

Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining •

Gigi Settles In as a Local Favorite

By Susie Iventosch

One step inside the front door of Gigi Restaurant in Lafayette had me dreaming of herb-roasted chicken and caramelized vegetables. The aroma was heavenly and when I asked Jeff Amber, chef/owner what it was, he said, in fact, it was duck. Whatever the fowl, I'm fairly positive I'll be ordering that dish next time I go in, because it smelled divine.

Amber opened Gigi, a sophisticated neighborhood restaurant, just about a year ago. He says they seem to be well-known for seasonally-driven dinners and very popular brunch items such as eggs Benedict and seasonal veggie and steak scramble.

"We select really fresh, locally-grown produce for our salads and our menu features handmade pastas, local fish and even great hamburgers," Amber said.

Many of the salads are made with seasonal fruit and greens, and the day I was there, the dinner menu included northwestern trout with Dungeness crabmeat; seared Tombo tuna with shitake mushrooms, bok choy and pea shoot salad; organic Cornish game hens – buttermilk fried; sautéed flank steak with summer squash, artichoke hearts, bacon and blue cheese; and

braised Sonoma lamb shanks with roasted corn, arugula and black olive vinaigrette.

Need I say more? Actually, yes, because the side dishes are also unusual and include warm olives, a bowl of local Brentwood cherries, baked organic broccoli and fries with whole-grain mustard aioli.

Prior to opening Gigi, Amber worked in the restaurant business for 15 years in San Francisco and says he learned his craft on the job. So far, he is very pleased with his first attempt at restaurant ownership.

"We'd like to thank the city of Lafayette for supporting us," he said. "We're off the beaten path, so we really appreciate our devout local following and are looking forward to our second year of business in this community."

When I asked Chef Amber if he'd be willing to share one of his recipes, he sent me a spinach-peach salad with champagne vinaigrette. Because we're right in the middle of the peach harvest, you'll have no trouble at all finding excellent ripe, but firm peaches for this dish. Be sure to use plenty of spinach, as it really shrinks down in size once dressed.



Roxanne Logan and Jeff Amber in the lobby of Gigi Restaurant in Lafayette

This recipe is available on our web site. Go to:
<http://www.lamorindaweekly.com>
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Gigi's Peach Salad
(Yields about 4 dinner salads)

- Ingredients**
 8 cups baby spinach
 3 ripe yellow peaches – sliced thin off the core
 12 tablespoons toasted almonds* (approximately ¾ cup)
 2 ounces shaved ricotta salata (if unavailable, substitute feta)
 5 ½ ounces champagne vinaigrette (see recipe below)

- Directions**
 Place spinach and peaches in a large mixing bowl and gently toss with vinaigrette. Add salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle almonds and cheese over top as garnish.
 *Place almonds on a baking sheet and spread out in a thin layer. Then bake in a 300-degree oven for about 5 minutes, or until golden brown.
 Champagne vinaigrette
 ½ cup Champagne vinegar
 1 shallot, chopped
 Juice of one-half lemon
 4 tablespoons Dijon mustard
 2 cups canola oil (I used 1 1/4 cups of oil and it was slightly tart, but we liked it)
 Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all dressing ingredients in a blender. Blend until thoroughly combined.

Gigi Restaurant
 1005 Brown Avenue
 Lafayette, CA. 94549
 (925) 962-0882
www.gigirestaurant.com

Hours:
Tuesday - Friday
 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for lunch and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. for dinner
Saturday
 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for brunch and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. for dinner
Sunday
 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for brunch and 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. for dinner
Closed Mondays

Sunday Brunch

- Breakfast •
- Lunch •
- Dinner •
- Catering •
- Sunday Brunch •

TERZETTO CUISINE Cafe

1419 Moraga Way, Moraga Shopping Center
 925-376-3832 - www.terzettocuisine.com
 Mon: 7am - 2pm; Tues-Sun: 7am - 8:30pm

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Free Entree Special
 Get a free entree with the purchase of another entree of equal or greater value. (Maximum value is \$8.95 lunch & \$14.95 dinner.)

Petar's Restaurant & Pub 925-284-7117

Petar's Restaurant is located in the heart of Lafayette at 32 Lafayette Circle.

* Regular menu only, not valid with daily board specials, early dinner menu or with any other specials or promotions. (soup & salad sides are not considered entrees) - Exp. Sept. 15, 2008 -

LAMORINDA's Restaurants
 ... updated August 6, 2008 ...

American		
Bistro	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7108
Chow Restaurant	53 Lafayette Cir, Laf	962-2469
Hungry Hunter	3201 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	938-3938
Quiznos	3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-0200
Ranch House	1012 School St, Mor	376-5127
Terzetto Cuisine	1419 Moraga Way, Mor	376-3832
The Cheese Steak Shop	3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-1234
BBQ		
Bo's Barbecue	3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7133
Burger Joint		
Flippers	960 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-1567
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	400 Park, Mor	376-8888
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	76 Moraga Way, Ori	254-8888
Café		
Express Cafe	3732 Mt. Diablo Blvd # 170, Laf	283-7170
Ferrari- Lucca Delicatessens	23 Lafayette Cir, Laf	299-8040
Geppetto's cafe	87 Orinda Way, Ori	253-9894
Rising Loafer	3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd Ste B, Laf	284-8816
Susan Foord Catering & Cafe	965 Mt. View Drive, Laf	299-2469
California Cuisine		
Gigi's	1005 Brown St., Laf	962-0882
Metro Lafayette	3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-4422
Shelby's	2 Theatre Sq, Ori	254-9687
Chinese		
Asia Palace Restaurant	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor	376-0809
Chef Chao Restaurant	343 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-1740
China Moon Restaurant	380 Park St, Mor	376-1828
The Great Wall Restaurant	3500 Golden Gate Way, Laf	284-3500
Hsiangns Mandarin Cuisine	1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori	253-9852
Lily's House	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf	284-7569
Mandarin Flower	581 Moraga Rd, Mor	376-7839
Panda Express	3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-0288
Szechwan Chinese Restaurant	79 Orinda Way, Ori	254-2020
Uncle Yu's Szechuan	999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf	283-1688
Yan's Restaurant	3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-2228
Coffee Shop		
Millie's Kitchen	1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf	283-2397

Squirrel's Coffee Shop	998 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-7830	La Cocina Mexicana	23 Orinda Way, Ori	258-9987
Village Inn Café	290 Village Square, Ori	254-6080	Mucho wraps	1375-B Moraga Way, Mor	377-1203
Continental			Baja Fresh Mexican Grill	3596 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8740
Petar's Restaurant	32 Lafayette Cir, Laf	284-7117	Celia's Restaurant	3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8288
Vino Restaurant	3531 Plaza Way, Laf	284-1330	El Balazo	3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-8700
Duck Club Restaurant	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7108	Maya Mexican Grill	74 Moraga Way, Ori	258-9049
French			Numero Uno Taqueria	3616 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1333
Chevalier Restaurant	960 Moraga Road, Laf	385-0793	Pizza		
Hawaiian Grill			Mountain Mike's Pizza	3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-6363
Lava Pit	2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori	253-1338	Mountain Mike's Pizza	504 Center St, Mor	377-6453
Indian			Pennini's	1375 Moraga Rd, Mor	376-1515
India Palace	3740 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-5700	Round Table Pizza	361 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-1411
Swad Indian Cuisine	3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-9575	Round Table Pizza	3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-0404
Italian			Village Pizza	19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori	254-1200
Giardino	3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-3869	Zamboni's Pizza	1 Camino Sobrante # 4, Ori	254-2800
La Finestra Ristorante	100 Lafayette Cir, St. 101, Laf	284-5282	Sandwiches/Deli		
La Piazza	15 Moraga Way, Ori	253-9191	Bianca's Deli	1480 Moraga Rd # A, Mor	376-4400
Mangia Ristorante Pizzeria	975 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-3081	Europa Hofbrau Deli & Pub	64 Moraga Way, Ori	254-7202
Michael's	1375 Moraga Way, Mor	376-4300	Gourmet Bistro Café	484 Center St, Mor	376-1551
Mondello's	337 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-2533	Kasper's Hot Dogs	103 Moraga Way, Ori	253-0766
Pizza Antica	3600 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-0500	Noah's Bagels	3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-0716
Postino	3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-8700	Orinda Deli	19 F Orinda Way, Ori	254-1990
Ristorante Amoroma	360 Park St, Mor	377-7662	Subway	396 Park St., Mor	376-2959
Japanese			Subway	3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf	284-2627
Asia Palace Sushi Bar	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor	376-0809	Subway	Theatre Square, Ori	258-0470
Blue Ginko	3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-9020	Seafood		
Kane Sushi	3474 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-9709	Yankee Pier	3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-4100
Niwa Restaurant	1 Camino Sobrante # 6, Ori	254-1606	Singaporean/Malaysian		
Serika Restaurant	2 Theatre Sq # 118, Ori	254-7088	Kopitiam	3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1653
Tamami's Japanese Restaurant	356 Park St, Mor	376-2872	Steak		
Yu Sushi	19 Moraga Way, Ori	253-8399	Casa Orinda	20 Bryant Way, Ori	254-2981
Jazz Dinner Club			Tea		
Joe's of Lafayette	3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Laf	299-8807	Patisserie Lafayette	71 Lafayette Cir, Laf	283-2226
The Orinda House	65 Moraga Way, Ori	258-4445	Tea Party by Appointment	107 Orinda Way, Ori	254-2206
Mediterranean			Thai		
Alex's	2 Theatre Sq # 105, Ori	254-5290	Amarin Thai Cuisine	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd # B, Laf	283-8883
Oasis Café	3594 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-8822	Baan Thai	99 Orinda Way, Ori	253-0989
Per Tutti Ristorante	3576 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-5225	Royal Siam	512 Center St, Mor	377-0420
Mexican			Siam Orchid	23 Orinda Way # F, Ori	253-1975
360 Gourmet Burrito	3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1270	Vietnamese		
El Charro Mexican Dining	3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-2345	Little Hearty Noodle	578 Center Street, Mor	276-7600
El Jaro Mexican Cafe	3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-6639			

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