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LOCAL FLAVOR REIGNS AT THE ROUNDHOUSE RESTAURANT

BY ALEESIA FORNI



A Madam Brett cocktail features bourbon, mint and bitter liqueur with a grapefruit foam.

You can hear the sounds of The Roundhouse's surroundings before you can see them.

Sitting on the corner of Main and East Main streets in Beacon, the David Rockwell-designed boutique hotel overlooks a striking gorge, with a roaring waterfall and impressive views of the rushing Fishkill Creek. Formerly a factory built in the 1800s that was originally part of the Matteawan Manufacturing Co., the building was converted into a hotel in 2010. Much of the uniquely curved structure was preserved during the renovations, and the hotel sports classic exposed bricks and many original fixtures.

The Roundhouse's restaurant received a more-recent makeover this past fall with the addition of Chef Terrance Brennan. Best-known for his New York City restaurants Artisanal and Picholine, Brennan's moved to the Hudson Valley, which has led him to take a new approach to cooking at The Roundhouse. After touring local farms and engaging in conversations with purveyors, Brennan became strongly committed to both sourcing ingredients from the Hudson Valley and practicing sustainability in the kitchen.

At The Roundhouse, Brennan puts a focus on "whole-farm" and "nose-to-tail" cookery, practices that make use of nearly all parts of an animal or vegetable and dramatically reduce food waste. "The result of these practices also means innovation in the kitchen," Brennan says. "Whole-farm cookery provides the opportunity, incentive and necessity to break away from the usual cuts and preparations you can find in any restaurant."

The restaurant's dinner menu is divided into four sections – fields and woods, nose to tail, sea to table and pasture – each paying tribute to that renewed commitment to sustainability.

"Using a whole-farm approach has been a real paradigm shift for me," Brennan says. "I won't be abandoning haute cuisine entirely, but you will see a more organic, rustic and simpler approach to some of the dishes that I create. In the past, I may have been concerned about the precise pre-



A baked Gala apple is drizzled with an oat-walnut crumble.

sentation of a dish, but now, for example, I will make root top vegetable chips just because I don't want to waste them, and they taste good."

On our visit to The Roundhouse, we start with the fields and woods, where a spoonful of house-made ricotta sourced from nearby Ronnybrook Farm is served with cranberry jam. Wait staff soon after delivers baskets of warm sourdough or fluffy multigrain bread.

A lighter plate of compressed pear salad features greens grown at Obercreek Farm. The salad is garnished with walnuts and creamy crumbles

of blue cheese. Though a pleasantly tart walnut dressing tops the salad, the dish seems lacking in both flavor and creativity. A second starter proves wildly more successful, with florets of blackened cauliflower served with a delectable cured yolk bottarga and sprinkled with shaved Parmesan, lemon and pistachios.

Seared New Bedford diver sea scallops are plated with a crispy potato fondant and a tart pickled onion. A smoked duck breast is a star of the evening, served rare and wonderfully juicy. Sides of Brussels sprouts are delightfully crisp, and the dish's subtle hints of citrus prove a true delight.

A baked Gala apple from Fishkill Farms acts as the serving dish for a dollop of vanilla ice cream in our dessert selection. The artfully presented sweets are drizzled with a whey-caramel sorbet and an oat-walnut crumble. While aesthetically pleasing, the toppings ultimately are too salty to achieve the dessert's full potential.

After that dessert, we make our way to the lounge area where we sit in overstuffed chairs by floor-to-ceiling windows and sip on cocktails – including a Manhattan we will continue to find ourselves reminiscing about weeks later. As we cozy up by the fireplace and take in the superb views of the illuminated creek, we find ourselves feeling completely at ease, though miles away from home. **WE**

For more, visit roundhousebeacon.com.



Compressed pear salad is served with local greens, blue cheese and walnut dressing.