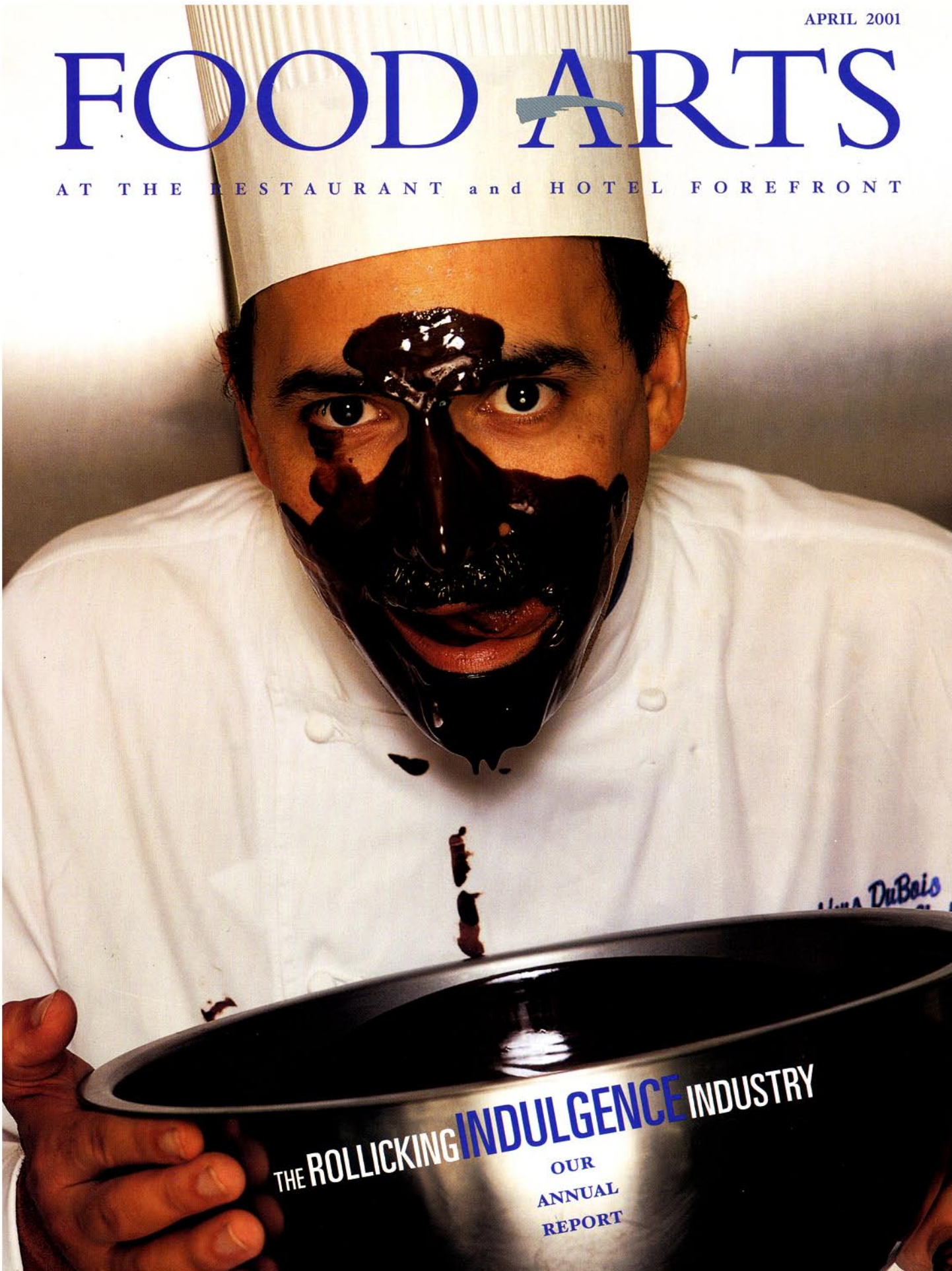


APRIL 2001

# FOOD ARTS

AT THE RESTAURANT and HOTEL FOREFRONT



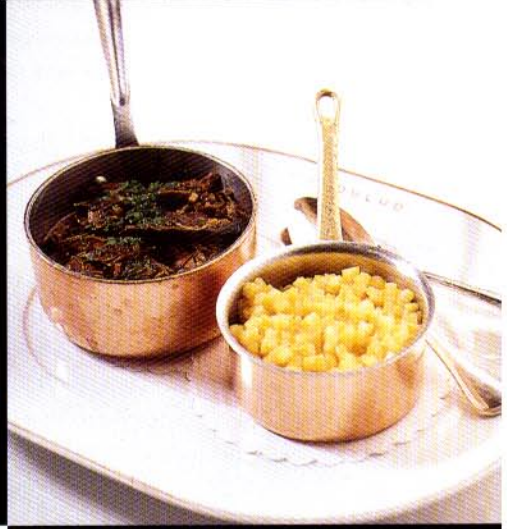
THE ROLLICKING **INDULGENCE** INDUSTRY  
OUR  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



# A KING

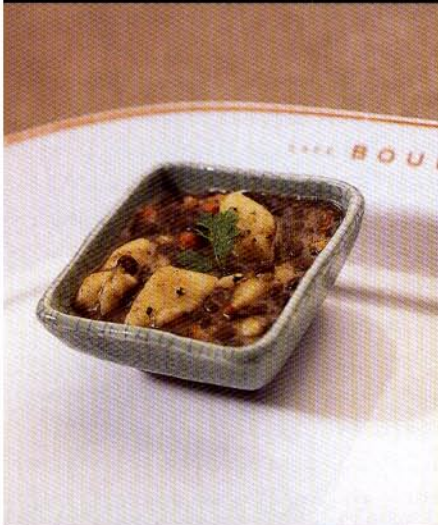


# AND HIS KNIGHTS

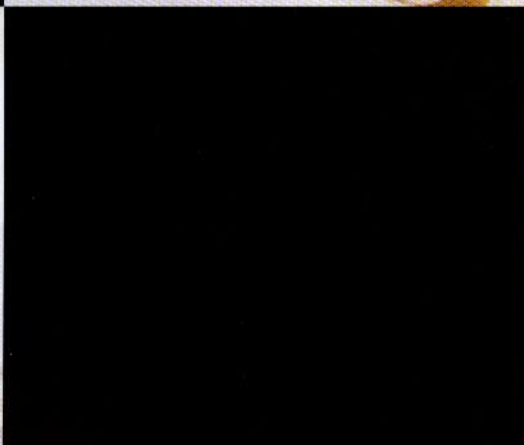
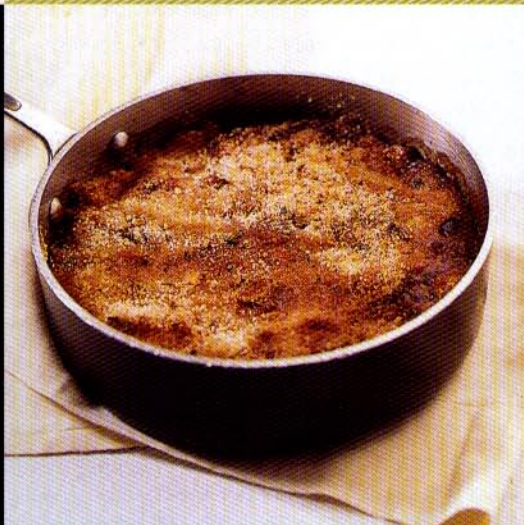
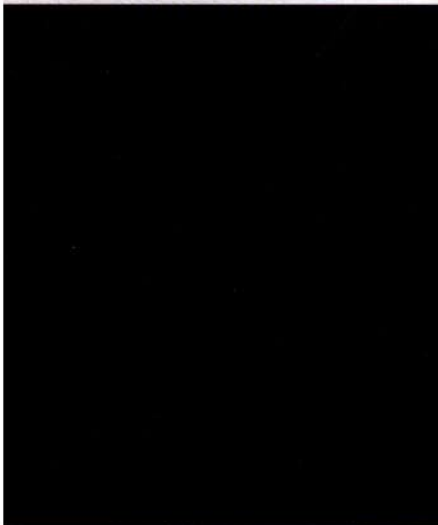


With nary a pawn in sight, Daniel Boulud's formidable array of regal dishes displays the dexterous moves of the master and his acolytes. (Dishes captioned on page 54.)





EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS DANIEL BOULUD MARKS TWO AUSPICIOUS ANNIVERSARIES BY SHOWCASING HIS TALENTED STAFF AT A 30-DISH WALTZ THROUGH HIS CULINARY REPERTOIRE. JIM PORIS REPORTS. PHOTOS BY BILL MILNE. ➤



waitstaff time to dress up the private-dining Bellecour Room for the food parade. Next time, says Boulud—and there *will* be a next time for one of his patented blowouts—he will close Daniel for dinner so he can use the main dining room. “Why not?” he shrugs, “It’s a lot of work, true, but this was really about fun.”

Rather than have each course involve a separate plate for each of its three dishes, all the components were served together, fully garnished and presented in miniature either all on a single plate or in appropriate vessels arrayed on a single plate. Two wines, selected by Daniel sommelier **Jean Luc Le Dû**, each the envy of anyone who’s ever flipped through *Wine Spectator*, were poured with each course. Boulud, the maestro with eyes and ears, beat the meal’s rhythm with his grand expediter’s bâton. But Boulud allowed each chef to step to the fore and command the brigade of stove-bound warriors when his dish was next up for service.

The menu’s tone—decidedly French, with Asian, Italian, and American references here and there—was set by **Frédéric Côte**, a former sous chef at Daniel who recently took command of the kitchen at **Georges Perrier’s Le Bec-Fin** in Philadelphia. He grouped three preparations containing foie gras on a shocking white square plate: a jelled *poule-au-pot*, a terrine of oxtail, artichokes, and black truffles, and a ballotine of rabbit with lentils and carrots. A shrimp *nage* with squid tofu, squid ink dumplings, and *shiso* reflected the time **Bruno Bertin** spent working in Japan. Bertin, chef at *Feast & Fêtes*, worked up two other cold soups for the second course—a “very Daniel” oyster/lemon-grass with sea urchin and *sevruga* and a curried cream of cauliflower/apple with mussels and coriander. Three raw fish dishes by Daniel executive chef **Alex Lee**—*hamachi* with golden osetra, leeks, and caramelized lemon; tuna with watermelon radish, pickled onions, and soy/mustard vinaigrette; and Thai snapper seiche with fennel seeds and anise hyssop from Lee’s home garden—completed the round of cold “appetizers.”

The next five courses sandwiched two seafood and two meat courses around a service of Italianesque starch dishes. In preparing the shellfish course, Boulud encouraged **Cornelius Gallagher**, sous chef/*poissonnier* at Daniel, to express the *trucs* of the trade he picked up from stints with **Gray Kunz** and **Laurent Gras**. Gallagher came through with a huge herbed sea scallop resting on gratinéed asparagus, a crisped langoustine tail atop a cabbage/bacon/chanterelle galette, and a butter-poached lobster sur-

rounded by cauliflower “couscous,” capers, and a beet-red verjus sauce. American **Brad Thompson**, the banquet chef at Daniel, drew the assignment for the all-American striped bass. Thompson applied three different cooking techniques to the fish: a steamed package of striper wrapped in lettuce and black truffles; a baked cocotte of striper, cockles, chorizo, peppers, and parsley; and a whole striper roasted on the bone and flavored with lemon, tomato, fennel, and olive oil.

**Andrew Carmellini**, executive chef at Café Boulud, provided the carbo bridge from one set of protein to another. Boulud touts Carmellini’s prowess at transforming that flour/potato mixture called gnocchi from the sodden to the sensual, so of course Carmellini obliged by mixing his dumplings with lentils and black truffles. More truffles—the first whites of the season—were part of an earthy lasagna containing layers of the broad pasta, tomato confit, béchamel, porcini, organic fowl, and Fontina. And since it was still prime time for tomatoes, Carmellini made a frothy risotto flavored with tomato water and a confit of assorted sizes and colors of tomatoes.

Daniel sous chef and saucier **Cyrille Allannic** let his Breton roots speak through his cider-braised tripe, a dish that was once a staple of the many Breton-owned restaurants that lined New York City’s theater district from the 1940s through 1970s. Allannic also roasted an immense veal leg that was served with its own jus and a side of parsnip/celery root puree. Glazed sweetbreads with orange, savory, and a confit of Vidalia onions completed his trio of veal. Jean-Francois Bruel of Café Boulud presented three dishes of Scottish game: a grouse pastilla, a hare civet with quince, and spice-rubbed venison loin with huckleberries and chestnuts.

The two dessert courses were split between fruits and chocolate. Daniel pastry chef **Johnny Iuzzini** produced the former—a blackberry pyramid with pistachio nougat, a warm fig tart with almond cream, and kaffir lime semifreddo with roasted plums and berries. Dishes 28, 29, and 30 followed, and the intrepid diners digested a chocolate lesson by **Rémy Fünfrock**, Iuzzini’s counterpart at Café Boulud: milk chocolate/raspberry millefeuille, warm bitter chocolate/ginger tart with lemon confit, and, for the final explosion, a chocolate bombe filled with caramel and salted peanuts.

There followed a rousing round of applause for the parade of chefs, some choice, juicy, jesting *bons mots* about Boulud from some of his compatriots in the culinary world, and intimations that an evening of this kind would some day be duplicated. As Boulud’s guests found out, he just can’t help himself. ■



Amid the parade of desserts, blackberry pyramid and kaffir lime semifreddo (top) and bitter chocolate/ginger tart (above). Opposite: Milk chocolate/raspberry millefeuille center stage between a chocolate bombe and bitter chocolate/ginger tart.

