

dine write

By Beatrice Allan
Photography by Julie Soter



CINQ at La Colombe d'Or
3410 Montrose Blvd. | Houston, TX 77006
713.469.4750 | www.lacolombedor.com

HOURS:

Monday – Friday, 11:30am–2pm
Monday – Thursday 6pm–9pm
Friday & Saturday 6pm–11pm

SAMPLE MENU SELECTIONS

appetizers

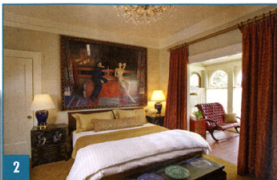
- **Labster Salad** *new ideas* In a Dijon mustard remoulade over rice vinegar marinated cucumber 19
- **Calendula Prawns** *new ideas* Berrigan polenta, tomato compote, shrimp cassanell 18/32
- **Jumbo Lump Crab or Loch Duart Salmon Tower** *Asiago* rose, ripe tomato and orange dressing 24
- **Labster Bisque** With Louisiana lump crabmeat 10

entrées

- **House Made Three Chili Rubbed Pork Tenderloin** *new ideas* Greeny Smith apple sauce, pommes purée, roasted corn relish, au jus 29
- **Cast Iron Seared Sea Scallops** *new ideas* Celery root puree, roasted wild mushrooms and mushroom essence 30
- **Asian Fusion Redfish** Grilled with Asian herbs and spices 29
- **Rib Eye with Green Peppercorn Sauce** 18 oz. 21 day aged primo rib-eye, shallot confit, mushroom roquet 44
- **Chateaubriand** The Chef's masterpiece served in a grand tradition with boucquiers of fresh vegetables, sauce béarnaise, for two or more 42pp

TWO WORLDS COINCIDE

1. Cinq Garden Room | 2. Rooftop Suite
3. La Colombe d'Or Bar | 4. Cinq Main Dining Room



THIS HISTORICAL MANSION HAS BEEN UPDATED STARTING WITH A NEW CHEF AND RENOVATED SUITES. ORIGINALLY BUILT IN 1923 AS THE FONDREN MANSION, THIS BOUTIQUE HOTEL (THE WORLD'S SMALLEST) HAS ONLY FIVE LUXURIOUS SUITES LOCATED IN THE MAIN STRUCTURE WITH CINQ, THE RESTAURANT, AND THE LIBRARY PLUS A BAR AND ART GALLERY. IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO STAY LONGER, VILLAS ARE AVAILABLE ACROSS THE STREET AT THE COURT OF COLOMBE. THESE ONE- TO TWO-BEDROOM CONDOS HAVE AN ADDED LIVING SPACE AND A KITCHEN.

With a new, young and extremely talented chef at the helm in the kitchen, classic dishes sit side by side with new innovative soon-to-be favorites. CHEF JERAMIE ROBISON, a Louisiana native with experience in kitchens behind loaded chefs at Dallas' The Mansion on Turtle Creek, David Burke's Fuchsia in New York and a short, but well received, stint under John Tostor at Tesoro's in The Woodlands – lack of inspiration or experience is certainly not found on his resumé. The menu of modern European cuisine with touches of Texas Creole accents allow Robison to not only create inventive new dishes but also be creative with his renditions of La Colombe d'Or classics.

Chef Jeremie must've known the way to my heart is vinegar. We were served a pickled vegetable amuse bouche with carrots, beets and Brussels sprouts. Just the tiniest bite but bursting with flavor to cleanse our palette and show us a sneak peek of what he has to offer.

If you've never tried octopus – never even occurred to you to order it – this is the place to check it off your bucket list. Usually served in a ceviche or raw, their octopus is braised. We didn't even know it could come this way! Braised octopus is served atop an avocado oil with garlic purée, chorizo and celery heart salad. The octopus is tender and the last little bit is crispy (my favorite part!) – with a touch of the avocado oil it's bright

and the chorizo adds just a bit of spicy flavor. The combination of flavors will have you rethinking your opinion of octopus.

Willing to be guinea pigs, a few items we had the pleasure to sample were special variations of items already on the menu. The evening of our meal it just so happened to freeze for the second time in Houston this winter season. Our variation of grilled Branzino, Mediterranean sea bass, with sunchoke purée, mushroom point and powder paired perfectly with the climate. Once you crash through the branzino's crispy crust, flaky white fish is exposed. The perfect bite is a swipe of mushroom point plus powder, purée and the result is this delicate, warm savory deliciousness. Its comfort food gone gourmet. But our taste testing didn't end there, to our delight!

Another culinary surprise for the weather was Robison's poached red snapper with crabmeat and prawns in a citrus, white wine broth. His take of a bouillabaisse was light, not overzealous, a great balance of just enough, properly prepared fish and shellfish lying in just the slightest bit of broth to warm you up.

Pan Seared Chilean Sea Bass. Many have it on their menu. Many claim it's the best item on that menu and even the best in town. Rarely have such bold statements lived up to what we

were served. And then there is CINQ's Pan Seared Chilean Sea Bass. And it really is the BEST. Served with jasmine rice, roasted peanuts, caramelized ginger and curry sage in a soy glaze, this bass is perfection. The Asian influenced dish is the ideal balance of flavor. Neither the ginger nor the curry is overwhelming and the bass has just the right sear that the soy glaze clings to. Chef Robison really shines in his fish skills with both this bass and the branzino. That doesn't mean he isn't equally skilled with meat...

To prepare us for the meat feast, we sampled one Luna Ravioli. Braised beef, foie gras, Parmesan Monte and beef just are masterfully combined into this warm pocket of wow. It's intoxicatingly rich and velvety.

Never having tried braised short ribs before, I'm pretty sure after having them here, I will never be able to order them again. My expectations have been set extraordinarily high with this presentation. Braised Short Ribs, corn vloate, red wine stewed cabbage, wild mushrooms in a vad demi-glace is fall off the bone tender. No knife required overconfidence.

After our overindulgent, decadent meal, with full bellies we toured the five renovated suites, which vary from one bedroom with a sitting area or dining room. The décor is gilded, elegant antique pieces that you might find yourself wanting to take home. Attention to detail in not overlooked even on the sillies across the street. The theme in elegance is carried on to create a harmonious story. It's romantic, European opulence done right.

Our villas are the Fragonard. All the rooms (villas and suites) are named after famous artists, in keeping with their fondness of art. The one-bedroom, two-story condo suite had a living room, kitchen and bathroom. It's a quiet, comfortable stay that transports you to another place. Almost like staying in a cute European boutique hotel with lush courtyard and romantic fountains.

The next morning it was back to reality but not before enjoying the courtyard and romantic fountains that had lead over farming icicles all around the perimeter of the sweet cherubs' tree. Romance and indulgence remain in this historical establishment even with the change of name and a new vibrant chef – all storied traditions are not forgotten, just renewed.