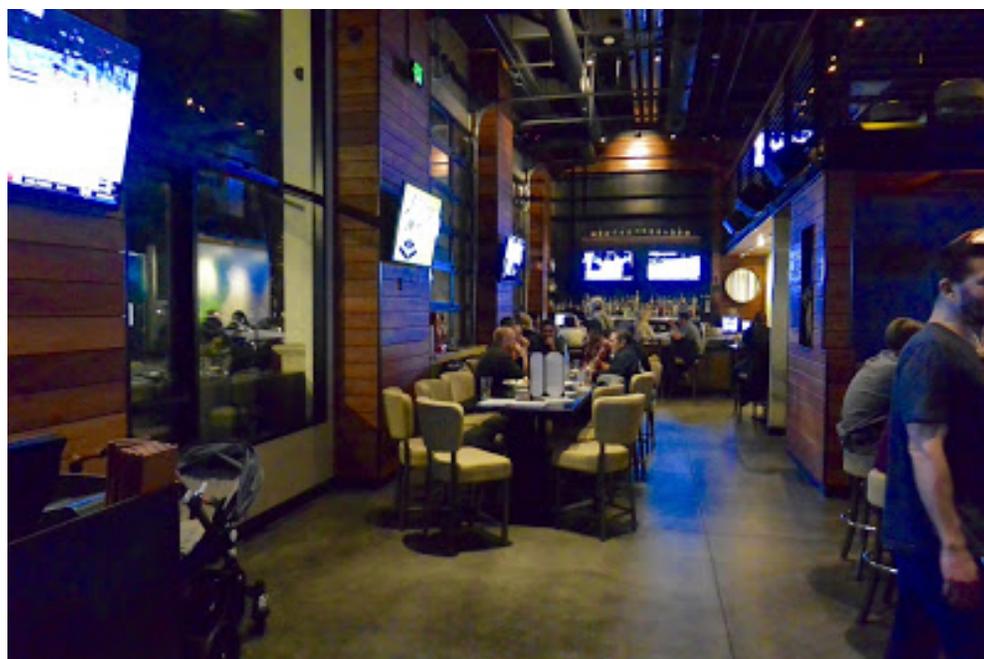
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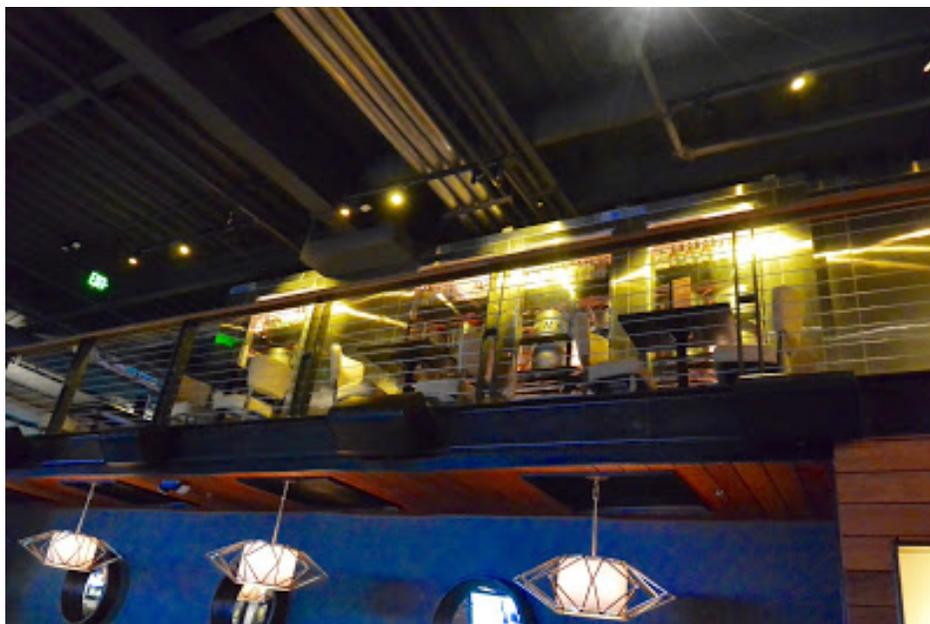
## WestRoot Tavern

As winter hits our fair city, we all buckle down and prepare for the hardships that most certainly await us in the coming weeks. Who am I kidding? We're all so spoiled with our usual 70 degree weather and sunshine, but we do have a few rainy, windy days here and there.



Why all this talk of rainy weather and chilly days? It's the perfect weather to get cozy with some good food and drink, especially on a heated, covered, outdoor deck! That's how we do it in San Diego! [WestRoot](#) recently opened up in Carmel Valley, and it's the perfect place for a great meal and drinks. A cozy bar is offset by a lovely covered (or uncovered in better weather) deck, upstairs seating, and ample television sets for sports and entertainment.





Like any good tavern, Westroot has fabulous cocktails. The menu contains a mixture of originals, plus some classics done right. I'm a sucker for an Old-Fashioned, and the Moscow Mules were served in those cool copper cups, so it was a no-brainer on which drinks were ordered. The drinks were well-seasoned and generously poured --- a perfect warming, yet refreshing treat.

There are loads of delicious-sounding things on the appetizer menu: carne asada fries, shishito peppers and snap peas, charcuterie and cheese just to name some items. Poke seems to be making its way onto the mainland, and a good thing. We ordered the poke nachos, which was a spicy tuna mix served with tortilla chips. The accompanying sambal cream was incredibly delicious and spicy, which added a new layer of flavor and interest. Quite good, and not too filling to save room for a great dinner.





The entree menu runs the gamut of delicious salads, sandwiches, burgers, steaks, and pastas. The SoCal mac and cheese sounded delightful, but it was the arugula steak salad that clinched it. Steak and avocado is a match made in heaven for me. There's just something about the smooth, buttery flavor of the avocado matched against a charred beef flavor that just

makes my mouth water. The spicy arugula was a nice change from standard romaine served on steak salads, and the dressing was light; the flavor of the beef and fresh vegetables was really allowed to shine through. The steak was just that: a full, juicy steak! I don't believe that I've ever gotten a steak salad with a full steak! It was almost like getting a healthy version of steak frites, with salad instead of fries.

A burger is always, always a good choice, and a burger at a tavern is the best idea. Westroot serves up a variety of great burgers, the standout for this visit being the BBQ pork burger. Meat on meat? Yes. Please. The BBQ pork burger is composed of an all-natural beef burger, layered with pork belly, pineapple barbecue sauce, and cheddar cheese. A true burger for a cowboy, or those of us who eat like them. It's quite a mouthful, and definitely not sissy food!





After those huge entrees, just a few bites of dessert were needed (yes, needed). A simple brownie mug with chocolate brownie, vanilla ice cream, caramel, and fresh strawberries. It was the perfect sweet taste to end the meal.

Westroot only recently opened in our area, but I see great things for this smart tavern. It's a wonderful atmosphere (kid-friendly, but it is a bit loud in the main area). The food was a knockout, and the setting was tops! Highly recommended.