

eat

BY ELIZABETH KEYSER photographs by JOHN SHYLOSKI



Maine lobster salad

A NEW NEIGHBOR

TOWNHOUSE IS READY TO SERVE YOU DELICIOUS FARE WITH SPACIOUS
AND CHIC INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SEATING OPTIONS

The keys to Townhouse open the doors to many rooms—as well as a sophisticated menu of New American seasonal coastal cuisine. The architectural details of the building (the former Gabriel's) with its fireplaces and series of dining and drinking spaces have been brightened up. The former dark-wood walls are now a light gray and highlight the details of moldings, mullions and coffers. The contemporary design, in tones of gray, blue and light brown, is punctuated with slabs of black marble, streaked white. Tables are set with crisp white linens, and the food is served in artful dishes and bowls. Abstract expressionistic paintings splash contrasting hot colors on the walls, adding an art-gallery energy.

As much as we admire Townhouse's design and architecture, the menu is the true standout. Chef Stephen Lewandowski takes local and regional ingredients and with classic technique, global flavors and a deft hand,

transforms them into creative, delicious dishes. With a background of the Harlan restaurants in Fairfield County and Tribeca Grill in New York City, Chef Lewandowski is a master at New American cuisine.

Where better to start than the cocktails? The Townhouse is a blend of blanco tequila and ruby red grapefruit juice, lightened up with club soda and lemon. It's sophisticated and refreshing. Homemade sodas—citrus cooler, pomegranate lemonade and açai berry tea—can be spiked with patron tequila, raspberry vodka or rum. The wine and beer lists are well-chosen and focused.

On to the food. The Maine lobster salad, an appetizer at dinner and entrée at lunch, is a study in hues of pink, orange and red. Poached in blood orange and paired with beets and blood orange segments, the lobster is sweet and bright. Tuna tataki, an appetizer of seared sushi tuna sliced to reveal raw centers, is rich and satisfying. The tuna is enhanced by the slightly sweet umami sauce and is served with crisp garlic chips.

Seared sea scallops are among the stars of Townhouse's entrées, an artful dish in a palette of cream, green and brown. Big, gorgeous scallops, perfectly seared golden brown, rest on a soft pillow of cauliflower cream paired with morels, caramelized cauliflower florets, asparagus, lardons and truffle vinaigrette. This is the kind of dish you crave the next day.

Vegetables play an important role in every dish on the menu. They're integral, adding colors and textures, absorbing and marrying flavors. Yet meat is honored, too. The roasted rack of lamb, a double chop crusted in mustard bread crumbs, was rosy pink inside. It's served over quinoa, with fall vegetables like Tuscan kale. A big smear of romesco sauce, the Spanish blend of charred tomato, garlic, red pepper and nuts, adds another bold flavor and creamy texture to the dish. The perfect salad to start this meal is the Bulgarian feta salad, creamier and less salty than the usual sheeps' milk feta. With chickpeas, cucumbers, tomatoes and red onions in red wine vinaigrette, it's a punchy mixture. It's served with


grilled homemade flatbread topped with za'atar, a blend of herbs, sumac and sesame seeds.

Of the vegetarian pastas on Townhouse's menu, Parisienne gnocchi, made with ricotta, are light and gluten-free. They are paired with a lovely herb-flecked corn pudding, so sweet and creamy that we dragged each gnocchi through it. The fall vegetables, tossed into the pan with the lightly seared gnocchi, show knife skills and attention to detail.

A great fall dessert meant for sharing are the crullers—crunchy sugar outside and soft caramel sauce inside. They're served with crème Anglaise to drizzle or pour. Leftovers, if there are any, make a nice breakfast treat with a cup of coffee the next morning. (Order to go, anyone?)

Outdoor dining continues into fall with heat lamps on the front porch. There is also seating in the charming atrium, with its cupola, clerestory windows, dramatic double stairway, marble floors, fireplace and a set of French doors that open to the fresh fall air.

In the bar, a high-topped table sits before the working fireplace. A curved bank of windows, shaded by a curtain of small gold beads, gives a seductive view into the main dining area. In the spacious circular dining room, tables are spaced far apart and the most requested are the two cozy, curved banquettes, curtained by little golden beads. The wine room retains its mahogany paneling, wine collection and allure. And there is yet another space off the dining room that transforms into a private dining area.

Townhouse is most certainly a place you will want to call home. 

TOWNHOUSE

35 Church Street,
Greenwich
203-622-4223;
townhousegreenwich
.com

On-site self-serve
parking lot.

HOURS

Lunch: Tues.–Sat.
12 to 4 p.m.

Dinner: Tues.–Sat.
4 to 9 p.m.

**from top to
bottom:** Seared sea
scallops • Parisienne
gnocchi • Roasted
rack of lamb •
Crullers

