

AS SEEN IN

# The Star Ledger

## Weekend Section, August 23, 2024

★★★★ RESTAURANT OF THE WEEK

### 4,670 Readers Vote Matisse 167, Of Rutherford Best Prix Fixed Eclectic Dining Destination



ZAGAT RESEARCHER REPORTS - "The mesmerizing European patio garden is my idea of enticing outdoor dining. Luxurious plants, trees & fascinating flowers amid shimmering lights and luminous fountains all come together to produce a charismatic venue for any event that would desire an al fresco scene."



#### THE JEWEL BOX

Inspired by Henri Matisse, this is the main dining room that is graced with its namesake's impressionist-style paintings. The vibrant chandeliers are a vivid addition to this stylish dining room.

### About THE DECOR & EVENT SPACES



BY GAIL GERSON

This exquisitely decorated dining gem with a magnificent European ambiance inspired by the artist Matisse has two seasonal tasting menus & is the culinary darling of North Jersey. Ensclosed in the picturesque town of Rutherford, the location alone is enough to lure you into its pleasant precincts. The historic exquisite eatery enhanced with a romantic décor is so perfect for specialty dining. The tasting menu is every bit the match of the stylish setting. Chef Greg Power has carried on the tradition with exquisite presentations, some of which I have seen for the very first time.

His entrées, are positively ethereal & his appetizers are prepared to melt-in-your-mouth perfection. The kitchen is infinitely concerned with flavors, textures & the impeccable quality of the ingredients. Love for fabulous food & love for those you invite to your table is the theme here. The specialty dishes & uniquely matched sauces will intoxicate you with your first bite.

★★★★  
SPLENDID ECLECTIC PRIX FIXED  
167 Park Ave, Rutherford, NJ  
201.935.2995  
www.Matisse167.com

BYOB; Closed Mon & Tues;  
Hours: Open Wed-Sun 5-10pm;  
Reservations-Accepted & A  
Must; Gift Certificates; Credit  
Cards: All Major; Outside Garden  
Dining: 25 seats; Accommodates  
Special Diets - Gluten Free &  
Vegetarian Options; Handicap  
Access; Will close for a party -  
Buyout Possible; Party Pkgs Ac-  
cording to Taste & Budget - Call  
Maria Presti for Arrangements;  
Children Accommodated - \$30;  
Menus Online; Good for Groups;  
Wi-Fi; No Outside Catering;  
Close to Rt. 17, Rt. 3, NJ Turnpike,  
Rutherford Train, Lyndhurst Train,  
Garden State Pkwy. Prix Fixed - 4  
Courses, \$125; 3 Course Wed-  
Thurs-Sun, \$95 Available

Chef Greg believes in making almost everything from scratch, following the seasons & savoring & caring about the food. Here the original flavors are wisely presented in all their opulence. They do believe in the slogan "Keep it simple, work with great ingredients." Housed in a historic building that was originally a horse and buggy firehouse, Matisse 167 consists of three matchless dining areas which set the scene for Chef Greg's very exclusive cuisine.



#### ▲ THE MOROCCAN ROOM

The Moroccan Room was beautifully redesigned in a very theatrical style that accentuates flamboyant colors. The room is ingeniously seductive with a very stress-free, well-being feeling of solace & comfort.

#### ◀ AL FRESCO DINING

The entrancing European garden is a patio with beautiful plants, fountains & bewitching lighting. Dining here is definitely hypnotizing.



#### THE HISTORY OF MATISSE 167 & THE NEW CHEF-OWNER

When the former owner, Peter Loria, who created this 37 year old dining superstar, was thinking of retiring, he prayed for a chef to continue his legacy. He met Greg & Lorena Power, shortly after, while they were dining at Matisse. Greg was looking for a place of his own, where he could utilize his extensive talents & wide-ranging experience. He was awestruck with the décor & the unique concept at Matisse, that offered the most pristine 'high-end' dishes at a reasonable price. Peter & Greg closed the deal just 3 days later. Peter Loria's prayers had been answered. Chef Power stated, "I will keep Peter's legacy intact as well as build my own."



Locals rave about the cuisine.



Awarded the Certificate of Dining Excellence



### About THE \$125 PRIX FIXE

#### FIRST COURSE

Appetizers will please every desire. The enticing BURRATA CHEESE AND LONG STEM PAN-FRIED ARTICHOKE that is wrapped with Speck Ham is superb. I also recommend the treasured SEARED OCTOPUS, that is plated with Chorizo, Roasted Fingerling Potatoes, Piperade and tasty Lemon Caper Butter. Another luscious starter is the WHITE SESAME SEED CUBED SUSHI TUNA. This arrives covered with Red Onion, crushed Oven Dried Pineapple, a Scallion Pancake, smoked Soy Vinaigrette, a bit of Chili oil, Wasabi Jus & Crushed Wasabi Peas.



#### SECOND COURSE

My party adored the succulent CRAB STUFFED SHRIMP that was delightfully stuffed with fresh CRAB & served with Julienne Summer Vegetables, a very yummy Beet Vinaigrette and then wonderfully drizzled with a Lemon Beurre Blanc.

You can also choose the uniquely designed PASTRAMI REUBEN with scrumptious, thinly sliced Pastrami & nicely flavored Smoked Duck Breast, Hot Mustard Vinaigrette, Swiss cheese, fresh house made Cole Slaw & Julienne Dill Pickle.

I was a consummate fan of the PAN SEARED SCALLOP choice that is blissfully served with house made Gnocchi, the delectable Crème of fresh Spring Peas, amid Lemon Butter. There is also Edamame that has a dollop of Bacon & Sage Crème & finished with Lemon & Baby Greens. If FOIE GRAS TRUFFLE is your pleasure you can request it for an additional \$10.

#### THIRD COURSE

Try the PAN ROASTED MUSCOVY DUCK BREAST & SOBA NOODLE, wonderfully covered with Fried Tempura Cabbage along with Black Cherry Ginger Marmalade, Cherry Balsamic Jus, Sage Yogurt Vinaigrette & Baby Greens. The Creamed Pearl Onions & Baby Bok Choy were a lip-smacking experience.

PAN SEARED CHILEAN SEA BASS - The fine tasting Green Onion Crab Risotto is quite delectable & beautifully accompanied by a mound of Mango Crème & Pineapple Ginger Chutney that added a heavenly flavor. The Coconut Yogurt Jus & chilled Pineapple Vinaigrette were the perfect finish to this delightful dish.

MATISSE BURGER - This star burger is huge portioned & the deliciously different combination of Beef Short Ribs, Gorgonzola Mousse with a heart warming BBQ Demi-Glace & A VERY APPEALING Osso Buco Chicken Wing is perfection on a plate.

THIRD SAVORY COURSE OPTION (\$15 supplement) - PAN SEARED SIRLOIN with Creamed Spinach, Red Wine Demi, Crispy Polenta Cake, Corn Jus & Crispy Onion.



### About THE THIRD COURSE

(L. TO R. TOP ROW) RAY, MOLLY, ARIELE, KEITH. (BOTTOM ROW) GAIL, CHEF GREG POWER, TERRY, CHARLIE: Matisse is the culinary darling of foodies & lures you into its pleasant precincts. Behind the scenes Matisse has an amazing team. Chef Greg is assisted by Co-owner and Director of Sales Maria Presti, Maitre'd Adrian Bello, Captain Keith McMillan, Sous Chef Ariel Lopez, Heidi Loria who is the Dessert aficionado & Molly Bohan, Assistant Sous Chef. They assure this restaurant is dedicated to those who seek fine food.



### About THE FOURTH COURSE

#### CHOOSE FROM THESE 3 PRESENTATIONS

These sweet endings are all made in-house and are as exceptional as their predecessors. The desserts are brilliantly conceived and even more beautifully presented. The Crème Brulee is a gorgeous combination of Vanilla Bean, Fresh Fruit, Mint & Powdered Sugar & leaves you wanting more. Another artistically delicious presentation is the PB & J BROWNIE with Peanut Butter Mousse, Strawberry Marmalade, Whipped Crème & Strawberry Vanilla Jus. This was a big hit at our table. Call it a tower of joy or a party on a plate the flavorsome ORANGE VANILLA CHEESECAKE with a Graham Cracker Crust, Orange Vanilla Crème is tastefully nicely topped with Orange Marmalade & homemade Whipped Cream. The Orange Vanilla Jus is slightly drizzled on the cake and it is splendid.

### About EXECUTIVE CHEF GREG POWER

Greg graduated the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Chicago and for the next 15 years worked & learned from our country's most illustrious chefs, including David Burke at David Burke Prime and Geoffrey Zakarian at The National. Other fine places that he sharpened his culinary savoir-faire at was in Manhattan's Capital Grille, Harry's Café and Steakhouse and many more.

He explained that he was grateful to Edward's Steakhouse in Jersey City, for giving him his first job and once stole the show as a contestant on the reality TV show, "Chopped." Taking all of this under consideration, it is easy to see why Chef Powers was in the right place at the right time. Mr. Loria stated, "I am thankful Greg walked in when he did. Matisse is in good hands." And I heartily agree.

