

Dish Deconstructed

Chef Trey Foshee on his Braised Colorado Lamb Shank

While most of his colleagues are ardent pig worshippers, the executive chef at George's California Modern keeps his elegant La Jolla restaurant away from over-the-top porkiness. "It bugs me when every chef in the world is pushing pig fat," says Trey Foshee. And even though his restaurant launched a well-built vegetarian menu last year, we pestered him into explaining one of his popular meat dishes. "One of the magic things about the dish is the combination of savory and sweetness and a bit of spice."

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On braising the lamb

"I put this on (the menu) about four years ago. It was kind of an answer to beef short rib. I know it isn't the beef short rib everyone loves, you know, it's the softness, the unctuousness. It has that sticky, rich quality to it. Last year we didn't feature the braised lamb — people were crying about it. It's on the menu now till the end of March."

The butternut squash risotto

"The butternut squash is roasted with smoked paprika. It's not a spicy paprika. The squash is puréed and folded into the risotto. I'm not a big believer in making risotto difficult. I think it should be done the way risotto's traditionally done."

The feta salsa verde with capers, anchovy and garlic

"It's like salsa verde."

The golden raisin onion relish

"The dish needed some sweetness. It had the savory of the risotto. We tend to use a lot of salsas, or condiments. They add just a lot of flavor, and they're not that fattening. It's not like you're adding a cream sauce, or flavored butter. It's the way I like to eat."

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