

MENU NOTES

ICED L'ABEILLE GARDEN RATATOUILLE

In 2015, I started working a patch of land at RdV Vineyards that would ultimately become l'Abeille Garden. I was harvesting late one morning, and as I do when I'm picking vegetables that have already taken on some heat from the sun, I was picking them into a bucket of cool water. The colors were bright and crisp in the morning sun, the smell was... the garden. I do not take food photos very often, but I was inspired enough to pull out my iPhone and capture the moment, and this dish draws inspiration from that moment.

LA RATTE POTATO FONDANT

La Ratte Potatoes are that variety of fingerling potato that Chef Joël Robuchon made famous with his Potato Purée. They're something we've planted every year at l'Abeille Garden. They have a unique ability to be cooked for a long time without overcooking. After blanching and peeling them, we make a braising liquid with vegetable stock, garlic, thyme and butter to finish cooking them. As a foil for the rich, buttery, earthiness of the potato, we are adding a sauce of reduced lobster stock enriched with lobster coral and minced lobster meat and finishing it with grated Australian black truffles.

MADRAS CURRY POACHED HALIBUT

The tropical flavors of South India are captured in our Halibut dish. Deep and vibrant flavors of Madras curry and cilantro are balanced with aromatic coconut milk-poached corn, which we are featuring here in lieu of the traditional rice or tapioca pearl garnish. We add mango for an additional touch of brightness to this summer dish.

SAUTÉED MOULARD DUCK FOIE GRAS

In general, I veer away from overly sweet preparations of Foie Gras. But because it is bar-b-que season, we thought that we would dress it up for the summer tasting menu with a small packet of cabbage and shredded duck confit, and then serve it with a spiced peach bar-b-que sauce.

MARTIN FARMS MINUTE STEAK

It's summertime, so putting a steak salad on the menu seemed to be fitting. I always joke with my French in-laws that a salad for them is lettuce getting in the way of protein, so we decided to go ahead and remove it. Steak with blue cheese is traditionally from the greater Southwest region of France; being from Iowa, where Maytag is made, including a blue cheese as the dressing was a must. We made our "croutons" with fried okra and a vinaigrette with some herbs from our garden to evoke that summer freshness.

BLACK ROCK ORCHARD PLUM CARPACCIO

As I was prepping plums for a dish upstairs in Kinship, I found myself musing over all the different colors and contrasts in the plum family and thinking how pretty it would look – like beautiful bird plumage – when fanned out over a plate. That led to the idea of doing a plum "carpaccio" for this course, with each component of the dessert highlighting distinct varieties.

ROOT BEER FLOAT

Growing up, Mom didn't make a lot of dessert at home. For a treat, we went out for ice cream. And when we went on family vacations, we took road trips. Vacations featured their fair share of treats, but being from St. Louis - home to the world's best frozen custard stand, Ted Drewes – we never stopped at Dairy Queen. No disrespect, it just never crossed our minds. Instead, we pulled over when we saw the classic orange and brown signage of an A&W Root Beer Stand. There was no better break from being stuck in the car or baking in the summer heat than a frosty mug full of root beer float. Learning how to mix the ice cream into the soda to cut it with just the right amount of vanilla creaminess while retaining enough bite to the ice cream was probably one of my earliest lessons in dessert 'plating.'

— ERIC ZIEBOLD, Chef

— ANNE SPECKER, Pastry Chef