

The Campanil

September 30, 2013

Room 389 in Oakland

By: Amanda Polick

On any given night, the crowd from Room 389's ivy-covered front patio spills onto the sidewalk of Grand Avenue in Oakland. Intimate wooden benches create little nooks for drinking and laughter. And stepping inside, the atmosphere is much the same: happy chatter and lively bartenders with booming chuckles. This little gem feels like Cheers, only a little fancier. If you are looking for a dive bar, you should probably keep walking.

Rich wood accents and ambient lighting make for a wonderful evening over one of Room 389's many artisan cocktails, which are all about \$9. And since they do not list any of their signature cocktails on their website, there is no need to spoil the fun by telling you of all the delicious concoctions. But if you are feeling spicy and in need of a little tequila, try the Erik Estrada – just don't swallow the habanero. Also check out trivia night (Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m.), all-day happy hour on Sundays (\$4 well drinks and draft beers), or dancing on one of the many nights they offer live music (no cover!).

And don't be surprised if you happen to sit down next to an adorable little puppy on your evening out. Patrons who bring their well-behaved dogs to hang out are somewhat of a staple at Room 389. If the crowd is a little much for you in the front, you can always make your way to the back and find a comfy couch or two to spread out on.

If you just cannot get enough of this place, then stop by weekdays starting at 7:30 a.m. and weekends at 9 a.m. for coffee and pastries – it will be the start to a great day. Room 389 serves local Bicycle Coffee and Starter Bakery's savory pastries and quiches (from \$3 to \$4), but come early because they run out quickly, especially the bacon quiches. You can sit outside on the patio or enjoy the quiet inside. And if you need a little "hair of the dog" from your night before, you can always enjoy your breakfast with the 389 Special – a mocha with Jameson, Kahlua and Bailey's Irish Cream, which will fix (almost) anything. And that is not even including the homemade salted-caramel whipped cream. Superb.

So, how do you get to this beauty? From Mills, the NL will take you right there, and the 57 will get you close enough to stroll over from Lakeshore. There's also plenty of street parking on Grand Avenue or in the surrounding neighborhood (and meters stop running at 6 p.m.). So, come early, stay late, and make Room 389 your new favorite place.