

The Cuisine Is As Rosy As The Setting At Carlsbad's Jeune Et Jolie

BY ANN WYCOFF | APRIL 29, 2019 | FOOD & DRINK

Jeune et Jolie ushers Parisian cool into Carlsbad.



Bells + Whistles designed the modern location with artwork like this painting by Carla Cascales Alimbau.

It's official. Carlsbad has a culinary scene. Land & Water Co. Clara. Campfire. And now, Jeune et Jolie has tipped the scales. Brainchild of restaurant visionary John Resnick and badass chef Andrew

perfected by the French, desired by all.

Let's start with design. Bells + Whistles, the aesthetic force behind Sycamore Den, Starlite and Campfire, has created another rarefied space. Arches, soft curves, pastel blue-greens, blush tones, crushed-velvet banquettes, inlaid tile and pink marble tabletops infuse a sense of coquettish charm into the room. On the custom French plaster walls, you'll find Resnick's carefully curated collection of line drawings, nude figures, mixed media and abstracts. A vintage reel-to-reel stereo spins out French tunes. But fear not, this place is more punk than precious.



The Green Hour can be prepared as a frappe or traditionally, via spoon, as pictured.

A horseshoe-shaped bar anchors the room with an absinthe tower centerpiece bedecked with cherubs and golden spigots. The cocktail menu, maestroed by beverage director Leigh Lacap, offers a globe-trot to French colonies with inventive ingredients and presentations, such as sweet potato and coconut water in the rum-infused Haiti, saluting the country's local pudding staple, *pen patat*, and his Creole take on a Manhattan, called Louisiane, in a ceramic coffee cup, a nod to Prohibition's hidden booze days. Tableside pastis service lends more French flair, as does the absinthe program. Lacap lights up when referencing the late 1800s French cafe society's "Green Hour"—5pm, when every table glistened with the popular emerald-green elixir. Here, you can order the honorary drink traditionally via a spoon-and-sugar-cube drip or try the refreshing frappe, which Lacap describes as "an absinthe mojito," lush with lime, mint and sugar.



Poire, prepared with Vadouvan poached pear, radish, Picholine olive and Parmesan

But Bachelier and his team's elaborate culinary performance art is the main event at Jeune et Jolie.

wave French; Bachelier explains that during recent travels, he was inspired by the au courant Paris movement of young chefs taking over the classic bistros, stripping the white tablecloths and heavy sauce-laden menus, and creating a culture of bistronomy (bistro + gastronomy)—refined, imaginative cuisine.



Betterave with beet, leek, horseradish, matcha and tuille

Bachelier's tutelage under chef William Bradley at Addison served him well, as his execution is

cognac and prune. Alaskan king crab and avocado in a green garlic bearnaise is cradled in a lightly crisped cannoli. Perhaps his finest work arrives as a bowl of coquilles—tender scallops in a vin jaune sauce complemented by earthy abalone mushrooms and sunchokes.



The walls are dotted with French-inspired artwork like this double paneled abstract by Marleigh Culver.

Appropriately, Lacap’s “low intervention wine” list is a tight and thoughtful collection of young and beautiful wines like Pet Nats, orange wines, young French vintages and culty picks from organic vineyards with biodynamic farming. Clearly, the stellar waitstaff is flying high, très heureux to be part of it all, from the friendly handlebar moustached greeter to surfer/#vanlife Nick, who waxes about Bachelier’s daikon potage (soup) like he’s at a poetry slam. Bistronomy has landed in a North County beach town, people. Bravo.



John Resnick and chef Andre Bachelier with daughters Elsie June and Margot Jolie

Jeune Et Jolie