

BLT

Living

Taste Test

DANIEL BOULUD BLINDFOLDED

Capitol City Cuisine

VICTOR ALBISU, HEAD OF STEAK

Perfect Pairings

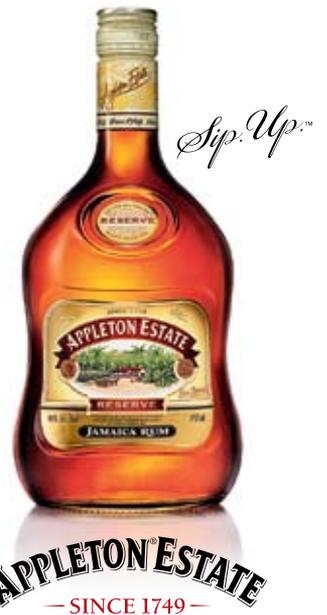
BURGERS, BEERS & SHAKES

Plus: SEASONAL RECIPES | CHEF'S BLACK BOOK

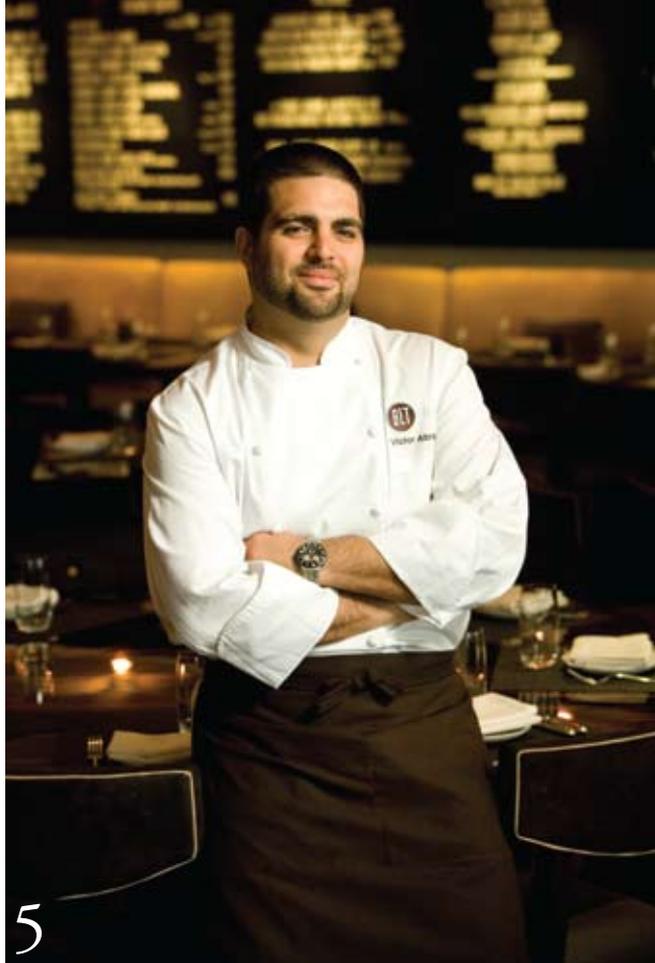
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Although they have never worked together professionally in the kitchen, Laurent Tourondel and Daniel Boulud have been friends for more than 17 years. While both chefs long left *L'Hexagone*, you can never take the Frenchness out of *les Français*. The common joke between them is: "Since when are you so American?"



9



17



11



14



18

5

BLT DC

Victor Albusu presides over the kitchen cabinet.

9

Order Up!

Meat your match for BLT burgers paired with shakes and beers.

11

Taste Test

Who are those masked chefs? Two culinary friends put each to the test with a series of ingredients that compose a final dish.

14

A Fishy Family Business

Meet Louis Rozzo, a fourth-generation New York fishmonger.

17

Falling into Risotto

Wild mushrooms provide earthy flavors for a great seasonal dish.

18

Grandmother's Secret Recipe

Everyone wants a piece of this rustic comfort food, savory pie.

21

Chef's Black Book

From Singapore to Charlotte, Laurent Tourondel gives the inside scoop on dining around the world.





THE HEART OF A CHEF

BLT DC

Victor Albisu

Victor Albisu was appointed chef de cuisine at BLT Steak DC nearly two years ago. With a Cuban father and a Peruvian mother who were both from “very intense cooking cultures,” and summers spent helping out at his family’s restaurants in Miami, Albisu seemed predestined for a culinary career. Yet, at one point in his life, he was headed in a completely different direction. Then his career path took an unexpected turn, and he made his way back into the kitchen. Creative and always evolving his skills, he is definitely at his happiest there.

What are some of your favorite childhood food memories? I started cooking at a very young age. My grandfather was a baker in Cuba. You could find me at a very young age standing on milk crates or telephone books to watch him make empanadas. I was always very involved. I used to go to Miami every summer to help out in the family business. I’d press Cuban sandwiches, brew coffee, or make *croquetas*. I guess it could have been seen as child labor anywhere else, but I enjoyed it too much to consider it work!

So you always knew you wanted to continue the tradition? Yes, but at first I didn’t take it seriously; I never opened my eyes to it as a career. I studied international relations, I was very much into political science, and I worked in international development after I graduated from college.

Then what happened? One day I woke up and realized that I was sitting in a cubicle, staring at a computer, and I wanted to shake it off. So I did. I had just bought a house, so I sold it; same with my car. I even broke up with my fiancée! Then I moved to Paris to learn how to really cook. A lot of people thought I was crazy!

Who is your biggest influence in the kitchen? My grandfather—he still means the world to me, and I find inspiration in his memory. He died when I left for college, so he never really got to see me cook. I try to honor him in the kitchen by being as creative as I can.

Aside from culinary school, what have you learned in other areas of your life that carries over into the kitchen? Patience. I used to be a bit of a hothead. I’m a father now; I have children at home. I’m still always focused on quality, but I don’t get so aggravated. I don’t lose it.

What is your cooking philosophy? What are you trying to achieve? I could sit here and tell you the usual—that I value quality ingredients, simplicity, etc.—and while all of that is true, as a chef, I strive to create

something new and different, and I try to do that every day. So as far as philosophy goes, I guess it’s just hard work and staying creative, and honoring the chefs that I learned from and trying to build on it. Every chef has a sort of lineage of chefs, mentors that have put time and energy into teaching him or her. Likewise, I want to be an inspiration to others; I want to do my part and teach others too.

Have you ever mistakenly created something that actually turned out well? While fundamentally I have an idea of the way flavors work, as all chefs do, I have to admit, I have had the occasion to be surprised by things I put together that turn out better than expected. I recently created a dish with pork belly and sardines. It sounds a little odd, but somehow the two fats went together really well. I made a little ginger-tomato chutney to go with it and added in a little toast. It was one of the most amazing flavors I’ve ever put together. It was this fat-on-fat surf and turf that could have turned out awful, but actually turned out really well. As a rule of thumb, I don’t force things together; I just let things come together naturally.

Tell us about the collaborative process in developing new dishes with Laurent. We are in constant communication, whether it be about the bar menu, our blackboard specials, or sourcing quality items. He’s always very receptive, and is an extremely creative chef. He really is an inspiration to work for.

What’s in store for the fall and winter menu? What are your seasonal touches? Seasons are really important in keeping the restaurant cutting-edge and current. I’m really enjoying concord grapes right now. I take pleasure in simple things, like short ribs or Berkshire pork belly, that I found a nice way of doing. But I could just as easily talk endlessly about having apples and pears in the house. How much time do you have? >



Give an example of something you're excited about on the new menu.

I'm doing a foie gras with a concord grape jam and crispy pancetta layered on a brioche. It's really interesting. I've also created a scallop dish, and I made a bacon glacé to accompany it. I started with a bacon jus. I do a confit of flat bacon for a different dish, and so I use that fat once it settles at the bottom. I clarify and reduce it into a beautiful bacon glacé. Diners are always puzzled by how this liquid tastes so much like bacon, and it goes really nicely with the scallops.

How about in your own kitchen at home? I don't actually cook that much at home anymore; but when I do, I'm a big fan of beans, actually. The Cubans and Peruvians love beans: bean stews, black beans, white beans, short ribs with lentils. I favor rib-sticking comfort food—I love it! When you begin the long process of a nice stew, it's all love. What you put into it is what you ultimately get out of it.

We know you're a big meat guy. What is your favorite cut, and your favorite way to prepare it? I like flank steak. I grew up eating that and chorizo, sweetbreads, and blood sausages. I'm a big fan of the classic Argentinean grill. But I also enjoy different cuts, like hanger steak and skirt steak, and getting them to taste better than you could ever possibly imagine.

Can you give us some tips for cooking meat at home? I've done a lot of classes and instructional stuff on grilling and cooking, and, you know, people are kind of shy about meat—shy about seasoning it, about turning on their grill, about sourcing the best-quality cuts and getting it right. It's not that hard. I always tell people, Don't be so reserved—go out there and find your favorite meat and your favorite seasonings. It's a trial-and-error process.

If you had to have your last cut of meat, what would it be? Oh God! Don't ask me that, because I'm going to give you a terrible answer! My favorite meal in the world is a breaded steak that you get in Miami called *bistec empanizado*. It is very thin, like a Milanese, and comes *a caballo*: rice, black beans, sweet plantains, and two fried eggs on top of it!

HOW DOES D.C. STACK UP IN YOUR MIND AS A RESTAURANT CITY?

It's been an up-and-coming restaurant city for a long time, and I think it's really hitting its stride. BLT Steak is a tribute to how D.C. eats: it's one of the premier restaurants in town, if not in the world.

VICTOR ALBISU INTERPRETS THE PRESIDENTIAL PALATE

Seeing as they're making waves in the nation's capital, we asked the chef de cuisine at BLT Steak DC to come up with a menu for our last three presidents, because you never know who's going to walk through the door.

Clinton was a D.C. foodie but is most remembered for eating Big Macs at McDonald's. So I would probably design a triple-decker foie gras club sandwich and substitute a tomato jam instead of the special sauce.

BILL CLINTON: Tochon au Foie Gras Club/Pancetta/Tomato Jam/Brioche

I never heard of Bush eating out, but given his background I can only assume he would enjoy our pulled-pork BBQ sandwich, made with slab bacon that has been slow cooked in duck fat and then shredded.

GEORGE W. BUSH: Pulled-Pork BBQ Sandwich/Pickled Scallions/Sweet-Potato Bun/Sherry Vinegar Fries

I have actually cooked for Obama, and he ordered a grilled wild salmon with olive-oil whipped potatoes, grilled rapini, and chorizo vinaigrette. I would modify the same dish into a crudo. The salmon skin would be removed and crisped. I would then slice the wild salmon into paper-thin strips, marinate it with chorizo oil and lime juice, and arrange it with chilled olive oil and whipped potatoes. Instead of rapini, I would use baby arugula (which is widely reported to be his favorite green).

BARACK OBAMA: Wild Salmon Crudo/Chorizo Oil/Whipped Potatoes/Baby Arugula

91 Points

Wine & Spirits

December 2008



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SEQUOIA GROVE is a boutique Napa Valley winery located on Route 29 in the heart of Rutherford. Head Winemaker Michael Trujillo and Winemaker Molly Hill choose from the very best palette of Napa Valley fruit sources to create Bordeaux-style wines of traditional character, structure and a true sense of place, a fresh approach yielding modern-day liquid treasures that over-deliver for their price point.

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R A N C H
P I N O T W I T H P A S S I O N

89 POINTS, 2007 Central Coast Pinot Noir, *Wine Spectator*, 09/30/09

88 POINTS, 2007 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, *Robert Parker Jr.'s The Wine Advocate*, #180, 12/31/08

90 POINTS, Editor's Choice 2006 Sonoma Coast Pinot Gris, *Wine Enthusiast*, May 2008



Order Up!

On the hoof: Cooked rare

PAIRINGS

Frog sticks: French fries

Pittsburgh rare: Burnt on the outside, rare on the inside

At BLT Burger, Laurent Tourondel has created his take on the classic American burger joint. Flavorful burgers, adventurous milkshakes, and staff-selected beers make for a great combination. BLT's John Rothstein has matched shake and beer pairings for these BLT burgers.



BURGER



SHAKE



BEER

<p>Great Hills Blue Great Hill Blue Cheese, Balsamic Caramelized Onion, Mushrooms</p>	<p>Mocha Mudslide The smoothness of coffee ice cream, Oreo cookies and chocolate syrup is a harmonious match to the rich blue cheese and the sweet caramelized onions.</p>	<p>Duvel Pale Ale With layers of complexity and mellow malt flavors, this Belgian ale has the muscle and finesse to hold its own against the wonderful flavors of Great Hill blue cheese and Oreo cookies.</p>
<p>Tex-Mex Jalapeños, Chili, Avocado, Salsa, Jack Cheese, Onion Sour Cream</p>	<p>Cookie Monster The richness of cookie-dough ice cream and Chips Ahoy cookies are needed to balance the intensity of jalapeños and incredible chili.</p>	<p>Tecate Considered one of the best-known beers in Mexico, it is the perfect soft finish to salsa and Jack cheese.</p>
<p>Lamb Tandoori Mint-Cilantro Yogurt Sauce, Cucumber, Olives, Red Onion, Tomato</p>	<p>Twinkie Boy Nothing brings out the kid in us like a Twinkie. This sweet combination needs the cool cucumber and mint and subtle spice for balance.</p>	<p>Blue Moon Belgian White Unfiltered, with coriander and orange-peel essence, this full-flavored ale with a smooth finish will match perfectly with refreshing mint and silky smooth caramel.</p>
<p>Turkey All-Natural Turkey Breast ground with Fresh Herbs</p>	<p>The Lunch Box Combine vanilla ice cream, peanut butter, and grape jelly for a rich and wholesome match for turkey.</p>	<p>Abita Light Made from 100 percent all-natural ingredients, this lager is smooth and flavorful. An excellent choice for lighter flavors, such as turkey and vanilla.</p>
<p>BLT Double-Smoked Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato, BLT Burger Sauce</p>	<p>Black and White Simple, with vanilla and chocolate. The classic comfort of this shake goes perfectly with the tradition of a BLT.</p>	<p>Brooklyn Local 1 Ale Fermented in the bottle, this beer has an alluring aroma and ongoing depth that pairs perfectly with a burger and shake.</p>

Burn one, take it through the garden, and pin a rose on it: Hamburger with lettuce, tomato, and onion

Barley water: Beer



LA MARCA PROSECCO is a fresh sparkling wine with a vibrant bouquet of apple, white peach and honeysuckle. The soft, harmonious fruity notes make this wine ideal for any occasion.



LAMARCA

PROSECCO
SPARKLING WINE

PRODUCT OF ITALY

Put to the Test

Daniel Boulud and Laurent Tourondel, blindfolded.

No agenda, no script, only one rule—no peeking. Just two very accomplished chefs (and longtime *amis*) getting together for a friendly gustatory challenge—which was more about having fun than any kind of test.

Both chefs are passionate about their profession, and focused on turning out the best food, no matter what venue it may be. They each have made their mark on the dining scene in New York and around the world.

The taste test was originally planned just for Laurent to challenge Daniel at BLT Steak. But the tasting was so much fun for the chefs that Daniel decided to invite Laurent Tourondel to his place, Restaurant Daniel, to do a taste test of his own.



BLT Steak Chef de Cuisine Christopher Lim, who worked for Daniel both at Restaurant Daniel and Café Boulud, couldn't resist the chance to get in on the action. He brought out the components of a butternut-squash soup to challenge his old boss, but Daniel was up to the task and named off each ingredient in swift succession.

DB: Ah, that was a great test. Laurent had to scratch his brain as hard as I did. The thing about this is that you have no idea what the challenging chef is doing, what he is thinking, or where he is going with the concept of a dish. Breaking it down like this blindfolded, your mind wants you to try to make flavor associations. And so you have to bring your taste buds into the process of asking "What could this be?" Most people eat with their eyes first, so what you see definitely influences taste.



THE FINISHED DISH
TUNA TARTARE / AVOCADO / SOY-LIME DRESSING

DB: Delicious! The combination of flavors is just perfect. Bravo Laurent!

LT: Merci! This is one of our signature appetizers—it's been on the menu since the beginning.



CRISPY SHALLOTS

LT: I think this one will be a little more difficult.

DB: This is definitely fried onion, or crispy onion. Or could it be garlic? Ah, I got it—crispy shallot!

LT: That's right! I didn't think you would find that one exactly.



WASABI

LT: Be a little careful on this one—it's strong. Just a little on the spoon.

DB: Wow. That cleared my sinuses. Wasabi! Hey, soy and wasabi! I didn't know you were doing sushi now, Laurent!



RAW TUNA, TINY CUBES

DB: After all the ingredients, I am sure it is raw fish. Is it tuna? It is very tender. Yes, it's tuna. I love it! Raw fish is difficult. I knew the texture was fish, but in this one there was no sinew, as opposed to fluke, or snapper, or even salmon. This one was not really that easy to find the right fish!



AVOCADO

LT: It's a big piece on the spoon, but you can go for it. This one is going to stump you.

DB: Is this cold or hot? OK, it's cold. Ummm, this is my favorite vegetable, avocado. I eat tons of salad with avocado all the time.

LT: Are you sure you cannot see!

DB: Ahh, we're in China. Maybe Japan. Not fish sauce. Ponzu? Ponzu maybe. Could be China or Japan.

LT: You are definitely in the right part of the world. Maybe it could be both.

DB: Soy sauce! But that was hard to judge because of the viscosity.

SOY SAUCE



THE FINISHED DISH

MAINE PEEKYTOE CRAB SALAD / CELERY / WALNUT OIL / GRANNY SMITH SAUCE

LT: This is a beautiful dish. Peekytoe crab is one of my favorite seafoods. I use it whenever I can at BLT Fish. This is just delicious.

DB: I'm glad you like it. It's one of the favorite appetizers on the menu right now.



PEEKYTOE CRAB

DB: You might want to smell this one first.

LT: Ah, this is crab. Incredible—the freshness and flavor is incredible. And this is Peekytoe crab! That's good stuff.

DB: I knew you would get this, and even what kind of crab it was!

GREEN-APPLE MUSTARD

DB: OK, be a little careful, this might be a little spicy.

LT: Mmmmm, this is delicious. There's whole-grain mustard in this, but it's a little sweet.

DB: Yes, there are multiple ingredients in this. It's a little fruity and it has an unusual color.

LT: I can taste a little citrus—oh, and now I get some apple. Did you mix mustard with an apple syrup?

DB: Close enough! It's green-apple mustard.

LT: Wow, that was hard. It was very tricky.

DB: Green-apple mustard is not easy to get! I think I got you on that one.

CELERY TWO WAYS, LEAVES AND STALK

DB: Both of these are from the same product.

LT: Ah, the first one has a leafy flavor; let me taste them both together. Dikon, or turnip?

DB: They're cut very thin, and so they might not have the same taste. Here's a hint: it's green, it's raw, it comes in long ribs. It goes well in Bloody Mary.

LT: It's, ah, celery.

APPLE FOUR WAYS

DB: Here's something prepared four ways. First is with vinegar. Second is poached with sugar. Third is a gelée. Fourth is raw.

LT: Ah, it's apple. I had it on the first one when I tasted the one with vinegar. The gelée was very unusual. The confit was nice, and the raw just confirmed it was apple.

LIGHT MUSTARD MAYONNAISE WITH LEMON

DB: (Daniel laughs) This is fun!

LT: Ah, easy, that's mayo. It has a little lemony flavor.

WALNUTS

DB: This one was cut up very thin, almost like it is crushed.
LT: Definitely nuts. Almond? Ah, no, I got it. Walnut!



PURVEYOR

F. Rozzo & Sons

Bring up Laurent Tourondel, and Louis Rozzo effuses. The fourth-generation F. Rozzo & Sons fish purveyor took some time to chat about the history of the business, himself, and his client and dear friend, Laurent.

How would you define your relationship with Laurent? I have a tremendous amount of respect for him, and every time I'm with him we have fun. I realize there are a lot of fish guys out there, so besides the friendship, as a business partner I know that he relies on me to provide the best product.

What is the backstory on F. Rozzo & Sons? We started in 1900 with my great-grandparents, who came over from Italy. While my great-grandfather started off as a gravedigger, my grandmother took a job filleting fish and was earning five times as much as he was, so they decided to start their own business.

What was it like back then? My father used to tell me that the Fulton Fish Market was run by the Irish, and that at first they wouldn't let my great-grandfather buy any fish until his wife's boss, who was Irish, vouched for him. He peddled his first box of fish back in his neighborhood and made more money on that box than he did in two weeks working as a gravedigger. Back then, he would go down to the market in a horse and buggy. Now take this next story as you will, but apparently my great-grandfather would sometimes fall asleep in the back of the buggy, but since the horse went to the market so often, he knew exactly where to go!

Aside from the mode of transportation, how has the fish business changed? While my father used to buy all his fish from Fulton Street, I buy mine direct from commercial fisherman. The technology of freight, the way fish can be packed and shipped, now gives me a huge advantage. I buy fish from Brazil, Ecuador, Holland, and France. There's a much greater variety available today.

What does Laurent favor? While he wants fish that is exotic and interesting, his overall concern is quality, so he prefers fish that I can get locally. I can get sea bass, eight or nine hours out of the water, directly to his restaurant.

What can diners expect from the sea on the fall menu? Ocean striped bass, black sea bass, fluke—there's a lot of beautiful local fluke around. Also, local monkfish.

Anything new and exciting? Yes, I'm actually going to be the first guy to bring in Alaskan king crabmeat uncooked, sashimi quality. I have been very impressed with the quality of this product, and it's a perfect fit with Laurent's philosophy.



What is your favorite dish on a BLT menu? I have to admit that BLT Fish is one of my favorite restaurants in New York City, and Amy, Laurent's protégé there, does a whole red snapper that is out of this world. Also, the black cod at BLT Market is to die for.

Do you have preferences when it comes to pairing fish and wine? I'm unconventional in that I really enjoy red wine, and all of Laurent's restaurants offer a great selection. My favorite is an Opus.

What's your favorite fish? That's a tough question, because I love fish. I sell to 300 restaurants, and I try to eat my fish in every one of them. It's just my passion—I enjoy them all thoroughly.

What's your favorite at-home preparation? I'm not really one to kill it with a lot of sauce. I love to take a fluke that I know was swimming just this morning or late last night, fillet it, and sauté it with a little butter and some salt. I prefer to really taste the fish on its own.

LOUIS ROZZO ON . . .

BUYING FISH

Look at the eyes—they have to be clear. The first things to go on a fish are the eyes and the gills. So if the eyes are clear and the gills are bloodred, it means the fish is fresh. If the fish sits around awhile, the eyes get foggy, like an old dog with cataracts.

COOKING MISTAKES

Overcooking, absolutely. Fresh fish has to be cooked delicately.

GETTING OUT THAT FISHY SMELL

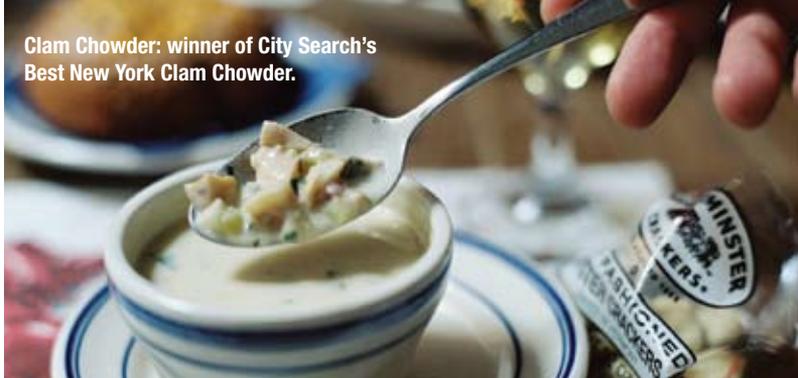
Well, I have a shower in my office. I take a lot of showers—at least two a day! My dad always said that the smell of fish smells like money. It's something I was born with.



Lobster Roll: a classic BLT Shack sandwich.



Clam Chowder: winner of City Search's Best New York Clam Chowder.



CHEF'S FAVORITES

Emilie Bousquet Walsh, Chef de Cuisine
BLT Fish Shack

TAYLOR BAY SCALLOPS

The Taylor Bay scallops we get from Rozzo are fantastic. We serve them ceviche style, in the shell—two scallops per shell—with an apple-coriander vinaigrette.

PAIRING:
Taittinger NV

We have this champagne by the glass. It is rather soft but nicely composed, with gentle mousse and an almost creamy richness. The white fruit and minerals make it a great pairing with the scallops.

PORK & SHRIMP SLIDERS

These are one of my favorite things on the menu. We pan-sear the ground pork and shrimp (mixed with scallions, garlic, and sweet soy sauce), and serve it on toasted mini brioche buns with sriracha mayo, sautéed ginger, carrot, and cilantro, finished with pickled red onions.

PAIRING:
Marqués de Irún Verdejo
A really refreshing and vibrant white wine from Spain.

FISH TACOS

Another favorite are the red snapper fish tacos. The snapper is supplied by Rozzo. The red snapper is tempura-fried and served in three corn tortillas with avocado (mixed with lime juice and red onion), chili aioli, on a bed of iceberg lettuce garnished with queso fresco and sliced lime halves.

PAIRING:
Lionshead Pilsner
The Lionshead Pilsner brewed in Pennsylvania is light and crisp and the perfect beer with these fish tacos.

Whole Crispy Red Snapper from BLT Fish.



Amy Eubanks, Chef de Cuisine
BLT Fish

CRISPY FROG LEGS

For the fall and winter, we love having the frog legs that Rozzo sources from Florida. We serve them with a lemongrass-curry-based sauce, served over a parsley-root purée. We first dip the legs in a flour and curry powder mixture and then pan-sear them until they are crispy, finishing with a bit of garlic butter and parsley. Then they are served over the parsley root purée with the lemongrass sauce on top.

PAIRING:
2008 Abbazia di Novacella Kerner Alto Adige

This northern Italian aromatic white adds an extra dimension of freshness to this dish.

ROCK SHRIMP RISOTTO WITH WILD MUSHROOMS

This is our classic wild-mushroom risotto, using hen of the woods as the base for the stock and incorporating lots of roasted garlic-sage butter. The BLT Fish twist is that we stir in fresh rock shrimp from Louisiana, supplied by Rozzo. We finish it off with house-made pickled baby chanterelles.

PAIRING:
2004 Vincent Dauvissat Chablis Vaillons
Mineral-laced white Burgundy, sourced from one of the great premier crus in Chablis. The earthy seashell notes in this wine amplify the wild mushrooms.

WHOLE CRISPY RED SNAPPER

Our Cantonese-style whole red snapper has become a BLT Fish signature dish. We get most of our whole fish from Rozzo, and especially the red snapper. The whole fish is deep-fried and served with a sauce made primarily from soy sauce, plum wine, and fish sauce. We garnish the dish with leeks, carrots, chili peppers, cilantro, fried shallots, and Chinese sausage.

PAIRING:
2007 Anthill Farms "Tina Marie Vineyard" Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
A riper-style domestic pinot works very well with the soy-plum wine sauce in this dish.



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VINEYARDS

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RECIPE

Wild Mushroom Risotto

WITH MUSHROOM CAPPUCCINO

Serves 6

CHEF'S TIP: Risotto is typically served as a first course in shallow, rimmed soup plates. Any extra garlic butter is great spread on bread, on top of a steak, or mixed into mashed potatoes.

MUSHROOM CAPPUCCINO

- 1 pound white mushrooms, wiped clean
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

RISOTTO

- 2 tablespoons + 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 pound assorted wild mushrooms, such as black trumpet, chanterelle, or porcini, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon chopped shallots
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon + pinch fresh thyme leaves
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 cups medium grain rice
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 4 cups chicken stock, preferably homemade
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup + 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano
- 1 tablespoon white truffle oil
- 1 tablespoon roasted-garlic butter



COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

Make the Cappuccino Place the white mushrooms and 1 cup of water in a blender or food processor in batches, if necessary. Blend until smooth. Pour the mixture into a large pot and bring to a boil. Pour the mixture into a strainer lined with cheesecloth or a lint-free kitchen towel. Let cool slightly. Squeeze out all of the mushroom liquid into a small saucepan. You should have 2 cups of liquid.

Bring the liquid to a simmer. Cook, stirring constantly so that it does not burn, until reduced to 1/4 cup, about 25 to 30 minutes. Add the heavy cream and salt and pepper. Keep the sauce warm.

Cook the Wild Mushrooms In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add half of the mushrooms and a pinch of salt, making

sure not to crowd the pan or the mushrooms will not brown. Cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes or until the mushrooms are tender and begin to brown. Add half the shallots, 1 teaspoon chopped garlic, and 1/2 teaspoon of thyme. Cook 1 minute more. Remove the mushrooms from the pan and repeat with the remaining mushrooms.

Cook the Rice In a deep, wide saucepan, heat remaining 3 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Add onions, remaining chopped garlic, and a pinch of thyme leaves. Cook, stirring until the onions are translucent, about 4 minutes.

Stir in the rice until thoroughly mixed. Add the white wine and cook until most of the liquid evaporates.

Add about 1 cup of stock and cook, stirring constantly, until most of the liquid has been absorbed. Add the remaining stock in three more additions, stirring well and allowing the liquid to be absorbed after each one. Taste a few grains of rice; they should be tender and creamy. If the rice is not done, or is a little dry, add more stock and stir well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in the Garlic Butter, sautéed mushrooms, 1 cup of Parmigiano Reggiano, and truffle oil.

Finish the Cappuccino With a handheld immersion blender or a whisk, blend the cappuccino until foamy.

To Serve Spoon the risotto into warm serving bowls. Pour the Mushroom Cappuccino around the risotto and serve immediately.

Louise's* Potato Pie

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large Idaho potatoes
- 1/2 medium onion, peeled and sliced
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped
- 2 tablespoons curly parsley, chopped
- 2 large puff-pastry sheets
- 1 egg yolk mixed with 1 tablespoon water
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream or crème fraîche
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, for dusting work surface
- Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste



COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare the Potatoes Peel the potatoes and slice them into 1/8-inch rounds. Put them in a bowl and add the onion, garlic, and parsley. Season generously with salt and pepper and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 380°F.

Prepare the Dish Shape the puff pastry to an 11-inch metallic pie dish. Add the potatoes. Cut around the perimeter of the pie dish, removing the excess pastry but leaving about 1 inch of dough hanging over the side. Discard the scrap pastry and fold the portion hanging over the side so it encloses the potato. Brush the upward-facing dough with egg wash. Place the other sheet of puff pastry on top of the pie dish and cut it so it conforms to the top of the dish. Brush the top with egg wash.

Bake the Pie Bake the pie on the oven's center rack until cooked through, 45 to 50 minutes or until a sharp, thin-bladed knife inserted in the center of the tart comes out hot. Remove the dish from the oven. Cut around the perimeter of the top, removing the puff pastry from the top, and set the cover aside. Add the cream to the pie and jiggle the potatoes with a spoon to let the cream seep into the deepest part of the pie. Season with salt and pepper, return the puff-pastry cover, and let the cream infuse for 15 to 20 minutes, covered with a clean, dry cloth.

To Serve Present the pie in its dish from the center of the table.

*Louise is Laurent Tourondel's grandmother, and her potato pie is one of his favorite recipes.

SINCE



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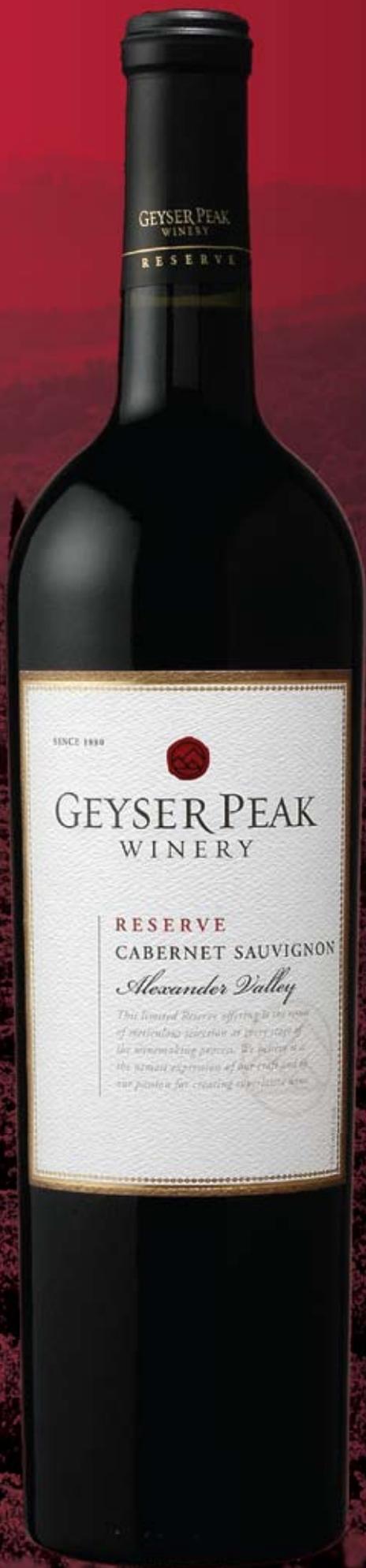
– WINE & SPIRITS MAGAZINE, OCTOBER 2007

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Black Book

Laurent Tourondel's Travel and Dining Journal

LOS ANGELES

The Bazaar

465 North La Cienega Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90048
Tel. 310.246.5555
thebazaar.com

Spanish chef José Andrés's place in L.A. is really a spectacular restaurant and truly something to experience. Eating the Philly cheese steak is like magic: it's a long, thin shell-like crust topped with seared wagyu beef slices; and when you bite in, you get a pop of cheese that bursts in your mouth. The Bazaar also makes for some of the best people watching in all of Los Angeles.

CHARLOTTE

BBQ

Mac's Speed Shop

2511 South Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28203
Tel. 704.522.6227
macspeedshop.com

You can roll up on your Harley here and fit right in. Crowds love this place for its solid Southern dishes, like barbecue, ribs, wings, and mac and cheese. There are also more than 150 beer choices.

FRIED CHICKEN

Price's Chicken Coop

1614 Camden Road
Charlotte, NC 28203
Tel. 704.333.9866
priceschickencoop.com

There is a lot of talk about fried chicken these days—but for the real deal, go to Price's.

FINER DINING

Rooster's Kitchen

6601 Morrison Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28210
Tel. 704.366.8688
roosterskitchen.com

From one of the best chefs in Charlotte, Jim Noble's restaurant, Rooster's, is a see-and-be-seen place with incredible food. There's a wood-fired grill and pizza oven turning out old-world-comfort-meets-Southern-style-cooking dishes. Try the spit-fire-roasted Carolina BBQ pork shoulder.

BRAZIL

CT Brasserie

São Conrado Fashion Mall
899 Estrada da Gávea
Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Tel. +55.21.3322.1440
ctbrasserie.com.br

My friend Claude Troisgros's CT Brasserie is like having a little piece of Paris in the heart of Rio. I especially loved his house specialty, the rustic roast chicken. And there's an authentic Parisian brasserie look and feel of the place, which is great. It also has an open kitchen that lets you observe the chefs at work during service.

Aconchego Carioca

Rua Barão de Iguatemi 388
Praça da Bandeira
Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Tel. +55.21.2273.1035

This is a small and simple bistro run by Rosa Kátia Barbosa. Authentic cuisine from northeastern Brazil. Try their signature shrimp in pumpkin.

Restaurant Roberta Südbrack

Rua Lineau de Paula Machado 916
Jardim Botânico
Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Tel. +55.21.3874.0139

This is one of Brazil's finest restaurants. Anything Roberta makes is out of this world. Fidel Castro is a fan of her brie au gratin with raspberry vinaigrette.

Bira de Guaratiba

Estrada da Vendinha 68A
Barra de Guaratiba
Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Tel. +55.21.2410.8304
biradegaratiba.com.br

Twenty-five minutes outside of Rio, this casual spot is on a secluded fisherman's beach with monkeys running around and tons of orchids. Try the crab pies or *moqueca*, a rich fish stew flavored with palm oil and coconut milk.

SINGAPORE

Jumbo Seafood Restaurant

Blk 11 #01-16 Dempsey Road
Singapore 249673
Tel. +65.6479.3435
jumboseafood.com.sg

Jumbo Seafood is a can't-miss in Singapore. There are seven locations, but go to the one on Dempsey Hill, which is located in former British Army barracks that have been transformed into modern, yet still colonial-looking, buildings. Try their chili crab, cooked in rich chili gravy and served piping hot—and eat with steamed or deep-fried buns. Another interesting dish is the scallop wrapped in yam ring. Imagine biting into a warm, heady taste of fresh whole scallop, wrapped in soft handmade yam rings. Accompanied with traditional sweet *ngoh hiang* sauce, the combination of smooth and crispy textures is really incredible.

Empire Café at Raffles

Styled like a typical 1920s Singapore coffeehouse, Empire Café is a hot spot for local Singaporean specialties that you might also find at the hawker-stalls on the street, such as nasi goreng, rojak salads, huge bowls of laksa noodles, and chicken rice.

Long Bar at Raffles

Check out this legendary two-story bar with nostalgic décor inspired by the Malaysian plantations of the 1920s. The must-have drink is the Singapore Sling, which was invented at this very bar.

Raffles Hotel Singapore

1 Beach Road
Singapore 189673
Tel. +65.6337.1886
raffles.com/en_ra/property/rhs



What a team! French chefs take a break from the Semana Mesa SP—the largest gastronomical congress in Latin America—to attend a soccer match in São Paulo, Brazil. From left: Stéphane Raimbault, L'Oasis; Claude Troisgros, Olympe, 66 Bistro, CT Brasserie; Gérald Passédât, Le Petit Nice; Laurent Tourondel, BLT Restaurants; Christophe Michalak, Hotel Plaza Athénée; Philippe Gobet, L'Ecole Lenôtre.



On a recent visit to Hong Kong, where BLT will open a second restaurant, and then on to Singapore, Laurent had a chance to catch up with the current F1 world champion, Jenson Button.

HAUTEBBQ

BARBECUE FIRE SPICES



Do a little yodel and sprinkle these herbs directly on the charcoal or wood fire right before you begin grilling meats or vegetables. Then put on your grill lid and create your own little speedy smokehouse. The spice mix is a savory blend of rosemary, fennel, thyme, coriander, oregano, and sage.

swiss-advance.com

HAUTETASTE

THE LONE ACRE



One dude. One acre. One hundred varieties. Dan Machin has a plot of land in Riverhead, Long Island, where he grows vegetables and edible flowers, which he then sells at the farmers market at J.J. Byrne Park in Park Slope, Brooklyn. One of Machin's goals is education—to present different experiences to customers and get them to try new things, such as medicinal flowers, ground cherries, and tomatillos. No machines, no chemicals—with just an antique hoe and a lot of elbow grease—Machin's produce is the real farm-to-market deal.

loneacre.wordpress.com

HAUTENOTEWORTHY

MADE TO TASTE.COM



MadeToTaste.com is an online shopping destination that offers a curated selection of chef-created and chef-related products. Imagine shopping in a chef's pantry for food products, kitchen tools and accessories, and cookbooks! MadeToTaste.com also features chef demonstration videos, recipes, and wine and cocktail pairings.

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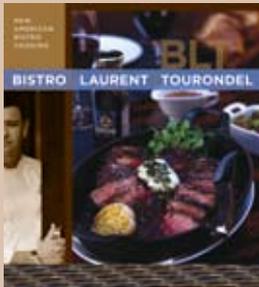
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BLT PUBLICATIONS

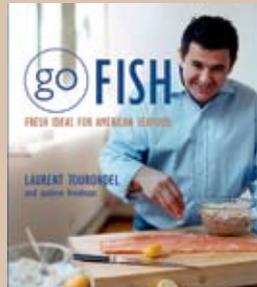


Bistro Laurent Tourondel: New American Bistro Cooking

By Laurent Tourondel and
Michele Scicolone

Forward by Eric Ripert

Signature BLT recipes simple enough for the home cook alongside Laurent Tourondel's family favorites and dishes inspired by his culinary travels.



Go Fish: Fresh Ideas for American Seafood

By Laurent Tourondel and
Andrew Friedman

Foreword by Daniel Boulud

At last! Here is the fish cookbook for home cooks looking to create elegant, flavor-rich meals without a lot of fuss.

BLT LOCATIONS



BLT STEAK 106 East 57th Street, New York, NY TEL: 212.752.7470

BLT STEAK DC 1625 Eye Street NW, Washington, DC TEL: 202.698.8999

BLT STEAK SAN JUAN The Ritz-Carlton, 6961 Avenue of the Governors, Isla Verde Carolina, Puerto Rico TEL: 787.253.1700

BLT STEAK MIAMI The Betsy Hotel, 1440 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, FL TEL: 305.673.0044

BLT STEAK LOS ANGELES 8720 West Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA TEL: 310.360.1950

BLT STEAK WESTCHESTER The Ritz-Carlton, Three Renaissance Square, Westchester, NY TEL: 914.467.5500

BLT STEAK SCOTTSDALE Camelback Inn, 5402 East Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, AZ TEL: 480.905.7979

BLT STEAK ATLANTA W Hotel, 45 Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard NW, Atlanta, GA 30308 TEL: 404.577.7601

BLT STEAK HONG KONG Shop G62, Ground Floor, Ocean Terminal, Kowloon, Hong Kong TEL: 852.2730.3508

BLT STEAK CHARLOTTE The Ritz-Carlton, Charlotte, 110 North College Street, Charlotte, NC TEL: 704.972.4380

BLT STEAK HONOLULU Trump International Hotel & Tower Waikiki Beach Walk, 223 Saratoga Road, Honolulu, HI TEL: 877.683.7401

BLT PRIME 111 East 22nd Street, New York, NY TEL: 212.995.8500

BLT FISH 21 West 17th Street, New York, NY TEL: 212.691.8888

BLT MARKET The Ritz-Carlton, 1430 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY TEL: 212.521.6125

BLT FISH SHACK 21 West 17th Street, New York, NY TEL: 212.691.8888

BLT BURGER 470 Sixth Avenue, New York, NY TEL: 212.243.8226

BLT BURGER LAS VEGAS The MGM Mirage, 3600 Las Vegas Blvd S, Las Vegas, NV TEL: 702.792.7888

Jeff Platt *likes*
Trinitario White.



Marc Forgione
chooses Grand Lait.



Aaron Sanchez *uses*
Guayaquil Bittersweet.

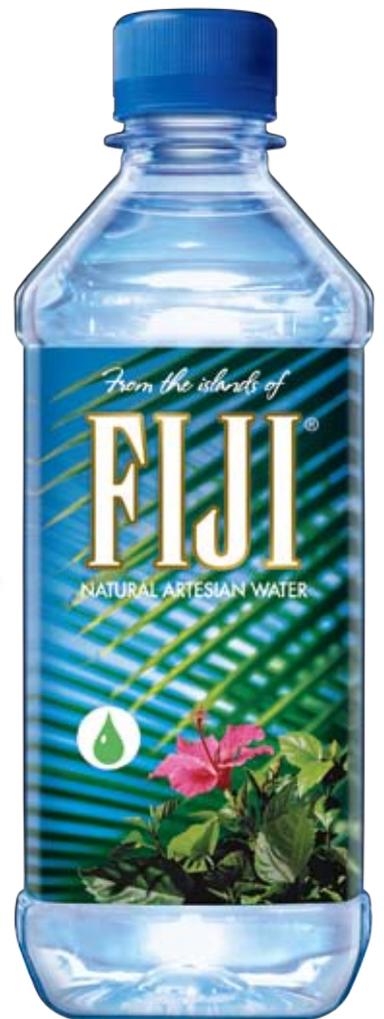


Laurent Tourondel *prefers*
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