

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## Margaux



Chef Michael Hoffman, Chef and Owner of [Margaux](#) (one-star Michelin, 16 points GaultMillau and four cutlery) in Berlin, takes guests on a Menu Voyage de Cuisine with his Cuisine Avantgarde Classique ®.

Margaux features a contemporary sophisticated décor with glowing walls of onyx, and large antique mirrors hanging on opposite walls over dramatic displays of pink and white Himalayan salt in glass cases.

Chef Hoffmann and his wife Kathrin know all about creating an inviting atmosphere in the restaurant. Edward F. Nesta and I had dinner at the restaurant in March 2007, where we entered Margaux to the sound of low jazz music in the background, as Maitre d'hôtel Gasumino Pireddu graciously welcomed us and escorted us to our table.

A tall black vase filled with white lilies, spear like foliage, and twigs heralded the arrival of spring on the reception desk, and red and peach velvet chairs and banquettes added contrast to the tables draped with white linens and accessorized with candles set in white votives softly illuminating the room.



We began our pre-"Voyage" with an aperitif of Champagne Brut Ruinart to accompany the Amuse Bouche of mezuna, calamari, julienne radish, and bell pepper presented in a deep bowl, which the servers embellished by pouring a rich sauce over the calamari at tableside. The Amuse Bouche was paired with two baguette rounds topped with caramelized radish, and thin baguettes, warm from the oven, served with a selection of salted butter from Normandy and unsalted butter.



The real "Voyage" for Edward began with his first course of Gillardeau Oysters, the house specialty, with a Parfait of Oysters with Champagne Beaumes de Venise and Roasted Pancetta; Glazed Oyster with Kashmir-Curry and Candied Pineapple; and lastly Baked Oyster with Champagne-Apple Sauerkraut. This course really stood out with its "eye mask" shaped plate with the glazed oyster on one side and the baked oyster on the other, and pureed oysters served with foam in a brown eggshell on a salt bed served on a large round plate. Paired with a 2005 Weingut Kirsten Weisser Burgunder, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, this course was splendid. Edward gave me a small taste of the Kashmir-Curry sauce, naturally not his oyster, and the taste was so delightful with a lovely zing to it, that I wanted to ask Chef Hoffmann if I could have a bowl of the sauce, however, I somehow managed to restrain myself.

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My "Voyage" began with a first course of Bretonic Lobster sautéed with Lime and Olive Oil, Pak-Choi with "Piment d'Eslette" and Glazed Red Pepper, and Sabayon of Olive Oil with Broad Beans, gorgeously presented on a large plate with the lobster removed from its shell with pak-choi sprinkled with paprika placed alongside the lobster, with a tempting sabayon sauce made from the broad beans and olive oil. If that was not perfect enough, a heavenly bowl of Lobster Bisque was the companion to this tasty course, and no, I did not share my lobster with Edward since he did not share his oysters.

We continued with a second course of Crispy Sautéed Sea Bass with Rosemary, Ragout of Baby Artichokes, Yellow Carrots, Spinach and Basil with Jus of Olive Oil with Candied Red Pepper, which was another artistically presented dish with great taste.



For his third course, Edward had Glazed Shoulder of Lamb Mediterranean Style with Tarragon, Thyme, Fennel, Sage and Black Olives served with Vegetable Barigoule, Leeks, Jerusalem Artichokes, Celery, Black Salsify, Carrots, Kohlrabi, Potatoes and Flavored with Wild Garlic, which was visually appealing and definitely a favorite of the evening.



I continued with Glazed Winter Vegetables with Black Perigord Truffles with Yellow and White Turnips, Black Salsify, Artichokes, Leeks, Celery, Kohlrabi, Purple Potatoes, Carrots, Jerusalem Artichokes, Vegetable Juice with Butter and Black Truffles. Chef Hoffmann loves vegetables and this dish clearly exemplified his joy as he cooked the vegetables to perfection and then topped them with a decadent extravagance of black truffles, demonstrating that vegetarian courses need not be boring, and this course was anything but boring.



Although the restaurant has a lovely cheese trolley with mostly Alsatian cheeses, we decided to complete our "Voyage" on a sweet note. For our dessert course, we had a tempting trio of Glazed Pineapple with Pistachios and Mumbai Curry; Caramelized Brioche-Pudding with Sweet Potatoes; and Arabian Mocha

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Sorbet. We definitely made the correct choice, as the pineapple spear was served warm with crunchy pistachios, the quenelle of Arabian mocha sorbet sat on a cookie base with a spicy cookie ring as a garnish, and the caramelized brioche pudding was presented as miniature round disks of brioche layered with sweet potatoes, followed by another tray of additional treats from the chef. Paired with a dessert wine made from 100% Moscato grapes, it was a lovely way to end our Voyage with Chef Michael Hoffmann.

**Margaux** is open for Dinner from 7:00 pm - 10:30 pm from Monday - Saturday. The restaurant is closed on Sunday.

Read about **Margaux** in the **Chefs' Recipes** where **Chef Hoffman** shares an enticing fish recipe in **English** and in **German**.



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