



Orange Co. California

Sauté

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TASTE
the GOOD
LIFE



6 FALL READY
RECIPES

TUSCANY
Mushroom Foraging on
Monte Argentario

WATSON RANCH LIFE
A Crawfish Boil With
Anne Watson & Family

NATURE'S NUTRITION
Educating Communities
With Primal Alchemy



Simple. Modern. American.

Oak Grill Welcomes New
Executive Chef, Peter Lai

While there is scarcely a shortage of dining within a stone's throw of the Pacific, few have been able to rise to the level of mastery that Oak Grill has. Nestled comfortably within the Island Hotel in Newport Beach, Oak Grill offers guests and locals the very best in resort dining.

Having been classically trained in the very finest culinary techniques, and continuing to honor his familial traditions, Executive Chef Peter Lai introduces his forward-thinking approach to coastal cuisine, which he defines as, "Simple. Modern. American."

After a single bite of the White Wine Steamed Clams, you are immediately presented with the conundrum, "How can anything 'simple' taste this complex?" It is a simple equation for a culinary genius like Chef Lai. Superior ingredients + care + skill + vision = delicious. (I'm horrible at math, and I could easily follow that!) This absolutely exquisite delicacy is as simple as it is gorgeous. This American take on a French favorite delights with each and every savory bite, and does so with a mere five key ingredients. It goes to show that there is no substitute for skill in the kitchen, and that indeed, less is sometimes considerably more.

Tasting Notes: White Wine-Steamed Clams

The white wine sauce is not a mere bystander in this dish, but rather shares the stage with the perfectly tender clams. Mild and sweet leeks along with the robust and smoky flavor of the thick-cut bacon lend their flavors to the sauce, but more importantly, enhance the entire flavor profile of the clams when all tasted together. Crostini is provided to spare everyone the embarrassment of licking the bowl in order to savor every morsel of the dish.

You don't get much more American than buying and serving homegrown ingredients from small, local suppliers which are often the "mom and pop" shops of yesteryear. Fresh ingredients are delivered daily from local fisheries, farms, dairies and butcheries to supply the kitchen. These superior ingredients all are harmonized with Chef Lai's vision of combining various cultural influences with the decidedly American palate. One such victorious example is the Roasted Chilean Sea Bass.

Tasting Notes: Roasted Chilean Sea Bass

The fish greets the palate as moist, bouncy, mild and ever-so-slightly-sweet, while fennel and arugula supply a light peppery/acidic quality. The risotto is sublimely creamy, but not overly rich thanks to the light bitter-citrus flavor of the dill, and texture is enhanced by the firm peas, and crisp baby asparagus.

We would have to agree with Chef Lai, the Chilean Sea Bass was our favorite dish on the menu, hands down. And it may very well be the best fish you've ever tasted, but don't take our word for it. Take a bite.

*Written by: K.W. Richardson
Photographed by: Aaron Shintaku
and Ryan Haack, Foxes & Wolves*

Oak Grill - Island Hotel
690 Newport Center Dr
Newport Beach, CA 92660

949.760.4920
oakgrillnb.com



*“The Chilean Sea Bass
dish is my favorite,
hands down.”*

- Executive Chef Peter Lai, Oak Grill



Read the full interview with Chef Lai
at www.sautemagazine.com.