

Liv Cafe & Bistro



As members and guests arrived during an hiatus from the wind and rain, that heralded the true beginning of winter in Victoria, I could not help but notice the broad smiles

and cheerfulness as each came through the door. This continued during the evening, with laughter and obvious comraderie during both the reception and dinner. The Bailli welcomed twenty-three members and guests.

Executive Chef and owner, Milton Rebello and his wife, designed Liv, their new Café and Bistro, literally from the ground up. The comfortable room décor and open kitchen concept are immaculate in what is the most recent addition to Oak Bay's culinary scene.



In his earlier career Chef Rebello had participated in culinary teams cooking for Chaîne events. But this was his first Chaîne event as Executive Chef in his own property. To borrow someone else's epithet, he and his team, "hit it out of the park".

The eclectic menu combined elegant style, with beautifully balanced flavours. Visual presentation was outstanding. Wisps of Indo-cuisine of poori and tamarind added a surprising and delightful touch to the canapes. Sula Tropicale Rose sparkling wine, India's first and only Gold Medal winner, with bursts of tropical



fruit and berry flavours, was a perfect match. (see the full menu and wine list at the end of this review)

Moving in to dinner, the first course, a salad of roasted pear, stuffed with blue cheese was paired with an Okanagan Switchback Pinot Gris from Haywire, 91 Points from Gismondi, its lively acidity complemented the blue cheese nicely.

The second course, an orange lacquered duck breast, perfectly pink, was accompanied by a selection of garnishes including a patty of duck confit rilette and salsa macha.



An unusual pairing for this duck course proved to be an excellent choice, an Australian crisp & dry Riesling, a 2024 Pewsey Vale Eden

Valley, with an impressive 93 Points from James Halliday.

Always appreciated, and sadly is often omitted in contemporary menus, is a palate cleanser. Chef Rebello's offering of a sparkling Sake sorbet, flavoured with a touch of bergamot, was delightfully cool and refreshing.



The main course, (or "Entrée" to use the classic term), of Rack of Lamb, was elegant in its presentation and impressive on the palate.



The flavours of traditional peas and mint accompaniments were interestingly paired together, as were potato & corn, respectively, in a puree and a hash. A favourite pairing for lamb is a Rhone red wine. Hence, a JL Chave Selection Mon Coeur, Cote du Rhone was the choice for this course. 92 Points-rated by Jeb Dunnuck. The region's typical Grenache was blended with fifty percent Syrah to produce dark berry fruit, as well as Provencal herb and spice- driven flavours, all nicely balanced.



Dessert, was truly a delicate construction, and a novel presentation of a Pavlova. Round petals of meringue formed a base on which was balanced a tiny, thin-walled chocolate bowl, filled with coconut mousse. Passion-fruit coulis and mint salsa were piquant garnishes. This dessert called for a light acidity wine with a touch of effervescence. Hence a petillant Italian Moscato D'Asti, Pertinace, paired perfectly.

After dinner, the Bailli introduced the culinary and service teams, complimenting them on the menu and service provided. Each was presented with a certificate of appreciation and the Executive Chef, received a personal gift to thank him for hosting the event.



Special recognition was also given to the Executive Chef, Milton Revello who had volunteered to be a judge at the Bailliage's Jeune Chef Commis, held at Camosun College, in 2023. It was there that Milton met his current Sous Chef, Levi Fox, whom he hired after his graduation. Levi was a finalist, and won second place in that Jeune Chef competition.

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