

ESSENTIAL DINING

WRITTEN BY BOB YESBEK • PHOTOGRAPHY BY GRANT L. GURSKY

The husband and wife team of Gary & Lorraine Papp have created another must-experience at Palate Bistro & Catering

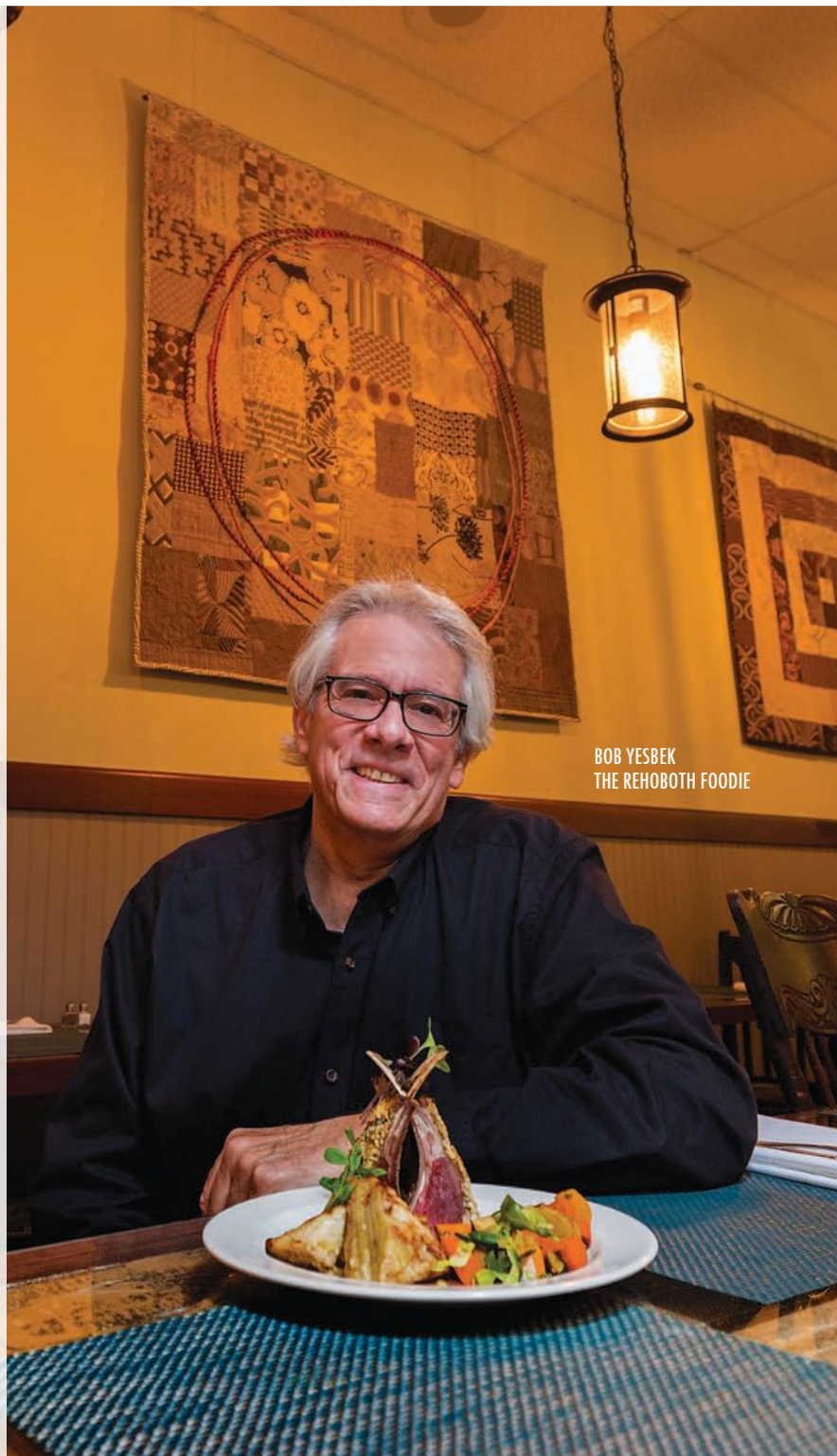
I love to give my readers, listeners and website visitors the lowdown on hidden culinary gems here at the beach. One of the best in the Rehoboth area is the tucked-away Palate Bistro & Catering, hiding behind a brick façade in the commercial center adjacent to the Safeway on Coastal Highway. This intimate spot is a soothing respite from the endless hubbub going on just outside.

Owner-chefs Gary and Lorraine Papp were the opening toques at The Buttery in Lewes many years ago. They have integrated their Essential Chef catering service into this cafe/gourmet-to-go eatery, bringing with them a long list of references that include Delaware Governor John Carney, former Governor Jack Markel and Senator Tom Carper.

Before they moved to the beach in the early '90s, Gary and Lorraine were the proud owners of the Wycombe Inn, a Victorian country inn just outside of New Hope, PA. They were expecting the arrival of their second child when they accepted the kitchen-boss positions at the soon-to-open Buttery in Lewes, originally located in the New Devon Inn (now the Hotel Rodney). After a short time, the owners worked hand-in-hand with the Papps to relocate The Buttery to a stately Lewes Victorian at Second and Savannah, where it remains — under new ownership — to this day.

Gary and Lorraine eventually created their own brand, The Essential Chef. "We wanted to share our knowledge and experience on three levels," Gary says. "The first was education." Gary taught culinary arts to disabled and alternative learning students for Now We're Cooking, a vocational program operated in Georgetown by the First State Community Action Agency. →

BON APPETIT: CHEF GARY'S WILDFLOWER HONEY DIJON & HERB LAMB LOLLIPOPS WITH A CABERNET GLAZE, ROSEMARY & THYME PAIRED WITH ROASTED ROOT VEGGIES AND YUKON POTATO GRATIN. ONE OF THE REHOBOTH FOODIE'S FAVORITES.



BOB YESBEK
THE REHOBOTH FOODIE

The second level is consulting. In 2008, Gary worked closely with Brick Hotel owners Ed and Lynn Lester to help open The Brick Restaurant and Tavern, assisting in the kitchen layout and design for the Georgetown landmark. Catering is the third element, and Gary and Lorraine are proud of the loyal catering clients who consistently rely on The Essential Chef. I'll add phase four: Palate Café & Catering in the Shops at Seacoast on Coastal Highway in Rehoboth.

The artfully designed eatery showcases Gary and Lorraine's exceptional talents with its copper-top bar, tapestried walls and extensive kitchen. Like their one-of-a-kind dishes, the menu steps out of the box with delicacies like spicy sesame watercress salad; a craft Caesar with kale and locatelli cheese; bourbon & brown sugar-braised beef brisket; coriander cumin eggplant and chickpea stew (a vegan favorite), and Gary's famous lump crab and Vermont cheddar hot dish. Of course, the slightly less adventurous



(and you know who you are!) can get the grass-fed all-beef burger, Lorraine's known-the-world-over chicken salad with granny smiths, or a cast-iron ribeye with a coffee stout glaze. Without a doubt, desserts are Lorraine's territory and they do not disappoint.

Like the majority of Cape Region eateries, Palate's menu changes with the seasons. The restaurant is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. for lunch and dinner Tuesday through Saturday with happy hour half-price burgers from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the bar. Seating is limited, so make reservations and double-check their hours. (This is the beach, after all, so y'never know.) 🌊

PALATE BISTRO & CATERING
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