



One Ingredient, Five Talented Chefs

BY STEPHANIE SHERRILL

Chef Paul Pairet of
Mr & Mrs Bund

Foie gras tends to invoke many strong emotions. Either you are against the creation of it (Google it if you don't know), or you simply can't get enough of its creamy decadence. The city of Chicago tried banning it for a bit, which only added to its mystique and popularity. As someone who used to treasure the rare foie gras experience in the U.S., I have unfortunately become quite jaded toward this delicacy. It seems too many Shanghai restaurants throw it on the menu as a crowd pleaser without truly understanding how to use its creamy texture and rich fatty flavor to create something magical. But when I find a chef who does it right, I am ecstatic. A chef who makes a fabulous foie gras dish is a chef whose menu will contain many memorable dishes.

David Laris' inventive style of cooking always leads to a few lovely foie gras dishes on his menu. His characteristically rich, creative cuisine tends to mix both the exotic and comfort food into one. It is his pure expertise in cooking that has kept his restaurant at the top of any fine dining list in Shanghai. The chilled foie gras is a beautiful and delicious

start with layers of rhubarb and brioche in between the layers of foie gras, and covered with a sweet lavender jelly. A surprising favorite was the potato foam with foie gras. This thick, soup-like potato foam has a rich flavor that complements the seared foie gras and salty pancetta pieces, and playfully hides a small potato hash brown inside. The squab stuffed with foie gras is another example of a great pairing, and an amazingly delicious, juicy dish.

On the other side of the river, another talented chef is quietly lurking. Chef Albert Servalls Bonilla once studied under Ferran Adrià (of El Bulli fame) in Spain and now resides at **La Verbena**. This up-scale Spanish restaurant located amongst the trees along the promenade has a great outdoor terrace and beautiful Bund views. It was during a wine dinner that we were introduced to his masterful skills in creating signature Spanish tapas as well as his molecular gastronomy skills. His foie gras-ccino is my overall favorite foie gras dish ever. Served in a clear espresso cup this dish is meant to be sipped, resulting in a mixing of the rich beef consomme with the foie gras foam top.



Laris

Every month in this column, Stephanie Sherrill updates our readers on Shanghai's dynamic restaurant scene. Stephanie writes a weekly dining column for Enjoy Shanghai and also writes for examiner.com as the China travel examiner.

If you are interested in contributing to Restaurant Corner, please contact us at spirit@awcshanghai.org.



La Verbena

Hidden in the hustling and bustling area of Jingan is a truly gifted young chef taking the reins at the PuLi Hotel's **Jing'An** restaurant. Although only in his twenties, Chef Dane Clouston has already met huge success from his stint as head chef in another luxury boutique hotel in Hong Kong. His style involves playfully combining textures, temperatures and flavors to provide a little of the unexpected. While he has many delicious foie gras dishes, one is listed inconspicuously on the lunch menu. The burger of hand-cut, imported beef includes a surprising creamy slice of foie gras embedded amongst the stack of beef, roasted tomato and buns—definitely not your average burger! Stop in for an elegant yet casual lunch or try a formal dinner where the white tablecloths and fine china add an air of sophistication.

Stiller's Restaurant in the Cool Docks has a lot going for it—an elegant, sleek interior; great views from the rooftop; and a warm atmosphere created by the husband and wife team of Stefan and Yoshi Stiller—yet the food could certainly stand on its own. Chef Stiller's

cuisine is influenced by German tradition but shows a light, modern hand, using the freshest ingredients and newest techniques. The menu is not long, but it features foie gras in no less than four starters including the decadent “Cake” of Foie Gras with black truffle. A well-chosen and reasonably-priced wine list and an outstanding cheese selection help round out a wonderful dining experience.

Finally, **Mr & Mrs Bund** showcases the genius of Chef Paul Pairet, who first became a Shanghai sensation at **Jade on 36**. This restaurant is a casual modern French eatery serving authentic French classics family style. The foie gras dishes are all exquisite, be it seared, served as a terrine or however else it might be prepared the day you go. The desserts, especially the lemon tart, should not be missed, and the bread basket is one of the best in town. Check out this place with AWCS on January 23rd for a special midnight dinner (all of the best Bund tables are reserved for us). Refer to the activities section for the details. ☺

Jing'An

2/F, The Puli Hotel and Spa,
1 Changde Lu, near Yan'an Xi Lu
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La Verbena

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Laris

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Mr & Mrs Bund

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Stiller's Foie Gras
Berlin

