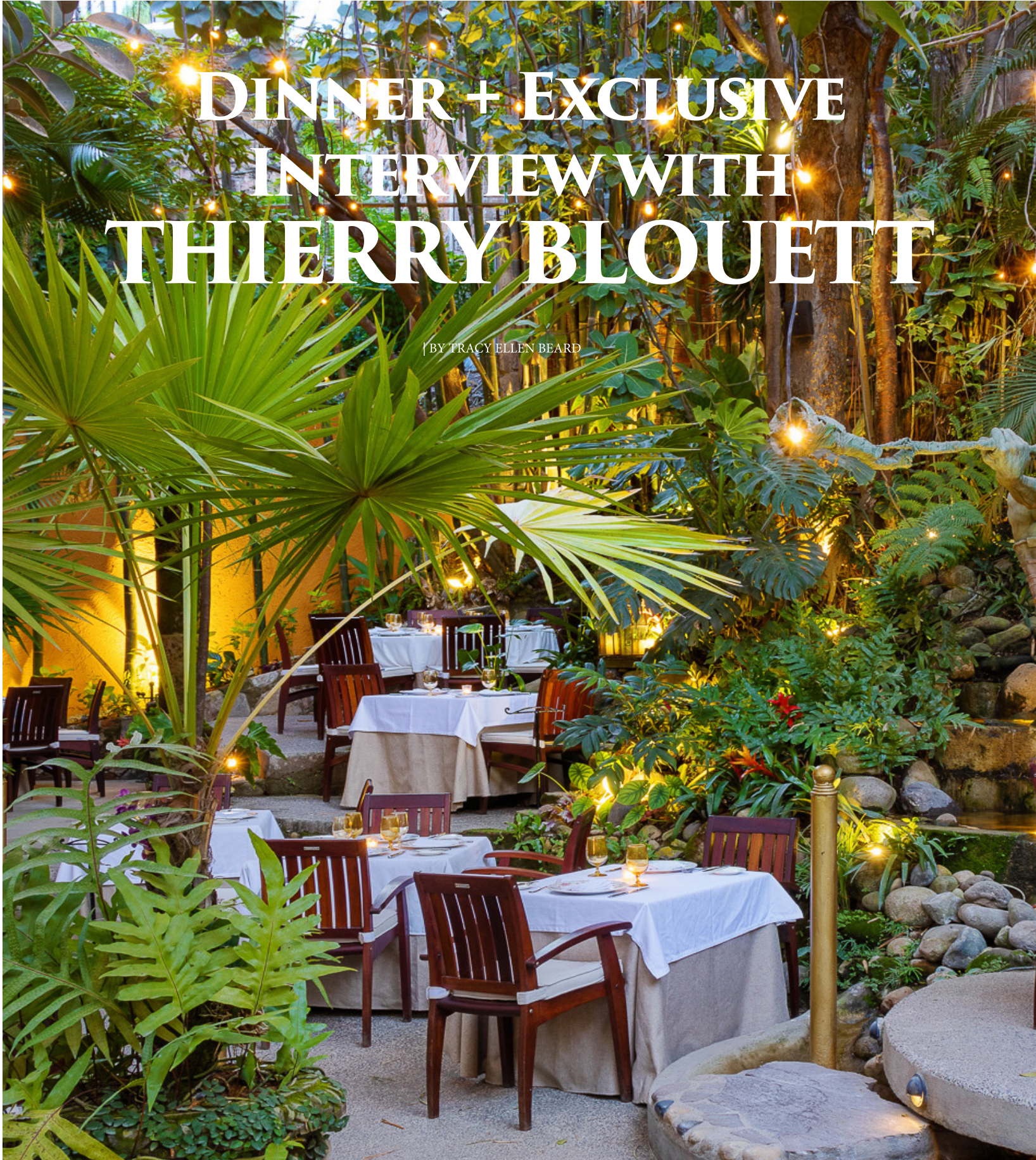


# DINNER + EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THIERRY BLOUETT

| BY TRACY ELLEN BEARD



Nestled against the hillside just outside downtown Puerto Vallarta, Café des Artistes promises an exceptional dining experience. My husband, Steve, and I had the pleasure of dining there after an exciting interview with Chef Thierry Blouet himself. From start to finish, the evening was a feast for all the senses.

The restaurant's interior exudes elegance, with each dining area offering a distinct vibe. We were escorted through the enchanted space and out into the garden, where we climbed the stairs to the uppermost table. From there, we had the best view of the lush, glowing garden. The ambiance was magical, and our servers, Javier and Daniel, anticipated and met our every need throughout the evening.

Our culinary journey began with two amuse-bouches: a passion fruit sphere topped with coconut foam and a miniature tostada adorned with ceviche, avocado, lime gel, and habanero mayonnaise. The first was sweet, light, and refreshing, while the second had a delightful kick, balanced perfectly by the creamy avocado. These dishes arrived with two mezcal margaritas. One was smoky, fruity, and creamy, spiced with a tajin rim, while the other was a vibrant green concoction, bursting with lime, kiwi, mint, and the unmistakable earthiness of mezcal.

Our first course was the Cacti from the Labyrinth and Roasted Avocado, accompanied by Chef Thierry's Rosé Thierry 2022 Sauvignon Blanc. The crisp acidity of the wine harmonized beautifully with the dish, while the tomato juice, cotija cheese, and croutons provided texture and flavor that left us savoring every bite.

Next came the Tomato Fantasy Au Chitextle Pepper, an artful medley of tomatoes, foam, roasted baby corn, a tomato wafer, and a cloud of white garlic foam. The vibrant flavors and textures danced on my palate, setting a high bar for what was yet to come.

The Roasted Asian Cabbage was a revelation. Twenty perfect layers, bathed in a sweet and savory Asian sauce, created a dish that was both comforting and innovative.

As the sun set, the garden transformed. Twinkling lights illuminated the foliage, and a violinist serenaded diners, amplifying the romantic atmosphere. It was the perfect backdrop for our subsequent courses.

The Zarandado Red Snapper filet was an absolute standout. Served atop creamy risotto with peas, chorizo, saffron, and fish jus, it earned an enthusiastic 10 from both of us. Equally impressive was the Marinated Broiled Octopus with Chicatanas. The octopus was tender and flavorful, complemented by smoked organic beets, green pea mousseline, beef and scallop tartare, bone marrow, and a luscious red wine sauce. This dish was a masterpiece.

We also enjoyed the Roasted Pork Belly with Citrus Spices and Brussels Sprouts and the Sliced New York Strip Au Curry. However, the Foie Gras Crème Brûlée stole the spotlight once again, with its rich, velvety texture paired with cassis sorbet and spiced bread—a perfect 10.

For the final dessert, we delighted in a playful Chocolate Taco with cashew crumbles. This whimsical treat capped off an evening of impeccable service, exquisite cuisine, and unmatched attention to detail. Café des Artistes is not just a restaurant—it's an experience. For anyone visiting Puerto Vallarta, it's an absolute must. ❖

