

RESTAURANT

H O S T A L I T Y



RISING STARS ★ 2007

Creating A Wine Country Buzz



How does a gal from Pittsburgh end up creating a culinary buzz in Sonoma, CA? Well, with lots of talent and plenty of airline miles. After Chef **Janine Falvo** graduated from the Pennsylvania Culinary Institute in 1998, she took a job at Spoodles restaurant at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando. This was her trial by fire, working the stove at a Disney tourist spot that gets slammed every day. It's places like this where the old saying, "What doesn't kill you makes you strong," likely surfaced.

Needless to say, Falvo, 32, not only survived, but excelled. Her Spoodles mentor, noted chef Bart Homser, was so impressed that he asked her to join him on his next venture at Molive

restaurant in Chicago. It was here that Falvo developed her finesse, learning that beauty and flavor must ride in the front seat with speed.

Her work at Molive got Falvo an invitation to be executive sous chef at Bradley Ogden's fine dining restaurant, Parcel 104, in Santa Clara, CA. Working in one of the world's most fertile regions taught her an appreciation for seasonal farm fresh ingredients.

In April 2005, Falvo aimed her sights on Carneros Bistro & Wine Bar, the crown jewel of The Lodge at Sonoma. The allure, among many things, was its magnificent herb and vegetable garden, which occupies 480 square feet of fertile land outside the back door.

Her dinner menu features items such as fava bean-Bellwether Farms ricotta ravioli with spring vegetables and citrus brown butter, and a wood-fired pork chop with black-eyed peas and greens.

In August, Michael Bauer, the irascible restaurant reviewer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, raved about Falvo, saying she has brought new life to Carneros Bistro. Her new menu, he writes, offers unusual, but welcomed touches that are intriguing.

No matter how impressive Carneros Bistro & Wine Bar may be, with its open kitchen, high ceilings and large windows overlooking the garden, without a quality chef like Falvo, it's merely brick and mortar.

—Michael Sanson