

## DINING

## Get a taste of Paris at The French Gourmet

BY ELEANOR HEALD  
SPECIAL WRITER

In 1993, after 15 years in Farmington Hills on Middlebelt and Fourteen Mile, The French Gourmet Bakery and Pastry Shop moved to Ferndale, changed its name to The French Gourmet and added a dining menu.

You can't find a Parisian dining experience more authentic than The French Gourmet.

In the Farmington Hills location, owners Lina and Marvin Bernstein were the first to bring roast coffee to Michigan. They had croissants and brioches before most people knew how to pronounce them. They brought these to the Ferndale location along with more than 100 tons, the largest selection in Michigan.

The French Gourmet out-in-menu began small with just soups and sandwiches and has evolved into a larger, more eclectic menu. Daily, now, there are three soups \$4.25. The house specialty is Paris Market Onion.

Among the most popular appetizers, ranging \$9-11 are Frogs' Legs; Bay Scallops Poached in Vermouth & Enrobed in Veloute Sauce (this is the famed Coquilles Saint-Jacques au Gratin); and Brie en Croute (mild French cheese with wild mushrooms, herbs and spices baked in puff pastry).

Most popular among house specialties is Bouillabaisse \$16.50, a Mediterranean seafood, tomato-bisque soup chock full of lobster, shrimp, mussels and scallops. There's Coq au Vin \$16.50, a marinated half chicken in Burgundy wine sauce served with potato galette. Duckling Monte Cristo \$17.50 has a five-fruit sauce finished with pear liqueur. Small, succulent baby lamb chops with a number of vegetable garnishes \$19.50 are fabulously French.

Quiches served with house



Taste of Paris: Lina and Marvin Bernstein offer customers a Parisian dining experience at The French Gourmet. They are pictured with four tarts and two giant chocolate dipped strawberries.

salad of the season are big. Even the hungriest diner will have enough for lunch the next day. Dinner-size salads can be topped with chicken, duck, lobster or

chicken livers sautéed in Burgundy raspberry coulis and framboise liqueur. This is a two-person operation. Marvin Bernstein runs the front

## The French Gourmet

Where: 23421 Woodward Avenue (west side, between 9 and 10 Mile roads) Ferndale (248) 541-1200  
Hours: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; until 10 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday  
Menu: Meticulously prepared classic French repertoire  
Cost: At dinner, house specialties served with salad of the season and homemade rolls and bread average \$14-18. Lunch prices are half that.  
Reservations: Accepted and advised Friday and Saturday.  
Credit cards: All majors except American Express.

of the house, taking your orders, serving your table, getting your housemade pastry order to go or fresh-roasting fragrant coffee. Lina's domaine is the kitchen. She does it all from appetizers, salads and a host of entrees to every cake, torte and pastry offered.

All menu items are made to order, prepared from scratch and worth the wait. Dinner at The French Gourmet is your evening's entertainment; don't put anything else on your personal menu. This is a place to savor aromas wafting from the kitchen, relax over food, listen to French cabaret music, enjoy the hospitality and unusual decor.

The exterior done in deep blue and lilac offers the first-time diner a clue that this spot is more than dining. It's an art nouveau fantasy setting complete with ceiling flowers, arbors and painted peacocks with coffee beans in their tails. A mural depicts a Russian ballet scene from the turn-of-the-century Belle Epoque era. There's also a coffee library housed in a now-

obsolete, wooden card catalog.

To end the French Experience, an array of ever-changing desserts is available. Cakes and tartlets served in the restaurant can be purchased for takeout. They are created in the most modern French pastry-making tradition based on the school of Gaston Le Notre in Paris. Only fresh fruit is used and butter is the only shortening. Preservatives or anything artificial are never added.

The French Gourmet does not have a liquor license, but an application for one has been made.

Dress code? The Bernsteins make one request, "No caps, please." They enjoy making you feel good in their maximum 35-seat restaurant and despise pretension. They love satisfying the need people have for a haven. Chef Lina is not the star here; her food is.

## WHAT'S COOKING

## TOO CHEZ

Executive Chef Greg Upshur of Too Chez Restaurant in Novi will be the featured chef for the Morel Dinner at the James Beard Foundation in New York on June 4. The dinner celebrates the annual mushroom harvest. Too Chez is at 27155 Sheraton Drive (northwest corner of Novi Road and I-96).

## OAKLAND GRILL

Has a new summertime menu at both lunch and dinner. Executive Chef Louis Shirkas has created a warm-weather-accented menu emphasizing Caribbean and Floridian food creations with a light infusion Pacific Rim cuisine. Prices are cooled down too. At lunch most sandwiches are under \$7 and entrees are under \$9. At dinner, entrees average \$16.50. The restaurant is at 32632 Woodward Ave., Royal Oak.

## THE GARDEN PARTY

The St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center host The Garden Party, La Fete au Jardin, 4-6 p.m. Sunday, June 7 in the Center's gardens, 27400 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Event features entertainment, wines from around the world, and a variety of food prepared by 60 of metro Detroit's finest chefs. Call (248) 626-7627, Ext. 3115 for tickets. Participating restaurants include Alban's Bottle & Basket, Big Daddy's Parthenon, Beans & Cornbread and Cafe Cortina.

## FRIDAY SPECIAL

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served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**COLD TURKEY SANDWICH**  
served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**CLASSIC CLUB SANDWICH**  
Ham, turkey, bacon, lettuce, tomato, mayo

**FRESH FRIED HAM SANDWICH**  
served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST**  
served on French roll with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**GRILLED CHEESE**  
served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**GRILLED HAM & CHEESE**  
served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**BLT (bacon, lettuce & tomato)**  
served with mayo

**TUNA SALAD SANDWICH**  
served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**TUNA MELT SANDWICH**  
served on rye with Swiss cheese

**PATTY MELT SANDWICH**  
served on rye with melted cheese & Swiss cheese

**CHAR-GRILLED HAMBURGER**  
served with lettuce, tomato, mayo

**CHAR-GRILLED CHEESEBURGER**  
served with lettuce, tomato, mayo, with cheese, onion or American

**SALADS \$4.25**  
We offer you choice of our own house dressing, French, Thousand Island or Italian Dressing.

**CHEF'S SALAD**  
American cheese, ham, tomato, onion, green pepper, great chicken breast, potato, onion, green pepper

**CHICKEN SALAD**  
served with lettuce, tomato and mayo

**GREEK SALAD**  
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