



August 2019

FISH TALES™

A Samuels Seafood Magazine



In this Issue:

Rouget from Les Grande Viviers

In The News...

The 2019 RAMMYS Award Dinner

In the Spotlight-

Paxos Restaurant Group: Serving all your Senses

In the Current-

Samuels Local 365... Local Fish, for Your Local Menu!

Spotlight

Paxos Restaurant Group

Lehigh Valley, PA
Serving all your Senses
by: Jessica Jewel Tyler



Since 2002, Paxos Restaurant Group has been changing the fine dining scene in Lehigh Valley, PA by bringing the city a little closer to the suburbs. From humble beginnings, George Paxos dedicated his career to the restaurant business at a young age before creating the Paxos empire. Each of the five restaurants is a monument to fine food, service, and design, with dishes handcrafted by amazing chefs and atmosphere created by famed designer, Jeffery Beers International. These ingredients are the only thing that connects them however, because no two concepts are alike.

Melt was the first Paxos restaurant to open in 2002 with the help of corporate chef, Chris Heath. He holds the same passion that inspired Paxos which started young when helping his mother cook Filipino food. His first official kitchen job was at age 14, where he eventually became a prep cook. After falling in love with cooking, he perfected his craft at the L'Academie de Cuisine in Washington DC and traveled the world. Before Paxos, Chef Chris was a Caribbean chef in Angora, but he's cooked all over the world including New York, London, Italy and Thailand.

This experience is the reason he was chosen to handle such diverse concepts that include everything from Italian to Mexican with a modern and upscale feel. As corporate chef, he works with the executive chefs to tailor the menus to each theme. And although he is more "stationary," Chef Chris still explores many cultures through food. "Being able to play with food from around the world is the best part of my job," he said.

Melt, Paxos' Italian concept, sweeps you into a romantic Big Apple getaway. According to Melt's architect, Howard Kulp, "the restaurant's contemporary, chic style is extremely New York driven." The two-story dining room features art deco furniture and avant-garde lighting that remind you of the ziti being served. The plates are just as visually pleasing (and scrumptious.) The secret to Melt's menu is traditional sauces prepared with a bold twist and presentation. Chef Chris also clamored over his seafood dishes including grilled Astan Tuna in a salsa romesco sauce that marries Italian cuisine with Spanish influence.

Blue has a very stylish bohemian feel with pops of cerulean and cobalt found in jazzy patterned rugs and whimsical vases. Nearly 2,000 blue LED lights also add a touch of magic to this energetic bar scene. The menu focuses on upscale southern American favorites like Barbeque Baby Back Ribs and smoked chicken, but adds a twist of French and Italian influence. Some of Chef Chris' favorites are the pan seared Chilean Sea Bass with a roasted root vegetable ratatouille and green herb pesto.

Torre stands out from your average Mexican restaurant in style and flavor. The industrial feel with classic wood and brick is juxtaposed by the hanging, hand-painted sugar skulls and a color-changing, three-story tequila tower filled with over 80 bottles. The fun eclectic style is carried over into menu items, like the once featured tamarind-glazed Mahi with chayote slaw and passion fruit vinaigrette. Torre's interpretations of Mexican cuisine are creative, decadent, and delicious - the options go beyond burritos to explore ceviches, and other seafood options like Astan Tuna with spiced peanuts.

Firepoint Grill features a very sleek, urban design and an impressive wood-burning oven as the center of attention. This American menu also plays with other cultures, but in this case, focuses on comfort food. Pizza, lasagna, burgers, and buttermilk fried Oysters reign supreme here. But there are also nods to Paxo's Greek heritage with a cheesy vegetarian moussaka.

Top Cut is the latest addition to the group. Located on the top floor of Melt, it features neutral colors and elegant style. The expansive 5000-bottle wine display and panoramic view add a moody, romantic atmosphere that works perfectly for this stylish steakhouse. Of course with a name like Top Cut, there are top selections of prime beef, but there's also an extensive selection of seafood. Chef Chris's favorite is the Dover Sole in a mustard hollandaise sauce.

"Our restaurant philosophy is not just about the food. It's the service and atmosphere," says Chef Chris. And it's clear - no matter which Paxos Restaurant you chose to dine in, you're sure to impress all your senses.

Employees of the Month



Greg Zin, Dock Worker, has been training new hires, cross-training his teammates, and generally taking on any new task, or putting out any fires that come his way. His expertise never lets us down!

Mark Buchanan, Driver #39, uses seamless communication and customer service to make sure things don't slip through the cracks. This is why he is trusted to run one of our biggest Virginia routes.

Mark Szojka, Freezer Worker, is always building his repertoire of skills and volunteering to fill in where needed in order to get the job done. We value his knowledge and dedication.

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Les Grands Viviers: Specialty Delights from the Tropic

By Jessica Jewel Tyler



Imagine bringing wild fish into your kitchen that no one has ever seen before! From the boats of Senegal, Les Grands Viviers is providing some of the most amazing fish that will really wow your guests. This contingent group of local fishermen is uncovering all the tasty treasures that the beautiful East Atlantic Ocean has to offer. They take pride in what they do because they have depended on the sea for their livelihood for ages and they use the knowledge that have been passed down through generations.

Small boats, holding four or five fisherman at a time, set out for 8-12 hours each day to fish. As the waters are paramount to the success of the villages, simple hand-lines, which pose no threat to this environment, are used. The catch is then immediately taken to the family owned packing facility where fish are sorted with close attention to quality and detail. One of the most popular options is Rouget, which is on special for the month of August!

Rouget, also known as Red Mullet, is a delicious little fish that packs a wonderfully sweet and robust flavor, similar to Shellfish, with a higher oil content. Sometimes it's also compared to fish like Orange Roughy, Sea Bass, and Ocean Perch, but it's size and stunning

appearance make it amazing for whole fish presentations. This beautiful reddish-pink fish with flashes of yellow is considered a delicacy in the Mediterranean where it's often steamed, stewed, or grilled whole. Now is the perfect time to try Rouget on your menu for a delicious summer dish.

Rouget is so sweet and delicate and yet it packs a ton of taste. Prepared simply with Santa Ines Extra Virgin Olive Oil, lemon, and herbs, the rich flavor really shines, but Rouget is also known to stand up to the most robust flavor profiles. It pairs beautifully with the heavier Mediterranean flavors such as olive, tomato, and fennel, in addition to bright and bold summer ingredients like energetic citrus and refreshing mint. Rouget is simply amazing on the grill and topped with a tapenade or salsa for a unique, effortless summer meal, but the possibilities are endless. This simple, versatile fish really allows you to be creative. We can't wait to see what you'll do with it this summer!

Some other options include Strawberry Grouper, John Dory, and Scorpionfish. Strawberry Grouper is just as delicious as its name suggests. Although Strawberry Grouper gets its name from its colorful spots, this rich, flaky fish tends to be sweeter and more succulent than other Groupers. John Dory is very popular in the U.K and Australia. It's an amazing fish with dense white meat and a firm, flaky texture. Its delicate sweet flavor is compared to Turbot or Sole. Scorpionfish are also quite a treat with their eye-catching appearance and mild, slightly sweet flavor sometimes compared to Lobster. In the wild, Scorpionfish use their poisonous spikes to defend their sweet flesh. When cooking however, their spines can be removed with shears or left on for a dramatic whole presentation, because cooking will completely denature the venom.

Les Grands Vivers provides a marvelous variety of delicious, premium fish with many possibilities. These showstopping fish also include; Parrotfish, Doctorfish, Sepia, Sea Bream, Pink and Striped Snappers, Octopus, Jumbo Squid and more depending on seasonality. We even see some Mahi and Giant Grouper occasionally, especially during summer and rainy seasons. Talk to your Samuels Agent if you want to impress your guests this summer with stunning fish from Les Grand Viviers.

In The News...

By Jessica Jewel Tyler

The 2019 RAMMYS



by the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW,) recognizes the dedication of food industry members while giving them a chance to let loose. With the amazing, fast-paced restaurant scene in DC full of diverse options and creative chefs, the RAMMYS are here to celebrate what makes DC so great: Its restaurants and the hardworking people who feed our nation's capital.

The event included cocktails, dinner, dancing and of course a

On June 30th, Washington DC's top chefs and other food industry professionals got to let their hair down at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center for the 37th RAMMY Awards, colloquially known as the "food prom." This annual ceremony, presented

beautiful ceremony in which awards were presented to some of DC's finest in multiple categories. We are so proud of our amazing customers for receiving such prestigious honors:

Chef of the Year: Kyle Bailey, The Salt Line

Employee of the Year: Valentine King, Hummingbird Bar and Kitchen

Manager of the Year: Donna Seal, Oceanaire

Formal Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year: The Source by Wolfgang Puck

Upscale Casual Restaurant of the Year: Iron Gate

Upscale Brunch of the Year and Pastry Chef of the Year: Ana Deshaies, Unconventional Diner

Casual Brunch of the Year: Compass Rose Bar & Kitchen

Cocktail Program of the Year: Barmini by José Andrés

Honorary Milestone Award: The Bombay Club (30 years) and Lebanese Taverna (40 years)



Captain Mike Johnson from Viking Village

While there are many oceans full of possibilities, sometimes it's great to eat local. Exotic and specialty fish offer so much creativity and wow factor, while local fish give you something to talk about. Samuels loves offering you both, along with the stories of the hardworking fishermen that help us create amazing dishes. This month, we are featuring our East Atlantic treasures, but we'd like to talk about local fish, because in addition to fresh and interesting imports, we also offer exciting, amazing quality fish from our local shores 365 days a year.

When you are eating locally you are supporting our dedicated American fisherman who still feed our country with the same fish it was built on - the same fish Samuels was built on providing the South Philadelphia Community. From Cod, Pollock, and Haddock to Porgies, Sea Robins, and Croakers, these were fish "for the masses", caught by local fishermen, supporting the economy and the dinner tables of the working class.

Speaking of classics, Cod, Haddock, and Pollock are American staples from fish fries to fish chowders. These fish come from a number of places, but the biggest are Massachusetts and Maine. For over 400 years, groundfish such as Cod have fueled New England. Starting with small sail boats before the industrial revolution, and progressing ever since to find more efficient and responsible ways to fish, New England is the hub for tasty, sustainable seafood. Our local Cod, Pollock, and Haddock come from sustainable fisheries and some are even MSC certified.

Some other fish fry favorites are Whiting and Fluke. Fish 'n' chips is a menu favorite, and using Whiting or Fluke elevates this dish. Both fish are also delicious baked and pan seared. Whiting and Fluke are caught off the coast from the Carolinas to Maine, right now we are getting some from New Jersey and up to Rhode Island. Depending on seasonality, New Jersey and Rhode Island also offer unique options like Porgies, Sea Robins, and Croakers. They are

Samuels: Local 365

By Jessica Jewel Tyler

usually caught as by-catch, but are just as tasty. Porgies are one of the most underrated fish. They have a mild flavor and a texture similar to Red Snapper, that make them irresistible. Porgies are also mostly trap caught (A Seafood Watch Best Choice) or trawl caught (A Good Alternative.) Sea Robin has a flavor comparable to Fluke, and some seafood aficionados prefer it. Their flaky white meat is firm and mild. Croakers are another fish that are popular for their great flavor. A member of the Drum family, Croakers have a similar flavor to Red Drum with a great texture and delicious white meat.

Some of our local ocean's greatest resources are shellfish and crustaceans. Samuels has close relationships with Maine Lobstermen, Crabbers in Alabama and Maryland, and watermen all over the United States to bring you the freshest domestic Lobsters, Crabs, Crabmeat, and shellfish. Other shellfish include Scallops, Clams, and over 100 types of domestic Oysters! When it comes Clams, we source everything from Little Necks to Chowders right from our local shores. Connecticut and New Jersey are some of the most popular areas, but some Clams like JC Walker hail from Virginia.

Drawing from the cumulative knowledge and experience of 6 generations, JC Walker Clams boast unmatched flavor, quality, and consistency year-round since 1983. This success and exceptional taste comes from the pristine, protected waters along the quiet shore of Virginia's Barrier Islands in which the Clams are raised. This small, unique location in Little Machipongo's ocean inlet is an ideal location that contribute to the Clam's distinct brine flavor.

And everyone loves the Barnegat Light fishing community, Viking Village. This longtime supplier emphasizes local, responsibly caught dayboat and tripboat Scallops, ensuring minimal impact on the environment and maximum natural flavor. The meat is tender and pleasantly plump and juicy with a delightfully sweet taste and unreal freshness. And none of the Scallops are ever processed - thus truly retaining their "dry" title along with their as-shucked size, weight and consistency and pure flavor.

Ask your Samuels Agent about our local fish. We also offer amazing catches like Black Sea Bass, Wild Striped Bass, Monkfish, and Squid in all sizes from Maine to the Carolinas. We even see Bluefish and Swordfish from New Jersey occasionally. And while you're supporting local, remember to look for domestic, Red Snapper and King Mackerel from Florida are a real treat this time of year.



Les Grands Viviers - *Soak up Summer with Rouget and Rosé*

by Chef Anne Coll

The fall is fast approaching, but we still have some amazing, long summer days left for grilling seafood. Les Grand Viviers offers some of the freshest fish from pristine tropical waters. Whether it is the beautiful Strawberry Grouper, Spiny Turbot, or Rouget, Les Grand Viviers' beautiful, exotic fish provide a great way to add some fun to the last days of summer grilling. One of my favorites is Rouget, also known as Red Mullet. The delicate, sweet flesh lends itself to roasting or grilling whole (which are also some of my favorite ways to enjoy a fish.) With the plethora of late summer produce; one is bound to make a knockout dish for guests or family.

Les Grands Viviers' Rouget pairs well with many flavor profiles. I prefer to pair it with Mediterranean flavors. Santa Ines Extra Virgin Olive Oil, lemon confit, roasted tomatoes, ripe olives, summer squash, basil, and artichokes are all great accompaniments to a grilled or roasted Rouget. I simply marinate this tasty fish in Olive Oil, salt, pepper, thyme, and lemon. The flesh is scored twice on either sides of the fish twice to help absorb more flavor. The Rouget does not take long to cook (about four minutes on either side at a medium high heat.) While preparing the other accoutrements, the fish can rest tented in foil.

This is the peak of the season for tomatoes. There is nothing better than roasted tomatoes with thyme and local garlic. The deep flavor of the roasted tomatoes and briny taste of the olives pairs perfectly with the delicate flesh of the Rouget. Artichokes are another great vegetable that complements whole grilled Rouget. The artichokes, I simply simmer in white wine and Olive Oil with lemon and thyme. I then stuff the artichokes with seasoned bread-crumbs and parmesan cheese and finish either in the oven or on the grill. Grilled summer squash rounds out this dish and gives a nice fresh flavor and great color. Quinoa or barley pilaf would make a lovely side dish for the Rouget and summer vegetables. Pesto with lots of Santa Ines Olive Oil and citrus make a great sauce for this lovely grilled Rouget.

Les Grands Viviers harvests some of the highest quality fish off the coast of Senegal and Rouget are great this time of year. Whether they are grilled or roasted whole, these petite fish make an excellent meal. Rouget are also delicious prepared in a traditional bouillabaisse, ciopinno, soup de poison, or pan seared fillets. And it's so versatile that it pairs well with Middle Eastern flavors, European profiles, and is even great steamed with the flavors of Asia. Les Grands Viviers' Rouget is an excellent treat to enjoy on a warm summer evening with a glass of rosé with friends and family soaking up the last of our long summer evenings.

Chefs Corner



Chef Anne Coll

Questions or Comments?

Chef Anne will be happy to assist.

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Image by Paul Stamegna



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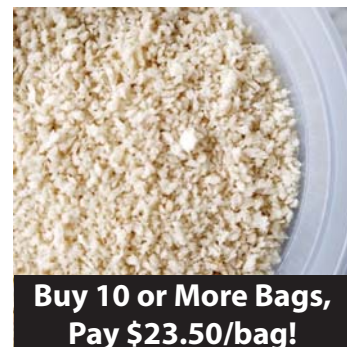
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