



Le Grand Colbert in Paris

oil and creamed potatoes
in Le Grand Colbert

Lovely Le Grand Colbert

NY Intrepid Travelling Gourmet tells you about good food and wine in one of the 'Grand Brasseries' of Paris....

All the best *The Travelling Gourmet*

NY UNIQUE BRASSERIES like Bofinger and Brasserie are to be found in 'La Ville-Lumiere' or the 'City of Light' in Paris.

of my favourites is to be found in the 2nd arrondissement the stock exchange and the Palais Royale gardens. From 'Bourse' Metro (MRT) station, which incidentally means 'stock exchange', I took a leisurely stroll to this restaurant in building built in 1637. It is named for Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Louis XIV's Minister of Finance who bought it in 1665. Loved gastronomy and wines too.

opened the glass-panelled mahogany door, and my dapper and Francois, the manager showed me to my usual table. You have ever seen that 'hit' romantic comedy starring Jack Nicholson as a very charismatic aging Lothario, you may recognise this place.

climatic denouement where Harry Sanborn (played by Jack Nicholson) goes to Le Grand Colbert to win back Erica (Jane Keaton), the true love of his life, was filmed right here. When I dine here, I like to sit on the very same seat that Jack Nicholson sat on in that 2004 Hollywood movie, "Something's a Give". Somehow it gives me a quirky thrill.

The bright and very pleasant atmosphere always puts me in an excellent and happy mood. Round balloon-like lamps light up the place with exquisite ornate engraved glass panels between the tables. Gleaming polished brass railings frame black leather chairs. On the floor the exquisite star-patterned mosaic is exactly like that in La Galerie Vivienne. The starched white tablecloths are always spotless. The ambience is slightly raucous but never too loud.

A good starter to have is half a dozen Gillaudeau No.5 oysters with just a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. With the shellfish, an effervescent glass of champagne like *Champagne Demoiselle Vranken is de rigeur*. Or try classic *pate de foie gras* (goose liver) on crisp and crusty fragrant French baguette accompanied by aspic jelly flavoured with Sauternes dessert wine. Heartwarming spinach and sorrel soup is another comforting goodie. Carnivores, take note, the wild boar stew is superb, as well as fillet of John Dory with earthy sorrel sauce. I also like very much the heartwarming moist, flaky grilled fresh cod with silky creamed potatoes and olive oil.

Have it with a glass of racy *Condiereu Georges Vernay 2005 Terrasses de l'Empire* from the Cotes du Rhone with fascinating flavours of starfruit, candied orange peel and persimmon.



La Bombe Alaska flambeed at your table!



La Bombe Alaska in Le Grand Colbert

Delightful Dessert!

I always say, "A meal without dessert is like a day without sunshine!" For sweet delights, Le Grand Colbert's 'piece de resistance' is spectacular La Bombe Alaska. A fantastic finale that is hard to beat, it comes 'flambeeé at table' with rum from the Caribbean! The rum is placed in a shiny copper ladle covered in flickering blue flames. Amazingly hot outside but cold inside. You see, there is a scientific reason for this phenomenon. The sweet meringue insulates the cold ice cream inside from the heat of the flames. The sapphire blue flames char the dessert ever so slightly and release a heady, intoxicating perfume. A lively foil to this is a dessert wine - *Chateau Briatte Sauternes 2001* from the Bordeaux region. Chocoholics with good taste may prefer "Moelleux", a mysterious dark and luscious chocolate cake. *Sacre bleu!* It was a marvellous meal, and as I strolled out into the cool, romantic evening to see the sparkling Eiffel Tower all lit up, I could almost hear 'la mome' Edith Piaf singing her immortal song, "La vie en rose"...

Le Grand Colbert

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Ambience ★★★★★ Cuisine ★★★ Service ★★★