

RANCH & COAST

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Addison at
The Grand Del Mar

*At Home With
Greg & Nancy
Hillgren*

New Year's
Eve Fêtes

*Holiday
Evening
Wear*





PHOTOGRAPHY BY VINCENT KUKAL

Addison: San Diego's Finest White Linen It's earned *Forbes* five-star and AAA five-diamond ratings, wins the *Wine Spectator* Grand Award time and time again, and is helmed by a Relais & Châteaux Grand Chef. Going on accolades alone, Addison, the temple-esque shrine to fine dining at The Grand Del Mar, stands head and shoulders above San Diego County's thousands of other restaurants. It's easy to get swept away in gold-clad hardware, but it's not titles and trophies that make Addison exceptional. It's an unflagging commitment to providing the very best of everything diners look for in an eatery, most notably and importantly, some truly fantastic cuisine. >>

Kumamoto oysters on the half shell with chive emulsion and smoked salmon roe



Le Menu Gourmand iterations. Each is designed to provide diverse flavors, textures, proteins, and examples of high level, classic European technique. Though young for such a lofty post, Bradley is a throwback. This is no center of molecular gastronomic experimentation. Smoke and mirrors are replaced by top grade ingredients, proper cookery, luxurious enhancements (caviar, truffles, edible gold leaf), and artful plating that only tweezers and steady-handed patience can produce.

« Chef William Bradley, a homegrown talent with nearly maniacal culinary focus, works with an astute and attentive front-of-house crew that's tops in the business. It's a unit that leaves the white gloves of even the most nitpicky critic unmarred — with the exception of perhaps a smear of brandy-infused mascarpone from the warm, puffy, nearly volcanic gougères that kick off each of Bradley and company's elaborate tasting experiences.

Chef's tasting menus are available in four-, seven- and the ten-course

Though Addison has been a standout since opening in 2006, Bradley, the only toque its kitchen has known, is operating at his highest level yet. In the past, he had a tendency not to mix things up as much, sometimes relying on a certain ingredient too often or putting out menus that were heavy on purées. But the current bill of fare is widely varied, providing something for everyone, and rarely, if ever, do two items come across as even the least bit similar.

Plump Kumamoto oysters are served in their shells, topped with a petite

garnish of fresh uni, and spiked with enlightening yet softly balanced lime and horseradish, the latter of which comes in the form of a creamy mousse. Sweet Alaskan King crab gets a dollop of salty osetra caviar and complementary citrus flavor from airy, yuzu-infused clouds. Then, as a diversifying game changer, charred hamachi collar that's both tender and almost unbelievably homogenous in its textural uniformity is given Japanese treatment, glazed in sweet soy and served atop sesame rice.

Pillowy gnudi are light in texture but heavy in salty Parmesano-Reggiano character that stands up to succulent pork and a generous dusting of parchment thin white truffle that, along with a cabbage component, lends raw earthen appeal. Perhaps no one dish communicates the kitchen's level of expertise and polish as a coffee-roasted canard wherein the fowl's crisp skin gives way to moist, rich meat underneath. Add autumnal accoutrements in the form of parsnips, dates, and pecans, and it's a dish that offers both a crystal clear picture of Addison as it is, and inspiration to return for all it will continue to be.

Much of this restaurant's awesome rhythm also has to do with Elizabeth Huettinger, who continues to curate a wine list and cellar that's a cut above, while delivering service that is all at once informed, informative, and hospitable. It's what one would expect in a palatial dining room, especially one that, instead of relying on cushy banquets, marble, and other aesthetically pleasing features, matches its outward polish by creating edibles that are every bit as luxe as those environs and worthy of top billing in America's Finest City.

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