

# PÂTISSERIE BOISSIERE EVOKES THE SPIRIT OF EUROPE

A 40TH anniversary will be celebrated this year at one of Carmel's oldest and most cherished restaurants: Pâtisserie Boissiere Cafe and Restaurant in Carmel Plaza.

Last week Morgan lunched at the Pâtisserie and was so pleased, a dinner visit seemed in order.

This is a small, charming restaurant and coffee house with a decidedly continental atmosphere unlike any other on the Monterey Peninsula. Patrons are immediately transported in spirit to elegant European restaurants-cum-coffee houses such as the Café Kranzler on the Hauptwache in Frankfurt-am-Main, and Florian or Quadri in Venice — but minus the small musical groups that serenade patrons in the afternoons.

Originally owned and operated by Pierre and Elaine Boissiere for 28 years until a tragic automobile accident took them both, the restaurant was continued by their daughters for a year and a half until 1989 when Magdy Ibrahim purchased it.

The intent of the Boissieres, who were originally from France, was to create a comfortable dining room that evoked the atmosphere of a European cottage: beamed ceilings, a working fireplace with fleur-de-lys decorated tiles, framed paintings, nicely appointed furnishings, fresh flowers, curtained windows.

It was exactly the kind of Carmel restaurant Ibrahim wanted to own and operate — even before he graduated from The Monterey Institute of International Studies. A native of Cairo, Egypt, Ibrahim came to the United States in 1980 and immediately settled in Carmel, where he has resided ever since.

He managed Carmel's Fish House on the

of catering at the Monterey Plaza Hotel when it first opened.

Ibrahim's managing partner with a minority interest is Lynn Wood. Together they work on the menu items and experiment with new dishes. The cooking staff, led by sous chef Mario Garcia, works with the two owners until they are satisfied with the results and the dish is added to the menu.

Two pastry cooks — Laureano Aquino and Marcelino Martinez — are responsible for the remarkable array of extraordinary pastries, tea breads and cookies — all prepared from scratch daily, many with house-made whipped cream. These are available for take-out, or served with coffee or tea, or as desserts following luncheon or dinner.

Warm entrées, including shepherd's pie, chicken pot pie, fresh filet of salmon in parchment paper, vegetable filo triangle and coquille St. Jacques are on the luncheon menu, ranging from \$8.95 to \$11.95, as well as soups, salads, pastas, and speciality

items such as quiche de maison, brie, paté and fresh fruit, and prawn and artichoke vinaigrette.

Inventive and flavorful sandwiches are offered, also, including a seafood salad sandwich made with snow crab and shrimp (\$9.95), a croissant *campagnard* (country-style) sandwich of layered ham and Swiss cheese topped with béchamel sauce is baked in a flaky croissant (\$7.95). Roast beef, oven-roasted turkey and roasted chicken sandwiches are available, as well as a tuna melt and a veggie burger, and all are served on the luncheon with a choice of soup du jour or a salad.

This popular restaurant is frequented by



**PÂTISSERIE BOISSIERE  
CAFE & RESTAURANT**  
Carmel Plaza, Mission btwn.  
Ocean and 7th, Carmel  
OPEN FOR LUNCH  
11:30 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M. DAILY  
DINNER FROM 5:30 P.M.  
WED. THROUGH SUN.  
DINNER RESERVATIONS ADVISED  
624-5008

ness from visitors who make it a point to lunch, dine or have coffee and pastries here each time they return to Carmel. Some, according to Ibrahim, have been returning for years.

#### Scrumptious starters

Diners are served a tiny crock of tapenade as a complimentary appetizer, but the dinner menu offers seven "starters," as well — from \$4.25 to \$8.95 — that are appealingly innovative, such as half a dozen mushrooms stuffed with fresh spinach, asiago, garlic and shallots; and baked brie with red onion marmalade served with sliced baguette.

The turkey, beef and country-style sandwiches are also offered on the dinner menu with either the soup of the evening or a garden salad (\$8.95 to \$9.95). Pasta Bolognese, vegetarian pasta and sautéed prawns with pasta are served in the evening with an oven-

roasted garlic bulb. These run \$11.95 to \$14.95.

Six of the the luncheon entrées appear on the dinner menu which is augmented with lamb shank (\$14.95) and roasted half duck (\$17.95).

On our luncheon visit, we ordered the fresh filet of salmon (\$11.95) which appeared at table oven-baked in parchment paper artistically arranged so that it looked for all the world like a large, lightly browned calzone. The salmon (succulent and delicately flavored with lemon-basil butter) was baked with artichoke quarters, julienned carrots, small cubes of tomatoes and yellow squash. Parslied white rice and thin slices of fresh pear accompanied this very excellent entrée.

#### Delightful by the fireplace

On our next visit, we came in the evening and were pleased to be seated near the open fireplace. Lighted candles and fresh flowers adorned the white clothed tables, and subtle lighting made the dining room intimate and appealing.

A nicely prepared lamb shank braised in red wine, with fresh shallots, garlic, carrots, spinach and fresh herbs (\$14.95) was Morgan's entrée choice, while our dinner companion ordered *quiche de maison* with caramelized onions, roasted bell peppers, broccoli, mushrooms and feta cheese baked in a flaky crust (\$10.95).

An excellent wine list of California and French wines is offered, along with one Italian wine, and two French house wines

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## PÂTISSERIE

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are available by the glass. We decided to share a large bottle of San Pellegrino sparkling water, our favorite of all bottled waters.

A very fine pear tart and a flavorful bread pudding were our choices for dessert, the latter served with fresh raspberry compote and whipped cream on the side.

Is it any wonder that so many Carmelites look upon Pâtisserie Boissiere Cafe and Restaurant as a sort of home away from home with all of its implied comforts, where they are assured of being well fed and well cared for?

Ibrahim, in a telephone interview this week, told Morgan that he attributes a huge part of his success to his staff, whom he and partner Wood regard as friends, colleagues and peers, some having been with the Pâtisserie for five to 12 years.