

Carol & Joe Davis

FINE DINING DETECTIVES

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EPICUREAN EPISODES

Left Bank Brasserie, Larkspur

By Carol & Joe Davis



House smoked trout



Canard aux Choux



Profiteroles



Colorful decor

The Left Bank Brasserie has been serving French Bistro fare in Larkspur for more than 15 years. Over time, local tastes change and restaurants that adapt and evolve will grow. Bay Area residents love French cuisine but are also drawn to other European-style fare. Restaurateur Roland Passot knew it was time for some changes. He decided to keep the popular classic French Bistro dishes but bring in a new talented local chef to incorporate new menu items made with fresh, local, and sustainable ingredients. These changes have made Left Bank Brasserie an even more approachable, everyday place to dine.

Executive Chef Sean Canavan -- who was trained in Europe and worked for many years at Kokkari, Jeanty at Jack's, and La Folie in San Francisco -- is the new chef, and Brandon Peacock is the Sous Chef.

The décor is unchanged and still festive in the 110-year-old Blue Rock Inn building in downtown Larkspur. The large stone fireplace and mahogany bar and colorful French posters make the restaurant inviting, and there is both indoor and outdoor dining available.

We started our dinner with Specialty classic and contemporary cocktails from their full bar. We enjoyed the Eva Green -- which is made with Pinnacle Vodka, Cointreau, lime and Chartreuse -- as well as a Classic Cosmopolitan. We opted to have mostly new menu items but could not resist a few of the French classics. We started with a few delicious appetizers. The Salade au Crab -- which consists of Dungeness crab, avocado, and mango with a Meyer lemon-vanilla vinaigrette -- was

light and delicious. The Truite Fumee, which is their House smoked trout with horseradish and crème fraiche, was fabulous! We also enjoyed the classic Escargot with garlic butter and Pernod, but will ask to have more garlic next time. You must have the Soupe a L'Oignon Gratinee as it is THE BEST traditional French Onion soup we've ever tasted. The seasonal Squash Soup was excellent, as well.

The Entrees were hearty and flavorful. The Canard aux Choux -- roasted duck breast with hazelnut Spatzle, braised red cabbage, and huckleberry sauce -- was excellent. The classic Boeuf Bourguignon -- traditional beef stew with baby carrots, pearl onions, lardoons, and egg noodles -- had a fabulous sauce and excellent mushrooms.

The Wine List features wines from France, California, and around the world. We particularly enjoyed the 2008 Domaine Auchere, Sancerre, Loire, France Sauvignon Blanc, which was crisp and dry and the 2006 Claudia Springs "Klindt Vineyard" Estate, Anderson Valley Pinot Noir, which paired perfectly with our entrees.

We saved room for desserts and are glad we did. We especially enjoyed the Profiteroles -- Cream puffs with French vanilla ice cream, served with warm chocolate sauce. The Fondant Au Chocolat, a gooey-center Chocolate cake with French Vanilla Ice

cream, was also exceptional. Cappuccino and espresso provided the perfect finish to a most enjoyable meal.

The Left Bank has been open for 15 years and has evolved. The décor is still inviting, the service is still crisp yet friendly, and the cuisine is as tasty as ever but even more value-priced. The addition of a more varied European menu to accompany the classic French Bistro fare and the use of more local ingredients continues to make The Left Bank a destination restaurant for lunch or dinner. When you are in the South Bay, you must try their sister restaurant LB Steak on Santana Row.

Post Notes

Left Bank Brasserie
507 Magnolia Avenue
Larkspur, CA
415.927.3331
leftbank.com

On street parking
Reservations
recommended

Open:
Mon-Thu,
1:30 AM - 10 PM
Fri-Sat,
11:30 AM - 11 PM
Sunday Brunch,
11 AM - 3 PM,
Sunday Dinner,
'til 10 PM

Happy Hour
Mon-Fri 4-6 PM
and 9PM 'til closing



Service with a smile