

ChicaGourmets!



POWERHOUSE

RESTAURANT AND BAR
215 N Clinton, Chicago

"Powerhouse exceeded my expectations in every way."
Phil Vettel, *Chicago Tribune*, January 31, 2008
4½ Stars Diners' Reviews on Metromix

Thursday, June 5, 2008 at 6:30 P.M.

**Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day:
The discovery that revolutionizes home baking**

Guests of Honor Authors

Jeff Hertzberg & Zoë François



Jeff and Zoë wrote *Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day* so that baking homemade bread would be easy enough to become a daily ritual for everyone. That includes people struggling to balance work, family, friends, and social life (pretty much all of us). They developed their method of refrigerator-stored artisan dough while juggling career transition and young children at home.

The book meets the needs of an amateur like Jeff (it's fast and it's easy), but it gives results professional enough to be served by Zoë, a pastry chef and baker trained at the Culinary Institute of America. And within a month of release, their book became the #1 bread cookbook on Amazon.com. Come learn their secrets. Watch them do it, then taste the results!

Chef John Peters' MENU



Canapés

*Blue Fin Tuna, Fresh Hearts of Palm
Carrot-Ginger Soup, Spiced Pineapple*
Vida Organica Sparkling Chardonnay 2006

Spanish Chorizo Risotto

*Wild Pickled Ramps, Fennel, Manchego,
Smoked Paprika*
Vida Organica Sparkling Chardonnay 2006

Olive Oil Poached Salmon

*Michigan Asparagus, Black Radish, Torpedo Onions
Brioche, Orange Crème Fraiche*
Zuccardi Serie A Chardonnay/Viognier 2007

Pork Tenderloin Mole

Hominy, Spring Garlic, Roasted Poblanos, Avocado Oil
Zuccardi Serie A Malbec 2006

Carrot Cake

*Cream Cheese Panna Cotta, Raisin Syrup,
Candied Walnuts, Blueberry Sorbet*
Zuccardi Malamado 2004

Located in the historic Near West Side Beaux Arts-style building that used to house the coal-fired generators and boilers that provided juice for the Chicago Northwestern Railroad. The restaurant now boasts a powerhouse of a team: owners Jimmy Alexander (formerly of Atropolis Bakery and Pegasus) and Mitchell Schmieding (former manager of Charlie Trotter) and Chef John Peters (formerly of Naha, Alinea and Trio).

Special Thanks to Lee Schlesinger, Winesellers, Ltd.

ChicaGourmets! Hosts Don Newcomb and Jim Price

Join *ChicaGourmets!* Membership is \$45 per year per household.

Please reserve online at www.ChicaGourmets.org Discover, MasterCard and Visa accepted.

Prepaid reservations must be received by 5/31/08; no refunds after that date.

Reservations are secured with receipt of payment on a first-come basis. Events often sell out early!

E-mail: DonaldNewcomb@comcast.net Tel: 708-383-7543 Fax: 708-383-4964

For non-internet reservations, mail to: ChicaGourmets! Premier Bank, 1210 Central Ave, Wilmette, IL 60091

POWERHOUSE

6/5/08

Reserve _____ at \$109 per person, inclusive = \$ _____ enclosed.

_____ Membership/Renewal payment (\$45) enclosed. See expiration (exp) date on mailing label.

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Email: _____

City/State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____

POWERHOUSE RESTAURANT AND BAR

215 N Clinton, Chicago

www.powerhouserestaurant.com

312.28.0800

ITLC's Overall Rating: A

Cuisine: A Ambiance: A Service: A

Powerhouse was, in fact, a historic powerhouse in the West Loop, fashioned in the Beaux Arts style. In the past, it supplied power to the Chicago & North Western Railway. In its current incarnation, it has become a restaurant of the same name, which is fitting metaphor for the team here: owner/partner Jimmy Alexander, partner/general manager Mitchell Schmieding, executive chef John Peters and beverage director Scott Noorman. It's clear that this team's intention is not to be a flash in the pan, but a solid anchor in this burgeoning Fulton River District.

The décor sets the stage. It's tailored, understated, elegant, yet inviting. And thankfully, conversation friendly. The staff is welcoming, intent on the diner's pleasure. The room is under constant yet unobtrusive surveillance by the partners, who have an uncanny ability to anticipate and attend to a diner's need almost before the diner is aware of it.

The menu is also tailored: a few, carefully selected items in each category. All five appetizers (\$11-18) are winners. It's difficult not to order the tartare of Hawaiian opah each time. However, the slow-roasted chicken thigh with toasted farro, kohlrabi and thyme is as delicious as it is unusual.

A couple of soups are offered (\$9). The cannellini bean soup is rich but not cloying, with great depth of flavor and silken on the tongue. Salads (\$9-11) include romaine hearts with Nueske's bacon, quail eggs, shallots and (Jimmy) Alexander's garlic dressing—redolent of raw onion and garlic. The tamer field greens come with roasted pear, blue cheese and spiced pecans. The grapefruit-arugula salad with shaved fennel and sumac berries is refreshing.

Currently, main courses include four beef (\$30-44), three game (\$27-32) and three seafood (\$29-31) entrées. It's a beef lover's dilemma: red wine-braised short ribs, 13-ounce dry-aged striploin? The 18-ounce prime ribeye with boulangere potatoes won out, and I was a winner, too. Well-marbled, seared but not burned on the outside, perfectly cooked interior, and meltingly tender.

Game lovers will be tempted by the seared venison loin with wild rice-dried fruit ragout or the roasted Pekin duck with a savory cobbler of beet and leg confit. The double-cut Iowa pork chop with mustard spaetzle, red cabbage and poached pear is also a worthy contender in this line up.

Seafood offerings promise always to represent the freshest and finest available. Atlantic cod is often offered, with fitting accompaniments of celery root, hedgehog mushrooms, melted leeks and Meyer lemon-oyster cream. Nirvana. The grilled wild striped bass with pearl couscous, Spanish chorizo, fennel, olives, blood orange and saffron was equally sublime.

The wine list is a treasure in this day of mass marketing. Don't look for your everyday labels. The list here is boutique winery-driven and justly boasts fair pricing. More importantly, it offers diners the opportunity to taste some fine wines that aren't generally available, owing to the wineries' relatively small production.

Desserts (\$9) here are no afterthought. They rise to the stellar level of the savories that precede them. Key lime tart is always a good finish, but don't overlook the sweet potato doughnuts or the mango upside-down cake. Powerhouse, the restaurant, does its namesake justice.

Lunch Su-F 11-2:30; Sa 11-2:00

Dinner Su-Th 5-10:30; F & Sa 5-11

Bar open continuously 11 a.m. – 1 a.m. 7 days

Reviewed by Jim Price and Don Newcomb