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Carmel, a Great
Wining-Dining
Destination





Troy Dupuy, center, with staff at Lespinasse, Washington, D.C.



Diane Forley, Verbena, New York

he says, "be honest with the ingredients. Then you can do a little bit of everything and make it fit."

CELADON

1040 Main St., Napa, Calif. Telephone (707) 254-9690 Open Lunch, Monday to Friday; dinner, Monday to Saturday Cost Entrées \$14 to \$19 Credit Cards Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Diners Club

TROY DUPUY, 33 Lespinasse, Washington, D.C. Born: Baton Rouge, La. Education: Louisiana State University, Culinary Institute of America Cooking style: French seasonal cuisine Signature dishes (wine suggestions): marinated tuna and gravlax, with seaweed salad and mango vinaigrette (Alsace Riesling); swordfish with sea urchin and olive oil froth (Sauvignon Blanc) Favorite wine: Peter Michael Chardonnay Clos du Ciel

When the Washington, D.C., Lespinasse opened in October 1996, chef Gray Kunz of the original New York Lespinasse tapped a youthful Louisianan who already had been working with him for five years. It seems to have been the right move. Troy Dupuy has been getting nothing but raves for the new restaurant.

"Oh, it's not just me," Dupuy hastens to note. "A lot of people have been sharing the 80-hour-plus workweeks." He singles out Wang-Kay Fung, a chef from Hong Kong who worked with Dupuy at Lespinasse in New York and who works with Dupuy to develop the Asian-tinged

recipes that make it to Dupuy's menu.

"That is the most rewarding part of my work here, working with Mr. Fung," Dupuy says. "We know what's coming up in the market, so we start exploring the possibilities. We run through ideas and discuss a dish maybe 15 or 20 times before we even pick up a pan. But once we do a dish, we seldom have to redo it more than once or twice."

The swordfish with sea urchin dish is a case in point. Dupuy adds boiling bouillon to the sea urchins, which cooks them lightly. Then he adds extra-virgin olive oil and froths the mixture to a puree with an immersion blender to make a sauce to serve warm, not hot. "It comes out like a mousse," Dupuy explains.

Dupuy worked in some high-profile New York restaurants before he got to Lespinasse, including stints at The Quilted Giraffe, Lafayette, Le Cirque and La Côte Basque. He discovered the joys of wine at The Quilted Giraffe. "Saturday evenings after service we would open three bottles of wine and eat. We really looked forward to that because they were always spectacular wines," he recalls.

LESPINASSE

923 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. Telephone (202) 879-6900 Open Lunch, Monday to Friday; dinner, Monday to Saturday Cost Entrées \$30 to \$39 Credit Cards Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, Diners Club

DIANE FORLEY, 35 Verbena, New York Born: New York Education: Brown University Cooking style: seasonal American with Mediterranean flavors Signature dishes (wine suggestions): butternut squash ravioli with roasted oranges and sage (Talley Chardonnay Arroyo Grande Valley 1995); seared tuna in coriander seeds with minted cucumber and red pepper romesco sauce (Lynmar Pinot Noir Quail Hill Vineyard 1995) Favorite wines: Viognier, Burgundy, Pinot Noir

Diane Forley has been the owner of Verbena for just three years, but she is no stranger to the New York scene, having cooked at Petrossian, The River Café and the Palace restaurants. She likes to juxtapose striking and vivid flavors, such as a Mexican mole sauce with saddle of rabbit and collard greens, or venison chops with braised endive and huckleberries.

"I learned from my mother to always keep an open mind about food," she says. "She was a very experimental cook, always working with different ethnic cuisines. Sometimes the most unexpected flavor combinations are the ones that create the best balance, aesthetically."

She learned about wine for a very practical reason—her customers were asking her for recommendations of what to drink with her food. "I'm self-taught. I learned my culinary skills on the job, and I learned about wine by keeping my senses open and learning how it enhances a meal, enhances the whole experience."