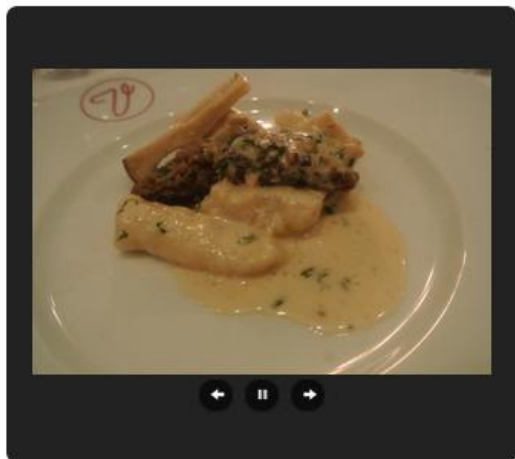




21  
APR

## A Fresh Look at the Spring Festival Menu @ Bistro Versailles in Greenwich



French restaurants often get a bad rap, but maybe there's a reason for that. Many of them give off a snooty, better-than-you, hands-off, 1% kind of vibe. Plus, you need to be prepared to foot a major bill that may require you to sell off one of your kidneys at the end of the whole experience. But, then there are some really great French restaurants that offer an authentic experience without all that baggage. And, yes, [Bistro Versailles](#) in Greenwich is one of those great places.



Recently, we attended their La Soirée Printanière event to celebrate the start of spring. The dinner consisted of 8 courses that were paired with 7 different French wines: yeah, they definitely went all out. But before we even dug into that they kicked things off with a few different hors d'oeuvre like freshly smoked salmon and pate on toast, a rich and flavorful housemade chorizo with flavorful chayote, and a cocktail made of pureed cantaloupe, rum, and orange. All the small bites were tasty and the cocktail was very refreshing, with an exotic, on the beach in Cannes taste to it (or at least that's what we imagine a drink on the beach in Cannes tastes like—hopefully next year we'll find out for sure).



After a few minutes, we had our first bites of the spring menu with their Wild Sorrel Soup. Before we even touched a spoon to the soup we had to sniff the hell out it because it had this beautiful, rich, spring-like aroma pouring out. This was a very nicely balanced soup with that

quintessential acidic, lemon-like sourness Sorrel is known for, balanced with a slight saltiness and a rich fatty creaminess from the dollop of yogurt emulsion on top. This was perfectly paired with a slightly tart, citrusy, and mineraly wine from Corsica.

As we continued on, we realized a few things about the food of Chef Erik Erlichson's (formerly of Acqua, Chez Jean-Pierre, and Saint-Tropez Bistro Francais). He focuses on clean and simple presentation and not overcomplicating the food. Also, we liked the spacing out of the meal with a good amount of time between courses so that you could drink, relax, and chat, just like in any good European bistro. Portions were also perfectly sized so that by the end of the night we didn't feel like we had eaten 30 pounds of food.

Ok, so on to the rest of the dishes . . .



**White Asparagus in a Chive Sauce:** the sauce had a nice earthy taste with the chive nicely coming through, which was a great contrast to the slightly bitter taste of the perfectly prepared asparagus. Again, the wine pairing from Savoie went oh-so well.



**Gnocchi with Morel Mushrooms:** these were perhaps our favorites from the night. There was a spiciness to the sauce that we couldn't quite put a finger on. But, when we talked with Chef Erlichson, he explained that the mushrooms were marinating in crushed red pepper! Speaking of the mushrooms, the Morel were exquisite and just so spongy good. The gnocchi was delicate, fluffy, and pillowy. We'd order this dish a million times. In fact, Kristien \*may\* have come close to licking the plate. This was well paired with a robust white wine from Languedoc that could hold up to the earthy mushroom flavors.



**Black Sea Bass and Green Pea Sauce:** simple, pure, and lightly seasoned, the fish remained moist and flaked off nicely with a simple tug. The sauce was a vibrant green and was light, not overpowering, but complimenting the fish. This was served with a wine from Bourgogne that had a slightly buttery finish, adding another level of flavor to the dish. One of our favorite preparations of sea bass ever.



**Spring Lamb Casserole and Vegetables:** the sauce smelled of delicious wine, and in terms of taste it was a bit sweet, a bit salty, and was a little rich like a good lamb dish should be. The meat simply flaked off as you took the fork to it, that's how delicate it was. Served with a nice, highly drinkable red wine from Haut Medoc.



**Artisanal Cheddar Cheese:** in America we start with cheese, but in France they often end with cheese! This plate of delicious French cheeses also featured bread, walnuts, grapes, and cranberries to balance it all out. And, of course, what's cheese without wine? This went very well with a slightly bigger red from Corbiere.



**Strawberry Rhubarb Tart:** the crust was buttery and crumbly and the filling was so very nicely balanced by being slightly sweet and slightly savory. This was an excellent tart that we'd order again and again, and not just because Rhubarb is Kristien's favorite, mmmm. Plus, it certainly didn't hurt with a refreshing aperitif of Pineau des Charentes.

### Final Thoughts

There are so many things we enjoyed about this meal:

- 1) Portions were perfectly sized (and priced) so that you could enjoy every single bite, leave satisfied, and no food would be wasted.
- 2) Dining was an enjoyable, relaxing experience, not just a quick eat and leave event.
- 3) The focus on fresh, spring-based ingredients made us feel all light and happy inside.
- 4) Their simple, yet elegant and creative dishes were perfectly balanced to bring a level of excitement to your dining experience without getting all crazy like a lot of restaurants can.
- 5) The service was excellent, in fact, some of the best we've had in a long time. Each server knew an amazing amount of information about each wine, including tasting notes. In addition, they knew the menu for that night very well and were able to talk about each dish in detail if we had questions.
- 6) To have 8 courses along with 8 different drinks for just \$75 is a pretty great deal.

We were also happy to see that when we looked at their regular menu that meals are priced nicely with breakfasts prices between \$7-15, lunch from \$8-22, and dinner just a bit more. And, BONUS, just this past weekend we walked by on a beautiful 75 degree day and saw that the front opens up and there are tables on their sidewalk so you can people watch on Greenwich Avenue.

Congratulations to the owners Marc and Evelyne Penvenne (who own [Meli-Melo](#) across the street) on a great event and for bringing Versailles back to Greenwich.

*Au revoir* for now!

---

*While we received this meal for free to review on our blog, we were not required to write a positive review. The opinions expressed are 100% truthful based on our tastebuds, preferences, and opinions, because that's how OmNomCT rolls.*

---