



AUGUST 2023
TheBayMagazine.com

FREE

PLUS:
Summer
Art Markets

Your August
Must-Do's

This Month's
Rhody Gem

Family Fun

Your guide to
beach concerts,
snack bar dinners,
ice cream contests,
and more

CREPES TILL LATE IN WARREN • PERFECT PICNIC PICKS • STORYTELLER'S NEW PICTURE BOOK

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The Bay Magazine
August 2023

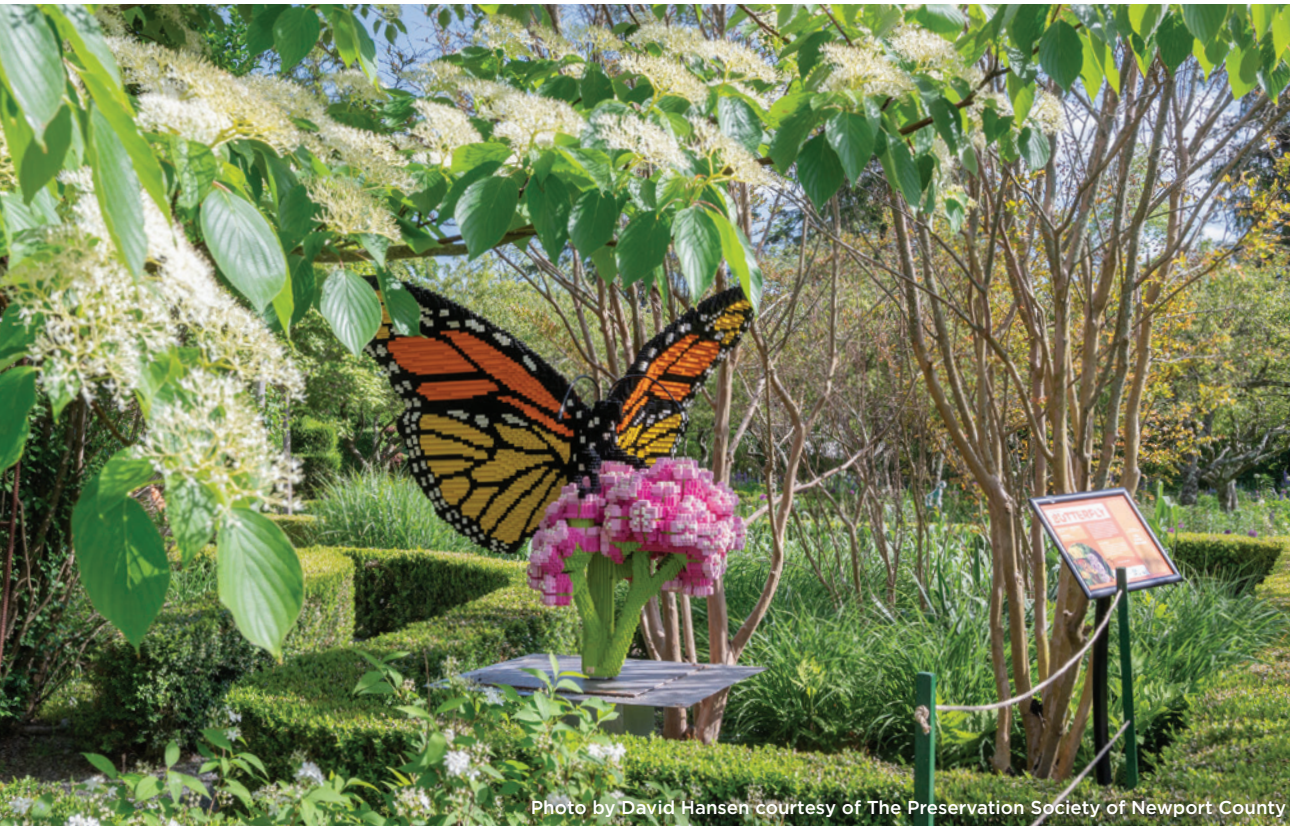


Photo by David Hansen courtesy of The Preservation Society of Newport County

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Photo courtesy of The Chenler

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ON THE COVER: Blueberry season is here! Photo courtesy of Sweet Berry Farm

By Elyse Major

Dinner Theater

Inside a small private room at Cliff Walk's only luxury hotel, an eight-act blind tasting awaits

Before my immersive foodie adventure at The Chanler in Newport, I confess to never having noticed the 19th century mansion right up there on Cliff Walk even though I've been going to Easton's Beach for years. In addition to being a hotel, The Chanler has The Lounge, a handsome bar for handcrafted cocktails and spirits; The Cafe, an eatery overlooking the Atlantic serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner; and then there's Cara, the property's *Forbes* Five-Star restaurant and the setting for this tale.

It was a dark and stormy night when my husband and I arrived and were led to a small private room on the main level of The Chanler. Large windows revealed brief flashes of moonlit waves below and candles flickered atop white linen tablecloths. Dinner would be a blind tasting, which means guests are unaware of what will be served. This "gastro-nomic journey," as it's described on the website, is as much about presentation and performance as it is about the meal itself.

My husband and I were seated at a round table toward the back of the dining area in the company of a few other eager guests at their tables. It was just after 8pm and we diners smiled widely at each other as if a magic show were about to unfold. Before long, executive chef Jacob Jasinski introduced himself, welcomed all, and let us know we would be sampling New England flavors in a menu prepared with chef Dylan Cadrette of nearby Castle Hill. There were also optional wine pairings with each course curated by Jace Chaffee, a Level II Certified Sommelier and founder of The Vine Farmer in nearby Massachusetts.

"In Cara, we adjust the nightly blind tasting menus to highlight whatever ingredient is at its prime for the day," began Jasinski. "We always try to focus as much as possible on the ingredients that come from our immediate region, as close to The Chanler and the shores of Rhode Island as possible."

Our server placed petite mother-of-pearl spoons before each of us, so I knew this meant the first course would include caviar, which is traditionally served sans metal for optimal flavor. Arranged artfully over a branded napkin, the briny black beads were housed



From the summer tasting menu: black sea bass with Marcona almond nougatine, radish, and citrus

in a tin with pieces of crab, razor clam, and cauliflower. This unexpected combination truly set the stage for adventurous eating ahead. This dinner was not for the fussy or hurried.

Prior to the start of each course, Jasinski opened the doors – which were kept closed during the entire tasting – to enter and explain what we are about to eat and why, how dishes were crafted around ingredients harvested at their peak, and the contemporary twists applied. Plates were cleared, new plates returned, and small glasses of wine to complement each dish were poured.

Course two was my first time eating

venison; it was free-range and served as a flavorful bouillon topped with a floating crispy disc garnished with radish slices and shallots. Next, a thick piece of North Atlantic halibut with savory rice and uni (another first), and pieces of turnip in a creamy truffle emulsion were presented, followed by a plate of bread and butter. Course four was Paccheri Pasta – not your ordinary ziti, the toothsome trio of ribbed tubes is filled with smoked duck and hazelnut

CUISINE: European-inspired contemporary

ATMOSPHERE: Elegant fine dining

Photos courtesy of The Chanler



Wednesday - Sunday

Seating 1: 5pm, Five-Course Blind Tasting (\$155 per guest plus tax and gratuity; optional wine pairing \$105 per guest)

Seating 2: 8pm, Eight-Course Blind Tasting (\$225 per guest plus tax and gratuity; optional wine pairing \$150 per guest)

NOTE: When making reservations, it's important to note that restrictions like vegan, vegetarian, or menus free from milk protein and gluten are unable to be accommodated; for severe allergies or restrictions, The Cafe is recommended.

in an earthy Perigourdine truffle sauce.

By 9:45pm, it was time for Mishima Wagyu rib steak with a confit potato, mushrooms, and foie gras, followed by a small plate of cheeses and medley of seasonal fruits. Meyer lemon sorbet garnished with kumquat, pistachio, and ginger crumb

signaled we were nearing the end of this tour de force. For the final act, a confectionary contraption starring Valrhona Dark Chocolate and Madagascar vanilla ice cream closed the show.

After a heartwarming curtain call, all guests were given a personalized card stock menu, signed by chefs, cooks, and servers – an endearing gesture. Exiting the private room, we stopped by the open kitchen to chat with Jasinski and his crew. “That’s the best meal I’ve ever had,” my husband gushed. The following morning, we were still talking about everything we ate, the foods we tried for the first time, the combinations of flavors, and how despite it being such a luxe occasion, there were no pretensions.

Cara The Chanler at Cliff Walk

117 Memorial Blvd, Newport
401-847-2244, TheChanler.com/Cara-restaurant

THE GRAHAM GALLERY

412A THAMES STREET, BRISTOL, RI
401-293-0657

New England Photographers

7/13/23 - 8/22/23

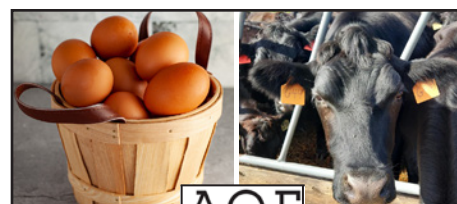
Marc Jaffe
Bonnie Jaffe
Henry Goldenberg
Jake Hart
Joshua Wright
Matt Corbishley-Brown
Jan Burling

New England State of Mind

8/24/23 - 10/3/23

Watercolors by
Wendy E. Berube

Nestled on the Bristol Waterfront among shops and restaurants you will find an intimate gallery exploding with the work of local artists. TH/F 4-7, Sat 1-5, by appointment, or when the flag is out



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