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## Lamorinda's Specialties of the House

### Dining al fresco, part two

By Amanda Kuehn

As the workday draws to a close, the evening just begins. And with longer days and warmer nights, the outdoors beckon for a little extra attention, even during dinner. From specialty cocktails and jazz-inspired wine tastings to heirloom tomato salad and sustainable smoked short ribs, the Lamorinda area has plenty to offer the outdoor dining enthusiast. The following are just a sampling of some of the al fresco offerings at Lafayette restaurants:



Rustic Tavern

Photos Amanda Kuehn

Tressa and Gary Rust celebrated the one-year anniversary of Lafayette's **Rustic Tavern** on April 30. With ample seating, bright flower boxes, afternoon tree shade and outdoor heat lamps, Rustic Tavern beckons al fresco eaters. And with the recent installation of an acoustic ceiling, the dining room now offers a more intimate atmosphere. Lunchtime diners can nosh on a Diamond Ranch burger served with peppercorn bacon or the well-renowned Lacinato kale and farro salad. The daily house-smoked specials are another winner. Afternoon and evening cocktails include the Lavender Loves Lemon Martini and the Rustic Woodsman, a smoky scotch-based drink you won't find elsewhere. Add an order of PEI mussels and consider sticking around for some house-made pasta or a grass fed New York steak. Starting this summer, the Tavern will serve a Taco Tuesday special, featuring the refreshing Rusticrita. The Rustic Tavern is located at 3576 Mt Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. For information, call (925) 385-0559 or visit [www.rustictavernlafayette.com](http://www.rustictavernlafayette.com).

Tucked behind a vine-draped trellis and winding around a non-descript building, the outdoor dining of



Chevalier

**Chevalier** resembles a provincial French garden. "We try to follow the seasons as much as we can," said chef and owner Philippe Chevalier, who hails from the west of France and whose Lafayette restaurant has garnered five Michelin Bib Gourmand awards since opening in 2008. Chevalier cooks in the classic French style, serving house-made salted butter, walnut and olive bread and homemade paté, to name a few. The chef favors local and organic ingredients whenever possible. Summer specialties include an heirloom tomato salad with Meyer lemon vinaigrette, frog legs and Maine lobster. There will be live music 2-3 times a month throughout the summer, and a very special Bastille Day celebration on Monday, July 14 featuring live music and a full pig roasted on an outdoor spit. One of three pig roasts this summer, the celebration is by reservation only and is sure to delight diners. Chevalier will also offer outdoor cooking classes every third Saturday in July and August. Chevalier is located at 960 Moraga Rd. in Lafayette. For info, visit [www.chevalierrestaurant.com/home.html](http://www.chevalierrestaurant.com/home.html) or call (925) 385-0793.

With 16 years of serving California Italian to the peo-



Postino

ple of Lafayette, **Postino** is "the old school restaurant in town," according to manager Paul Crotty. "The first this side of the tunnel to serve burrata (a fresh Italian cheese made from mozzarella and cream)," Postino keeps a fairly consistent and traditional menu, with a few changes each month and "an Asia flare" once in a while. They've recently redone the lawn that spreads in front of the historic 1930s building designed by Carr Jones. The area is available for outdoor dining, as well as cocktail parties. The last Tuesday of each month Postino offers patio wine tastings, paired with hors d'oeuvres for \$30 a person. Alternatively, you can select a glass from their award-winning list of over 250 wines, and sip to the sound of live music Wednesday through Saturday evenings this summer. Postino is located at 3565 Mt Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. For information, call (925) 299-8700 or visit [www.postinorestaurant.com](http://www.postinorestaurant.com).

For lunch and breakfast al fresco options in Lamorinda, see the June 18 Specialties of the House story at <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0808/Lamorindas-Specialties-of-the-House-Dining-al-fresco-for-breakfast-or-lunch.html>.

## Book Club Welcomes Budding Author

Submitted by Francie Low



Photo provided

Lafayette book club welcomed budding author Karen Lynch, who wrote "Good Cop, Bad Daughter," to a recent luncheon. The book is a memoir of Lynch's childhood growing up with a bipolar mother in San Francisco in the '60s and '70s. "In 1980 she joined the San Francisco Police Academy, as times were tough and a recent Berkeley grad couldn't find a job," said book club member Francie Low. "She was one of the first-

male cops on the force. Her Beatnik mother did not like the idea of her daughter working for the 'enemy.' The book is a page-turner." Lynch has been approached by Hollywood and she was a recent guest on NPR's Friday Forum (<http://www.kqed.org/a/forum/R201405221000>). From left: Sharon Richard, Collen Miller, Molly Ogo, Karen Lynch (author), Francie Low, Carol Spiering, and Madeline Fleischmann.

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