

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## La Meridienne

Always on the lookout for new great restaurants, I was especially pleased with La Méridienne, a casual-chic sleeper of a restaurant located on the beach in Tartane, Martinique.



The restaurant opened in April 2004, yet Edward F. Nesta and I almost missed having dinner there, because when we went to have dinner there in April 2006, someone had removed all of their signage. Fortunately, we heard very good things about the restaurant, and were determined that we would somehow find them, which we did, with the help of directions from friendly neighbors. The restaurant now has new signs, placed higher than the previous signs. I guess perhaps that someone was jealous of the competition.

After our adventure to find the restaurant, we were more than ready for an island cocktail to assuage our thirst, and were delightfully surprised with their inventive cocktail menu. We decided to forego our usual wine for dinner and create a cocktail pairing dinner. We selected the Passion Killer to begin, which was a deliciously lovely combination of Rhum Vieux, guava, pineapple, lime and cane syrup served in a tall pilsner glass garnished with bougainvillea threaded on a skewer, beautifully presented and very enjoyable.



Edward paired his cocktail with a Tartar of marlin, fig, olive, pink peppercorn and crispy salad, which was an abundant amount of tartar of marlin served with mixed greens with balsamic vinaigrette, sliced black olives and red pepper. I selected the Tempura of scallops, crunchy vegetables with sesame and balsamic vinegar, which were five crunchy golden tempura scallops surrounding a mound of crispy haricot verts and sliced zucchini with chopped red pepper to provide a dash of color, and a balsamic reduction painted on the plate to create an Asian design between each of the scallops.



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For his second pairing, Edward selected the Bloody Tanioucha Roses made with vodka, homemade rose ice cream, orange juice, lime juice and cane syrup, paired with sliced Magret Duck served medium rare with oranges, fennel tagliatelle, pink peppercorn basmati rice with grapes and an orange sauce.

I paired their Planteur cocktail made with rum, pineapple, mango, orange, lime, grenadine, nutmeg, and cinnamon with Salmon in papillote, julienne of fennel, basmati rice and anise seed beurre blanc. I opened the paper to discover perfectly grilled fennel and a moist and flavorful salmon in a cream sauce.



For dessert, Edward selected the Devouring Passion, an honorable combination of gingerbread, fig and dark chocolate ice creams. I selected the unlikely mixture of Pear roasted in vanilla, olive oil, with hazelnut crumble sorbet and peppered fromage blanc, that was absolutely fabulous. Martinique is called the island of flowers, and La Méridienne incorporates many floral flavors into their homemade ice cream, which they make with lavender, rose and jasmine. When Samuel heard that we love homemade ice cream, he insisted that we sample kiwi, banana, and peppered fromage ice cream as well. Not ones to turn our noses up at homemade ice cream; we somehow managed to savor each of their delectable ice creams.



The restaurant has a sophisticated menu expertly executed by their young chef Sébastien Finck-Metz, who is originally from the northeast of France. He began his culinary training at 16 years, and at 24 years, he has a firm grasp of technique and execution. The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner, and is closed on Sunday evenings and all day Monday.

**La Méridienne**

**Plage de l'anse l'etang**

**Tartane**

**Martinique, FWI**

**Telephone: +596 596 58 79 91**

**Fax: +596 596 58 78 59**

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