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IN THE YEAST LIKELY OF PLACES
PAIN D'A



Lights shine on the entrance to Pain D'Avignon in Hyannis.

VIGNON



Ron Schloerb/Cape Cod Media Group

RISES TO THE CAFÉ CHALLENGE

BY JANICE RANDALL ROHLF

AT PAIN D'AVIGNON, EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED.

First off, it's located in an unremarkable building at an obscure Hyannis address — 15 Hinckley Road — down the road from Uno Chicago Grill, near the airport rotary. It's an unlikely setting for this European-style bakery with café and bistro, but more and more, people are discovering that it's worth the trip. People find their way here in droves, to eat in or take out some of the tastiest food you can get on the run or in fine dining on Cape Cod.

What they find is the ordinary made extraordinary — from hearty breads to croissants, and entrées like potato-crustured shrimp with tomato and cilantro jam.

Pain D'Avignon (“pain” means bread in French) built its reputation on bread — crusty, preservative-free artisan loaves just like you'd find in Europe. The yeasty aroma of baking bread wafts from the special French-made Bongard ovens, manned by workers from seven different countries, including Bulgaria, the Ukraine and Moldavia. On average, 9,000 pounds of dough each day are formed into nearly 200 different breads and rolls, croissants and pastries.

Pain D'Avignon is the product of the vision and passion of Vojin Vujosevic of Yarmouthport, who co-owns the bakery/restaurant with Toma Stamenkovic of Centerville. The establishment, celebrating its 20th



anniversary this year, is a destination for everyone who appreciates excellent baked goods and other food prepared with creativity and finesse. The café/bistro is open every day, all year 'round, and accommodates hundreds of diners who find a way to squeeze an automobile or bicycle outside — in the tiny area that serves as a parking lot — to make it through the door into the small dining spot: for a buttery croissant chased by a cappuccino, a gourmet sandwich (prosciutto and mozzarella with fresh basil and tomato on focaccia is a bestseller), imported cheeses with a glass of wine or dinner prepared by chef Toby Hill of South Yarmouth.

The original owners, all twenty-something friends from Belgrade, came to the U.S. in 1992 with little more than the clothes on their backs and the hope of starting an old-world-style bakery in America.

The friends opened a wholesale bakery that year on Airport Road in Hyannis. It operated for more than 15 years and handled a regular client base of more than 300 accounts.

But it took a tragedy — a fire that burned Pain D'Avignon to the ground in 2008 — to transform the bakery into something more.

“After the initial shock ... I just wanted everything to be even bigger and better,” says Vujosevic. Being forced to rebuild brought rewards. Vujosevic used the time to re-examine his business strategy and to resurrect his dream of being a restaurateur.

“I have always loved good food, good music, cooking and having a good time with my friends while doing so. The café evolved from this idea,” says Vujosevic.

“The concept of the restaurant was much influenced by Vojin’s travels through the Mediterranean,” says Mario Mariani, Pain D'Avignon’s general manager. Colleagues of Vujosevic attribute the successful branding of Pain D'Avignon to his cosmopolitan sense of aesthetics — simple, even a bit rustic, yet sophisticated.

Three years ago, Hill — a classically trained chef who has overseen some of Boston’s finest restaurant kitchens, including Spire and 606 Congress — became Pain



Fresh-baked loaves of country bread are pulled from the oven at the Pain D'Avignon bakery.
Paul Blackmore/Cape Cod Media Group



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VOJIN VUJOSEVIC



D'Avignon's first executive chef. From 2005 – 2007, Hill distinguished himself as an innovative chef/owner at Chatham's Eldredge Room restaurant. “I knew at once that Toby was the right fit,” says Vujosevic. “He understands my idea and my passion.”

To Pain D'Avignon, Hill brought original stocks and sauces, a farm-to-table program, seasonal menus and scratch cooking. More than 40 retail and lunch options were added, along with a daily breakfast special, such as crepes stuffed with papaya cream.

“We have looked at everything and made it better or changed it for something better,” he says. For example, when their potato chip supplier stopped making the dark russets they preferred, Hill started making his own. Margherita pizza, a longtime customer favorite, is still on the menu but so are daily special pizzas like Truffle Potato and Bleu Cheese and Duck Confit. Hill and his kitchen staff of 10 are constantly changing, reaching for that one technique or ingredient that makes the difference between fine and fantastic.

And people notice.

Pain D'Avignon in Hyannis combines a bakery with a café/bistro, above left. Above, chef Toby Hill prepares a mussels dish in the bistro's kitchen. Ron Schloerb/Cape Cod Media Group

"The reason I celebrated my 70th birthday at Pain D'Avignon was very simply their combination of incredible food, first-rate service and great ambience," says John Rowland, a Cape Codder who invited 18 guests for his birthday meal, a special five-course tasting menu paired with fine French wines.

"I feel Toby does magic with local foods," says Rowland. "Why go to Boston and get second best?"

Taking the plunge into fine dining was a risk for Hill. "People aren't as adventurous

here" on Cape Cod, says Hill, adding that he was afraid to put foie gras on the menu. But he did, and it worked. So did steak tartare and choucroute garnie, onion soup, and steak frites.

The French names on the menu, however, tell only half the story. Pain D'Avignon is committed to using local ingredients from farms such as Barnstable's Cape Cod Organic Farm and Cape Abilities in Dennis.

"People don't realize what's being grown

on Cape Cod," says Hill, adding that he doesn't usually have time to pick up produce, but if a farmer can deliver or "a guy walks in with a fish or scallops," he won't turn them away.

Susan Knieriem, owner of Miss Scarlett's Blue Ribbon Farm in Yarmouthport, says she supplies Pain D'Avignon with "fresh everything," which varies by season and includes chicken, tomatoes, squash, canteloupes and even shiitake mushrooms.

"In part because of TV chefs, people are more knowledgeable about food now," observes Mariani. "The entertainment value of a meal becomes important, and that includes where the chef got his meat and vegetables."

"Quality," Pain D'Avignon sales manager Colleen Franzreb agrees, "is what sets us apart, along with variety and customer service." Franzreb has been involved in many ways — hiring, scheduling, branding and now handling wholesale accounts — since Pain D'Avignon relocated and reopened. With the café on solid footing, Franzreb has turned her attention to increasing the number of wholesale accounts. "Just like the word of mouth that brings people into the café, if a chef likes you, he'll tell others and take you to his next location," she says.

Cleberson Lemos of Centerville, a Brazilian immigrant, has been with Pain D'Avignon for 18 years and is now the head baker. "At the beginning, I didn't speak English. I was just a helper — cutting dough, watching," says Lemos. "Then opportunities came."

These days Lemos leads a team of 25, some of whom start making dough at 4 a.m. and others who bake the loaves until midnight. Dedication is a quality that runs through the entire operation and that has been instrumental in the success of a company that began on a wing and a prayer.

"I call it the 'Little Train That Could,'" says general manager Mariani, who has a theory about Pain D'Avignon's success. "When you get here, you see simple things executed in a simple, perfect way. People are touched; something resonates with them." And that's why they keep coming back. ♦

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PAIN D'AVIGNON Pain Grillé



House-smoked bone marrow butter, house-made ricotta, red pepper mostarda and grilled breads

Makes 8 – 10 servings

INGREDIENTS

Bread:

Whatever bread and however much you desire! I serve our cheese bread, country and raisin-pecan breads.

To taste:

extra virgin olive oil
kosher salt
black pepper

Smoked bone marrow butter:

NEED A SMOKER!

2 beef femur bones (Split lengthwise so the marrow is completely exposed. Place bones in a pie tin in the smoker so you retain all the melted marrow fat)

8 applewood chunks (soaked in water)

1 pint beer

1 pound unsalted butter
(cubed and kept chilled)

kosher salt, to taste

Ricotta Cheese:

NEED CHEESECLOTH!

1 gallon whole milk
(raw, local milk would be preferable)

2 teaspoons kosher salt

¼ cup distilled white vinegar

To Taste:

heavy cream
extra virgin olive oil
Espelette pepper OR
ground crushed red pepper
thyme (chopped)
kosher salt

Red pepper mostarda:

6 red peppers (cut out stem,
remove seeds and slice in strips)

4 red jalapenos (cut out stem,
remove seeds and slice in strips)

½ cup sugar

½ cup white balsamic vinegar

1 tablespoon mustard powder

To taste:

kosher salt
black pepper

Method of preparation:

1. Place wood chunks in bottom tray of smoker above heating element. Place beer in tray above wood tray, turn smoker on low fire, turn grill on high and preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

2. Place the beef bones, marrow facing up, in the smoker for 2 to 3 hours.

3. For the ricotta, place the milk and salt in a heavy-bottomed pot and place on medium heat with a temperature probe

in the milk. Stir every couple of minutes. Once the milk has reached 180 degrees, add the vinegar and continue the stirring every couple of minutes, until the liquid reaches 200 degrees.

4. At this point, the curds will be separated from the whey and will be floating on top. Simply scoop off the curds, place them in a cheesecloth-lined sieve and allow to drain for 10 minutes. Remove from cheesecloth and mix with a little heavy cream, just to make it creamy and spreadable. Place in the serving container and chill.

5. For the mostarda, place the red peppers, jalapenos, sugar and vinegar in a pot and heat on high, until liquid is thick and viscous like syrup. Gently whisk the mustard into the mixture, and adjust seasoning with salt and black pepper. Place in a serving container, and chill in refrigerator for at least 2 hours.

6. Remove the trays of marrow from the smoker and place in the oven for 10 minutes. Then, remove marrow from bones, and combine with rendered fat. Allow to chill.

7. Once cool, place the marrow and congealed fat in a food processor and blend until completely smooth and whipped. It should resemble shortening. Add the cold butter and whip until combined and smooth. Adjust with salt, seasoning to your taste. Place in serving container and allow to chill for 15 minutes.

8. Cut the bread to desired size; place slices on grill for 30 – 45 seconds; flip; grill second side for similar time. Oil first side with extra virgin olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Remove bread and oil and season second side. Place warm grilled bread in a basket or suitable serving container. Drizzle ricotta with olive oil and sprinkle with salt, Espelette pepper and thyme, and place breads, ricotta, smoked bone marrow butter and red pepper mostarda on table. Eat until you are stuffed!

— from Chef Toby Hill

PAIN D'AVIGNON Onion Soup Gratinée



Makes 5 – 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

4 Spanish onions (sliced thin)

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Sachet (wrapped in cheesecloth and tied with twine):

2 bay leaves

10 thyme sprigs

3 quarts chicken stock (Substitute low sodium chicken broth, if desired)

1 pint dry sherry

kosher salt and pepper, to taste

croutons, to taste

Gruyere cheese (sliced), to taste

provolone (sliced), to taste

Method of preparation:

1. Place a large saucepan on high heat.

2. After a minute, add the olive oil, onions, sachet and a pinch of salt and pepper, and stir.

3. Cover with a lid and turn down heat to medium.

4. Stir every couple of minutes until onions are soft, brown and starting to stick to the pan.

5. Add the sherry and reduce until liquid evaporates.

6. Add the stock and bring to a simmer.

7. Simmer for 10 minutes and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

8. Remove sachet.

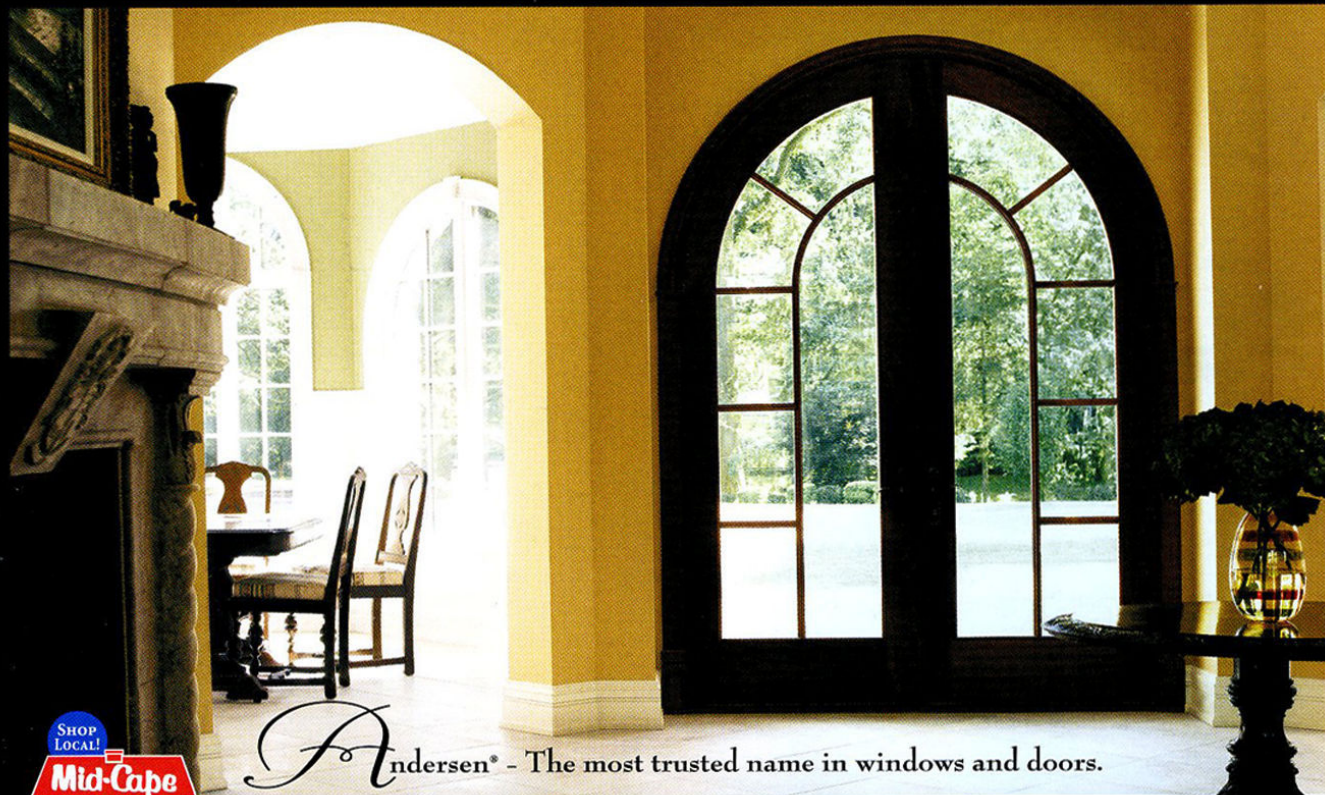
9. Place oven on broil or preheat oven to 500 degrees.

10. Place soup in ovenproof serving dishes; top with croutons and cover with a slice or two of each of the cheeses, with the provolone on top. We use two slices of Gruyere on the bottom and two slices of provolone on top, hanging over the edges.

11. Place in the oven and cook until the cheese has browned. This makes the cheese run down the sides of the dish and crisp to the sides. Eating the crispy cheese is truly the best part of Onion Soup Gratinée!

12. Remove and let rest for 5 minutes. Enjoy!

— from Chef Toby Hill



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PAIN D'AVIGNON Poulpe Grillé



Charred octopus with shaved apples, arugula, blood orange segments and vinaigrette

Makes 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

Octopus:

- 1 octopus (7 – 8 pounds)
- 1 apple (cored and quartered)
- 1 orange (sliced in four)
- 1 lemongrass (mashed and cut in quarters)
- ¼ pound ginger (rough chopped)
- 1 onion (peeled and rough chopped)
- 2 celery stalks (cut in thirds)
- 1 carrot (peeled and quartered)
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 cup white balsamic vinegar

Marinade:

- 1 lemongrass (chopped)
- 2 ounces ginger (chopped)
- 5 garlic cloves
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 cups grapeseed oil
- ½ cup soy sauce (low sodium)
- ¼ cup yuzu juice

- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ tablespoons crushed red peppers

Blood orange vinaigrette:

- 4 blood oranges (juiced, approximately 6 ounces of juice)
- 1½ cups grapeseed oil
- kosher salt, to taste
- black pepper, to taste

Salad:

- 1 baby arugula
- 3 Granny Smith apples (shaved thin)
- 4 blood oranges (segmented)
- blood orange vinaigrette, to taste
- kosher salt, to taste
- black pepper, to taste

Method of preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and turn on grill to high.
2. Place the octopus, quartered apple, sliced orange, smashed lemongrass, ¼ pound of ginger, onion, celery, carrot, white wine and white balsamic vinegar in a deep roasting pot. Cover with aluminum foil; cook on high for 15

minutes; then place in a 350-degree oven for 3 hours.

3. In a blender, combine the chopped lemongrass, chopped ginger, garlic, sesame oil, Dijon mustard, grapeseed oil, soy sauce, yuzu juice, brown sugar and crushed red peppers, and blend until smooth. Strain through a fine meshed sieve. Set aside.

4. In a mixing bowl, combine the blood orange juice and the grapeseed oil, and season with salt and pepper to your desired taste. Set aside.

5. Remove roasting pot from the oven; remove foil, and allow to cool for 30 minutes.

6. Remove the octopus from the liquid, and gently clean off the outer purple film, making sure not to remove the suction cups.

7. Separate the mantle (bulbous part behind the eyes), the head (where the eyes are) and the tentacles. Discard the head and eyes. Remove and discard the stuff inside the mantle and set aside. Cut the tentacles in half, so you have four on each side. Remove the beak from the center of the tentacles and discard. Detach each tentacle and set aside. If you are grilling them later, place them in a container and add enough strained cooking liquid to cover. Refrigerate. If you are going straight to grilling, place tentacles in a bowl and set aside.

8. Place one half of the marinade in the bowl with the octopus and mix gently. Place marinated octopus on the hottest part of the grill and cook for roughly two minutes on each side, or until the octopus has nice, crispy charring on both sides.

9. Place remainder of marinade in another mixing bowl and add the hot grilled octopus and mix gently.

10. In another mixing bowl, combine the arugula, apples and blood oranges and as much blood orange vinaigrette, salt and pepper as you desire.

11. Place the salad on a plate or platter and top with the hot grilled octopus. Serve immediately.

— from Chef Toby Hill