

DINING

# Lark celebrates anniversary with many couples

BY KEELY WYONIK  
STAFF WRITER

June is a popular month to become engaged, or married, and lots of couples will be celebrating at The Lark.

Jim Lark, who owns the restaurant with his wife Mary, a well-known artist, told me about a woman who said the Lark was special because that's where her husband proposed. She added - "but doesn't everybody get engaged at the Lark." It was one of the nicest compliments he ever received.

Whether you're celebrating a special occasion, or just out for dinner, Jim and Mary want you to feel at ease in their award-winning restaurant modeled after Southern European inns. The atmosphere is relaxed, yet elegant. Original artwork decorates the interior, which features tiled and carpeted floors, and terra cotta walls with Portuguese tile murals. There are lots of fresh flowers everywhere. Cars whiz by on Farmington Road, but all is quiet and serene at The Lark. For awhile you'll forget you're in the heart of West Bloomfield. Gardens, trees and ponds shelter Canadian geese and other wildlife.

"We opened one side with glass doors to an enclosed garden to help create the ambience of an inn," explained Jim Lark. "Our vision hasn't changed in the 15 years we've been open. We're always looking for ways to improve. Our cuisine is always evolving. We've only had three chefs since we opened, and each one has been better than the one before. We let him do what he

**The Lark**  
**Address:** 6430 Farmington Road, (north of Maple Road), West Bloomfield, (810) 861-4466.  
**Hours:** Fixed-price and a la carte dinners from 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Closed Sunday and Monday, except for theme dinners on the last Monday and Tuesday of each month. Will be closed for summer vacation Sunday, June 30 to Tuesday, July 9.  
**Reservations:** Required.  
**Menu:** Eclectic and distinctive with French cooking techniques.  
**Prices:** Four course fixed price dinners \$30 to \$57.50 excluding dessert. Major credit cards accepted, (except Discover).  
**Highlights:** Award-winning country inn, walled garden viewed through the dining room windows.

wants, just as long as he does it right, and the best."

Marcus Haight, Chef de Cuisine, joined the Lark in 1986. Prior to joining the Lark he was dinner chef at Gallic Le Bec Fin of Georges Perrier in Philadelphia. He uses only the finest ingredients in his kitchen - garden herbs, extra virgin olive oil, and Guernsey Farms Dairy products to name a few.

Deciding what to order is always a challenge at the Lark. The menu changes throughout the year to reflect the seasons. Dinner begins with cold appetizers, followed by a choice of soup,

pasta, or hot appetizer of the day, Italian ice, "for a refreshing interlude," and main course with accompaniments.

Choices include: Atlantic Salmon with Garden Sorrel, Dry Vermouth & Garlic, Roast Main Lobster with Sherry-Vinegar and Oregon Hollandaise, Black Angus Sirloin Strip Steak with Crisp Onions & Pinot Noir Sauce. Look for veal medallions and White Sturgeon with lemon caper & dill sauce on the new July menu.

"My mother said, 'you can only get out of your head what you put into it,'" said Jim Lark. "We travel a lot to search out food ideas and recipes, they become the source of our monthly theme dinners. We also send Marcus to France. It has been, and still is, the source of the best cooking."

The Lark is hosting a Wood-Grilled Brazilian Barbecue Dinner 7 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, July 29-30. The cost is \$75 per person, not including tax or gratuity. Champagne and Mango Granite Cocktail and coffee are served with dinner, other beverages are extra. Call for reservations, the last date for cancellation without charge is July 22.

"Our most memorable meal in Brazil, and the most enjoyable in Portugal on several occasions was at Churrascaria, specialty barbecue restaurants whose splendid feasts put even the best barbecue of our west and south to shame," writes Jim Lark in his monthly newsletter sent to customers. "Your waiter will present each barbecued offering on a sword-like skewer and slice off as much as you wish. In Brazil,



STAFF PHOTO BY DAN DEAN

**Celebrating anniversary:** Many couples pop the question or celebrate their anniversary at The Lark, and Jim and Mary Lark are happily celebrating an anniversary too - their 15th in business.

the waiter tries to sneak up on patrons deep in conversation and refill their plates before they know he's there. You get the picture; it's a crazy evening which seems perfect to take full advantage of our outdoor grill."

Latin rhythms will be provided by Heidi Hepler and Michelo

Ramo. The menu features wood-grilled country sausage, giant shrimp, barbecued baby appetria, leg of lamb, and beef tenderloin, Brazilian rice, black beans with garnishes, banana, Brazil Nut, Caramel & Chocolate bombe, Coconut Ice Cream, Chocolate Sauce, and assorted

chocolates. Reservations are a must at the Lark, which seats 45 to 49 people at eight tables and three booths in the main dining room, and two booths in the cafe (bar). Guys, don't wait until the day of your anniversary to call - it might be too late!

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