

# INCORPORATING TRENDS WHILE KEEPING TRADITION

| BY TRACY BEARD

**T**raditional French cooking techniques are the foundation of high-end cuisine; but to keep today's diners engaged, chefs must continually incorporate innovative approaches. Molecular gastronomy, a trend of remaking everything into something new, ran rampant for an abbreviated time. Today superior chefs smartly incorporate only the best of these techniques. On my recent trip to Paris, my friend Connie and I dined in three exceptional fine dining establishments: Le 39V, Truffles Folies Paris and Palais Royal Restaurant.

## LE 39V RESTAURANT

A rooftop-restaurant in Paris, is circular and features a central terrace garden. We began with a glass of bubbly on the terrace and chatted with Communications Manager Angia Vaudron. We sat down with Angia when she said, "It's a little bit at this place, no?"

[Chef Frédéric Vardon](#), chef/owner of Le 39V joined us on the terrace. I asked if anything changed when he received his Michelin Star in 2012. He said, "The Michelin Star did not change my philosophy. I work for the guests. I work with the produce and my staff; and if my work is recognized with one Michelin Star, then that's ok."

Chef Vardon uses traditional French cooking techniques but adds flare to his dishes. When I asked what he thought about molecular gastronomy, he stated, "Molecular gastronomy can sometimes create very interesting new textures; but if the new texture destroys the taste and integrity of the ingredient, it is no good."

We dined on the chef's "Image Du," or tasting menu, and began with a dish of Kristal Gold caviar on top of thinly sliced beef and green apples. The chef's signature dish, oven-grilled macaroni with a ragout of summer truffle, was rich and decadent, and Connie delighted in the farm egg cooked with mushrooms topped with an airy foam. We savored two desserts: a light and fluffy Grand Marnier soufflé and Paris-Brest, round pastries made with praline and hazelnuts served under a sugar cage.

Service at 39V consists of a synchronized layer of staff. While the sommelier explains the next wine, a stealthy waiter removes used glasses and plates without your knowledge.



# PALAIS ROYAL RESTAURANT



[Chef Philip Chronopoulos](#), chef/owner of [Palais Royal Restaurant](#), made his mark on Paris by receiving one Michelin Star just 12 months after opening. Chef Chronopoulos celebrates French haute cuisine, infuses native flavors from his home in Greece, and simultaneously plays with the colors and textures of food without forfeiting the integrity of the ingredients.

Connie and I dined on lunch in the garden, and Raphael, the sommelier, selected wines to pair with each dish. We began with Chef Chronopoulos's signature dish, egg of my childhood. This unique scrumptious bite features a creamy egg yolk positioned on a spoonful of sauce made of pureed tomato, olive oil and honey all encased in a crunchy exterior shell. The creation of the dish is a bit mystifying, and our waiter shared that it takes the chef two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening to make enough for the lunch and dinner services.

The shrimp ravioli topped with Daurenki Imperial caviar was decadent, but my friend and I agreed that the crispy rice with artichokes, artichoke chips, marinated radicchio and Parmesan cheese made the top ten best dishes list for each of us.

A lovely palate cleanser of lemon mascarpone sorbet with pink grapefruit granita prepared us for a decadent dessert. White cheese vanilla ice cream lay bathed in a pool of raspberries, candied rhubarb and hibiscus syrup.



## Innovative Cooking

These three incredible Paris chefs take French cuisine to new heights. As today's pioneers in the culinary industry, they are infusing modern methods with traditional French cooking techniques creating tantalizing dishes that engage customers.

# TRUFFLES FOLIES PARIS



Chef Cyril Bocciarelli owns [Truffles Folies Paris](#), a restaurant where truffles are showcased from subtle to dauntless ends. Truffles elevate any dish, and Chef Bocciarelli highlights his cuisine with seasonal truffles from around the world.

Connie and I began our dinner with a refreshing gazpacho with shaved white truffles. The truffle nuance added just a little something extra to the mouthwatering tomato-cucumber soup emboldened with icy basil sorbet.

We savored gently baked eggs with truffle and toast points. The simple egg made an unadulterated backdrop showcasing the fresh shaved truffles. Later we dined on al dente tagliatelle pasta bathed in a cream sauce and topped with black truffles followed by a rich and creamy risotto where Chef Bocciarelli used black Périgord truffles from Australia with abandon.

The truffle is a member of the mushroom family. Chef Bocciarelli has such a delicate touch and keen understanding of each truffle's flavor profile that he uses this savory gem to enhance delicious desserts. We enjoyed a decadent truffle-infused tiramisu and truffle ice cream with chocolate cake.