

2008 Fall Dining Guide

By Tom Sietsema

Washington Post Staff Writer

Sunday, Oct. 12, 2008

Tackle Box

Sound Check: 79 decibels (must speak with raised voice)

Out front, menus are stacked on lobster traps. Inside, weathered buoys dangle from the exposed ceiling. If you haven't figured it out, this sibling of (and neighbor to) the more formal fish-themed Hook also draws its inspiration from the water. Chef changes in the kitchen next door have not affected what's served in this minnow of a space: lobster rolls, fried and grilled fish, and sides that suggest a Southern supper, everything ordered from a counter in the rear. The clam chowder could use more salt, and the hot dog is no better than what you get off the streets downtown, but I admire the joint's frying and grilling skills, evinced in sweet, lightly breaded scallops and pleasantly smoky trout, respectively. Both dishes are good on their own, although patrons can dab them with one of Tackle Box's tasty house-made sauces. The best value is the \$13 "Maine Meal," a choice of a fish, a sauce and two sides (go for the basil-walnut pesto, fresh-tasting coleslaw or paprika-spiked macaroni and cheese). There's no beer or wine to wash back your meal, but there are picnic tables to extend the illusion of eating al fresco.