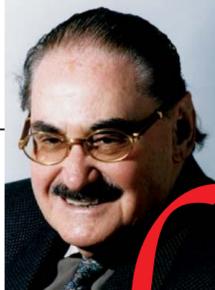


Rated ★★★★★



L'Escalier

“Unquestionably, the most exquisite dining room in Palm Beach”



(Left to right) Front row: Matt Sobon, Executive Chef; Renaud Gonthier, Pastry Chef Back Row: Patrick Cottrell, Dustin Ward, Michael Czaplinski, Carl Wynter, Michael Hackman, Brian Marsh, Stephen Wallner, Lindsey Nau



Chocolate Bombe with Carmelized "Rice Krispies", Savory Caramel, and Malt Ice Cream



Agnolotti of Crottin De Chavignol



Lobster Carpaccio and Scallop Ceviche



Roasted Rack & Grilled Saddle of Colorado Lamb



Dourade Royale Bourride



Filet of Salmon, Carrott-Ginger Emulsion



Renaud Gonthier, Pastry Chef



Stephan Wallner



Lindsay Nau



Dustin Warm

root, delicate bone marrow custard and small carrots finished in a sensitive anise reduction. Mushrooms, this time fresh and wild are key in the buttery truffle vegetable risotto.

Aficionados of cheese will cheer the roiling Fromage cart offering a broad matrix of exclusive world-class cheese choices. Desserts are a fitting end to the meal, especially classic, unbelievably light cream filled profiteroles, one of the specialties of the house and well worth sampling. White mocca creme brulee, rich chocolate bombe, and a sorbet variety, are also regulars on the menu. And if you are a tea fancier be sure to sample the wide selection available. Eschew calories from the commonplace bread served here, regrettably the same bread offered in every Palm Beach restaurant, with the exception of ta-boo.

The Tapestry Bar and lounge with enough seating and standing space supports outstanding live trio's or pianist's rendering non-intrusive melodies Monday to Thursday evening, making L'Escalier a good place to drink as well as to eat.

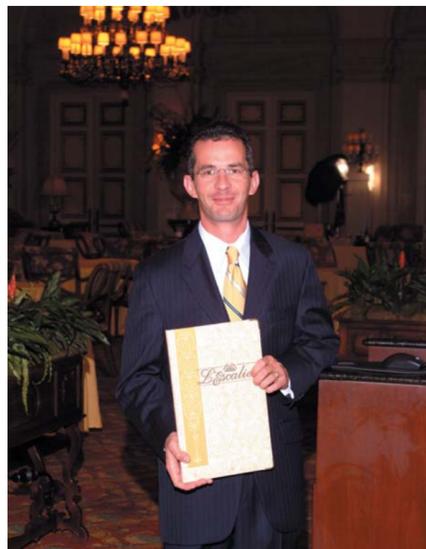
***1/2 L'Escalier, The Breakers, One South Country Road, Palm Beach, Florida. (561-659-8480. Serves dinner only Tuesday to Saturday. Average price per person \$90 (excluding wine and cocktails); \$95 for chefs tasting menu. Jackets required. Accepts reservations and major credit cards. BT



Above Publisher of BlackTie magazine Gerard McKeon dines at L'Escalier



Publisher of BlackTie magazine Gerard McKeon and Editor-in-chief Joyce Brooks at L'Escalier.



Nicolas Fanucci, General Manager

day, a chefs special, lavishly spread on a bed of finely diced grilled watermelon salad with sweet and sour shallots and a honey glaze topping, bestowing an enormous amount of taste contrasts seductively dancing on the tongue. Another rewarding appetizer worth trying is the divinely mouth-watering molded-mound of micro lettuces teeming with fresh zesty herbs and red and yellow tomatoes dressed in a civilized white balsamic vinaigrette. Cavendish Farms quail though slightly dry, comes on a raveworthy foundation of flavorsome barley risotto. We agreed the butternut squash soup was too exotically seasoned and definitely an acquired taste. Agnolotti of crottin de chavignol, a quality goat cheese filled pasta, garnished with squash blossoms, tomato confit and a pistou sauce turned out to be an unexpected delightful surprise, full-bodied and fulfilling, its creamy texture smoothly melting in your mouth. As for L'Escalier's langoustine and crisp veal sweetbreads brought to table with braised butter lettuce and red globe radish, it likewise makes for great eating.

Fish and roasts play major roles on the menu. Poached turbot, a regular offering really turned us on. A generous portion, perfectly prepared, juicy and moist, paired with complex and flavorful spot prawn ravioli, Asian pear and tempura basil. This dish is served with a zestful coconut curry sauce. Glazed cheek of veal star in the roast tenderloin done to perfection in a rich network of celery

The most exquisite dining room in Palm Beach is unquestionably L'Escalier in the opulent 1926 Breakers. Its sumptuous setting is beautifully framed by antique mirrored panels, the gold and red carpeting soft and lush underfoot, the exalted space crowned by a towering wood beamed, hand painted mural ceiling flooding the room in a softened golden radiance from elaborate clusters of chandeliers. Surroundings likewise include imposing marble columns, aristocratic pieces of carved mahogany sofas and chairs richly upholstered, skirting elegantly appointed candlelit tables dressed in yellow topped by starched white linen.

When Chef Matthew Sobon puts his mind to it, he can certainly execute a memorable modern French repast, proffered with a good deal of pomp and ceremony, as well as complementary bottled water, serviced by a polished white-gloved waitstaff. Sobon is nobly seconded by master sommelier Virginia Philip who can skillfully match each dish with an appropriate wine, having some 1350 different selections to chose from, starting at \$35 up to \$6400 a bottle.

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During a recent visit we found an opulence of flavor in nearly every dish, in harmony with the amplitude of the menu and the spaciousness of the setting.

Dinner is launched with a couple of amuse bushe giveaways such as excellent micro-steins of frothy cauliflower soup. We followed with foie gras of the



(Left to right) Oliver Giraud, Bob Helsen, Kevin D'Antonio



(Left to right) Roberto Amadei, Advid Rosenthal, Richard Paladino, Master Sommelier Virginia Philip