

PARIS MONTHLY CITYGUIDE

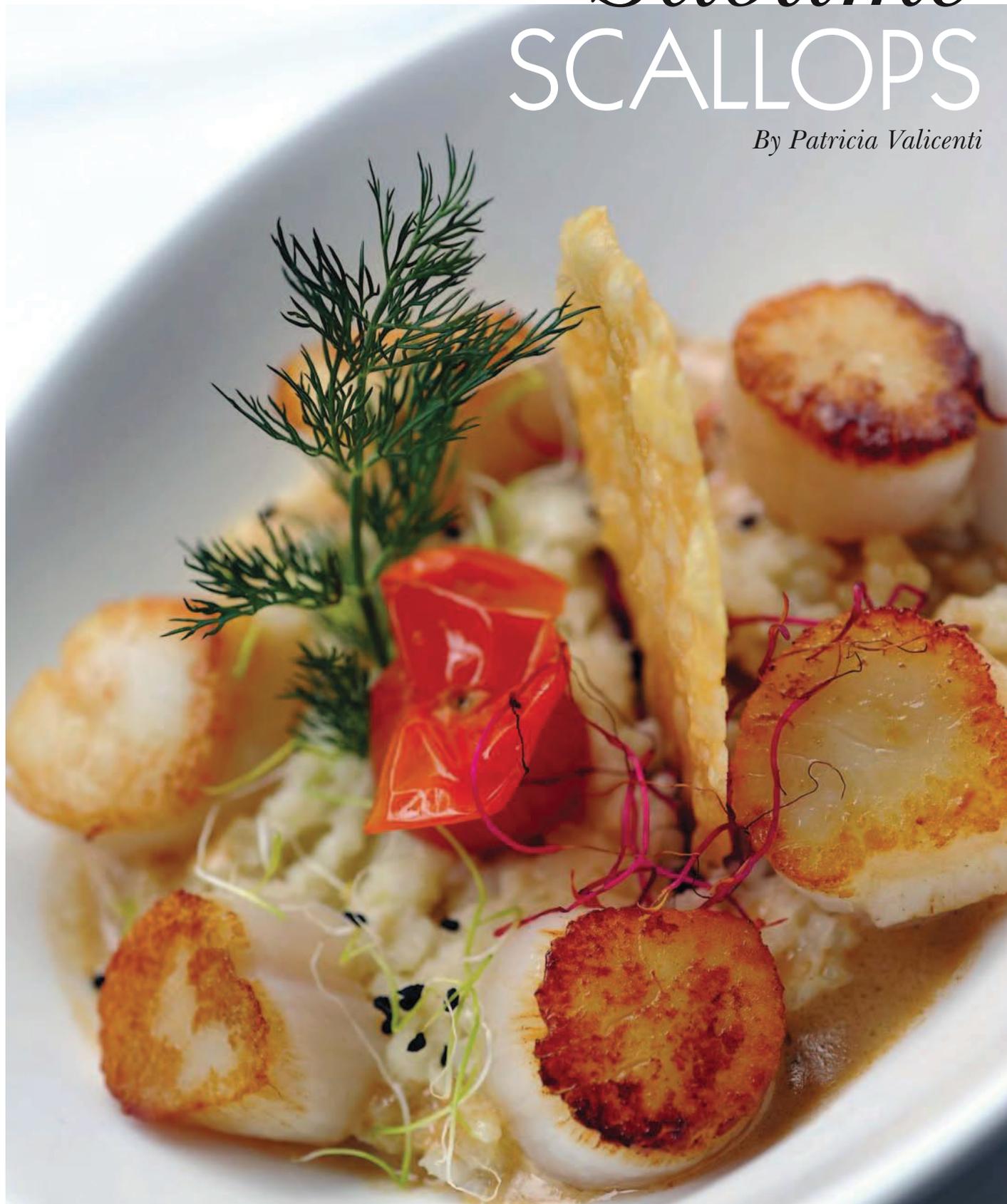
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PARIS COLOURED BY DESIGNER CASTELBAJAC

Sublime SCALLOPS

By Patricia Valicenti



The coquille Saint-Jacques, or the king scallop, a gourmet favourite, perhaps even the most sought after of all the molluscs, has been on the face of the earth since pre-historic times. Fished since at least the Middle Ages, this savoury shellfish became a symbol for pilgrims to the sanctuary of Saint James in Compostella in Spain, which brought into being its French name, coquille, meaning shell and Saint-Jacques, French for Saint James. The bivalve favours sandy or weedy seabeds along the coast and in France the delicacy is generally found in the cold waters off the coasts of the Pas de Calais in northern France, Normandy and Brittany.

Most of France's coquilles Saint-Jacques are fished in Normandy, whose Saint-Jacques received their red label in 2002. The Bay of Saint-Brieuc in Brittany is home to the largest coquille Saint-Jacques fishery in France and these were the first shellfish in France to receive a label of approval back in 1995.

In France, the fishing of these scallops is essentially forbidden from April to October, with the first much-awaited coquilles Saint-Jacques of the season arriving in November. RestoPartner, which groups together some 60 Parisian restaurants dedicated to quality cuisine and the use of seasonal products is

honouring the venerable shellfish for 15 days in November with the Quinzaine Gourmande de la Noix de Saint-Jacques, an event where ten of the member establishments feature coquilles Saint-Jacques on their menus in a host of specially conceived recipes.

So in a whirlwind here are some new takes for the ancient king of the molluscs that you can try out this month in Paris. Over at Millésimes 62 chef David Ditte prepares the Saint-Jacques with bacon and beans delicately set off with a beurre blanc and served in a casserole. Meanwhile, Jean-Claude Bertrand at Le Laumière does a nice take on sautéed Saint-Jacques with organic spelt and Parmesan cheese. The coquilles Saint-Jacques from the Port-en-Bessin beds are being prepared in a carpaccio with thinly sliced beets, baby spinach leaves and olive oil over at La Marée by Teddy Merienne and sautéed Saint-Jacques with endives candied with orange are on the menu at Flottes from chef Eric Salmon. Coquilles sautéed with citrus fruits and served with endives and a lemon grass vinaigrette are just in from Philippe Légise at Chez Françoise while the chef at Pasco, D. Barsso, has prepared grilled Saint-Jacques with Serrano ham served with potatoes mashed with black olives, and Mathieu Scherrer over at the scenic River Café is simply roasting the Saint-Jacques and is serving them with fresh girolle mushrooms.



For additional restaurants as well as recipes to download (in French) visit <http://restopartner.com> Quinzaine Gourmande de la Noix de Saint-Jacques From the 10th to the 23rd of November

CHEZ FRANÇOISE
Aérogare des Invalides, rue Robert Esnault-Pelterie (7th),
01 47 05 49 03

FLOTTES
2 rue Cambon (1st),
01 42 60 80 89

LA MAREE
1 rue Daru (8th),
01 43 80 20 00

LE LAUMIERE
4 rue Petit (19th),
01 42 02 46 71

MILLESIMES 62
13 place de Catalogne (14th),
01 43 35 34 35

PASCO
74 blvd de la Tour-Maubourg (7th), 01 44 18 33 26

RIVER CAFE
146 Quai Stalingrad, 92130 Issy-les-Moulineaux,
01 40 93 50 20