

# L'expérience Culinaire

A high-quality dining experience at a fair price



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Have you ever wondered why La Chaumière has remained one of Calgary's premier restaurants for over twenty-eight years? Where to start? Diners own their table for the entire evening, are pampered by an army of servers, and are made to feel like superstars. In return for this privilege, one might think they would have to pay extravagantly. In a market where the \$40 entrée barrier has been breached some time ago, the most expensive entrée, the Médailles D'Elan, Sauce Cinq (Alberta elk tenderloin, five peppercorn sauce) at \$32.50, illustrates how reasonable prices are at La Chaumière. Lunch items range between \$10.95 and \$17.50.

Much of La Chaumière's success is related to service. Under the tutelage of owners Joseph De Angelis and Joe Mathes (both of whom have an eye for uncompromising quality), servers know how to make each diner feel comfortable and very special. De Angelis' love of

the business is deeply rooted in his past. In 1957, he took a summer job in a restaurant in his native island of Ischia, Italy, and fell in love with the restaurant business—little did he realize that one day he would become an icon.

The menu is sublime—no effort or price has been spared to source the finest ingredients. "We are constantly hunting for the best in local produce, ensuring freshness and the highest quality," says Bob Matthews, executive chef. "Fresh fish and fresh produce [are] being delivered six days a week," adds Matthews. A local boy, Matthews started his apprenticeship in 1981 at La Chaumière and has come full circle when, in 2000, he became head chef and partner. His experience in Europe and Japan has added another dimension to his formidable skill and talent.

Matthews' cuisine gives great wine room to shine. The eight-hundred-label wine list, which won its own Wine Spectator Best of Excellence award, offers plenty to choose from. Classic French Burgundy and Bordeaux are the principal strengths, but there is an extensive range of other wines to choose from.

The list offers great value, particularly in the \$40 to \$90 price range. For special occasions, choose from some of the most renowned wines including La Romanee Conti. Customers appreciate that they get the best wine for their money from Mathes, a veteran in the industry who has worked with De Angelis since 1975 and as his partner since 1981. Feel like splurging? Enjoy a bottle of 1983 Chateau Lafite at \$795 (going for more than double that price at other restaurants).

Servers skillfully pair meals with some very unique wines. For starters, try the Tartare De Thon Et Caviar (Ahi tuna tartare, flying fish caviar, and micro greens) with a Grüner Veltliner from Austria; it's crisp acidity offers a refreshing contrast to the rich tuna. Or enjoy





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the harmony between the sweetness of the Foie Gras Sauté Aux Pommes Et Miel (sauteed foie gras with apples and honey) and the lushness of the Beauges de Venise from the Rhône. One of De Angelis' recommendations is the absolutely stunning Velouté De Pois Verts (green peas velouté with mint and scallops). And for your entrée? Carré D'Agneau, Sauce A La Menthe (a rack of Alberta lamb with asparagus and mushrooms, mint sauce) cooked pink to perfection and possibly paired with a rich, complex 2000 Les Fiefs de Lagrange (a Bordeaux red which also matches well with the Alberta elk tenderloin). Or try the steely, fruity Burgundian Chardonnay served with the spectacularly juicy Loup De Mer À L'Eau Folle (seabass all'acqua pazza). For dessert, instead of

with hazelnut fan), the Chaud-froid De Chocolat Blanc (a very intriguing white chocolate soup with strawberry and almonds), or the delicious Crème Tiède Au Citron Et Limoncello (warm lemon custard spiked with Limoncello).

If you are looking for excellence in dining (know anybody who isn't?), La Chaumière delivers with excellent food in a pleasant atmosphere—and the service is the best of the best. The Distinguished Restaurant of North America organization (DIRONA) has listed the restaurant continuously since 1981. "Our customers come regardless of what the economy is doing," De Angelis proudly proclaims. "Providing the highest quality dining experience consistently, and at a fair price, creates loyalty up to twenty-eight years," he adds.

La Chaumière, besides having intimate seating for couples, provides dining options in a private room for fourteen, the wine cellar for twenty, and two banquet rooms seating fifty to one hundred each.

—Peter Blattmann

*For more information or to request a reservation, please call 403.228.5690.*