# L'Espalier's Holiday Squab

### by Clint Hamblin

Now located at 774 Boylston Street next to the new Mandarin Oriental Hotel, L'Espalier continues to flourish as one of the top 20 restaurants in the United States. Since his purchase in 1988, award-winning chef/owner Frank McClelland's Back Bay eatery Zagat, Boston for the last eight years and is the only independent restaurant in New England for the last six years to receive Five Diamonds from AAA.

L'Espalier Chef/Owner Frank McClelland

Chef du cuisine James Hackney runs the day-to-day operation of the L'Espalier kitchen. "We all enjoy our work," Hackney said, while tending to the needs of a small bird about to go into the oven. "L'Espalier is a great place to learn about running a restau-

Oysters are always a great first course, especially when they're Skip's Island Creek oysters served with apple mignonette, cider vinaigrette and topped with a dollop of American caviar. 3 pounds rutabaga These perfectly shucked oysters slid out of their shell and into my mouth with great ease.

L'Espalier's butter poached

Maine lobster with kiwi and grapefruit served with Italian caviar was outstanding, as was the Hawaiian blue marlin with artichokes barigoule served with French osetra caviar. The marlin was rare and cooked to perfection, paralyzing our conversation until every piece had been eaten.

A delectable monkfish with has been named number one in apple spaetzle and black trumpet mushrooms served with German osetra caviar was the last course before cleansing the pallet with a lovely concord grape sorbet.

Tender foie gras with sweet

potato fondant and cranberry ginger relish was followed by unusual but quite spectacular beef marrow ravioli and venison with wild escargot ragout and cocoa satsuma

A selection of cheeses and condiments preceded a white chocolat martini with concord grape foam and chocolat shavings and a thyme pomegranate manhattan.

The standout was L'Espalier's whole roasted squab served with rutabaga mash and cranberry relish, a colorful holiday dish, easy to make and a great alter-

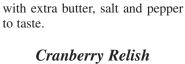
native to the Christmas ham or turkey. Cooked rare, the squab is as delicious as a tender filet mignon. Happy holidays!

## L'ESPALIER'S HOLIDAY SQUAB

Rutabaga mash (serves 4)

### Ingredients

1/2 pound butter 2 bay leaves 6 black peppercorns 1/2 tablespoon Kosher salt



### Ingredients

1 pound frozen cranberries

L'Espalier's Holiday Squab

**Directions** 

inch squares and place in a cook-

ing pot, barely covering with

water. Add butter, bay leaves,

peppercorns, and 1/2 tablespoon

salt. Bring to a simmer and cook

covered until tender. Once

cooked, drain, discard bay leaves,

and crush rutabaga with a potato

masher or an electric mixer, mak-

ing sure not to over-mash. Finish

Roughly dice rutabaga into 1-

- 2 cups orange juice 3 cups ginger ale
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 orange, zest of
- 1/2 cup golden raisins

### **Directions**

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan (stainless steel is best), and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 30 to 45 minutes or until liquid is reduced by half.

### Whole Roasted Squab

### Ingredients

4 whole squabs with gizzards removed

1/2 pound butter 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1/2 bunch of thyme 4 cloves crushed garlic

# Sea salt and cracked black pepper **Directions**

Put oil in pan and heat on high until consistency of water. Add 1/4 pound of butter and place squab breast side down, adjusting heat to medium. Add the remaining butter, thyme and garlic until frothy. Brown the squab on breast side, then turn. Baste until medium rare. Put into oven at 375 to 400 degrees for four minutes, and remove and let rest covered with foil or butter paper for 2 minutes. Serve squab with rutabaga mash and cranberry relish.

### Wine Pairing

L'Espalier's Kate Moore is a charming and well-informed sommelier. Her pairing recommendation is a 2004 Silver, "Julia's Vineyard", Pinot Noir, Santa Barbara.

### Signature Cocktail

There's something special about the taste of tangerine juice, especially if you mix it with gin and Cointreau.



Mandarin Gin Fizz

### The Mandarin Gin Fizz

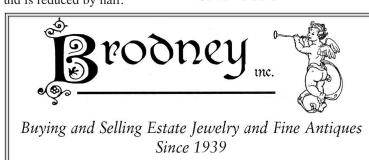
### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 ounce tangerine Juice 1 1/2 ounce Cointreau
- 2 ounces Beefeater Gin
- 1 egg white

### **Directions**

Mix all together, and shake vigorously. Strain into a champagne glass, and add an orange garnish.





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