

# Cognoscenti

## magazine

Because life is short

### BLOOM RESTAURANT Scottsdale, Arizona

Although a thousand meals might suggest otherwise, flavorful food and healthy dining aren't *necessarily* antithetical. This is clearly demonstrated at **Fox Restaurant Concepts'** sensationally popular Arizona dining establishments, where a bevy of culinary contradictions are reconciled: Dishes are finely textured yet loaded with plenty of nourishing green vegetables; tasty yet lacking in excessive use of oils or animal fats; gourmet, yet reasonably priced.

At **Bloom**, one of the group's "New American Cuisine" restaurants, the staff wears gray shirts with ties and black pants—matching the décor, which is trendy, minimalist and upscale. Blue velvet covers the seats; the carpet is a pleasant checkered pattern.

The restaurant was already quite full by noon on the day **Cognoscenti Magazine** editors visited. We ordered a pair of flavorful and (reasonably) healthy appetizers: baby spinach with Stilton cheese, glazed pecans, and crisp apples; and a seared scallop salad with roasted corn and truffle-orange vinaigrette.

In the entrees, a roast chicken breast was succulently juicy, while salmon served with lemon salad was undeniably rich—but even here there was plenty of salad to offset any heaviness. Generally undervalued and under-utilized vegetables like red beets and brussel sprouts made cameo appearances throughout the meal.

Sommelier Regan Jasper's approach to designing Bloom's wine flights is refreshing. There are 22 different varietal and regional wine trios on the menu, the wines kept from oxidizing by a nitrous tapping system. A number of these wines are of finer qual-



*Lemon tart at the sensationally popular Bloom restaurant*

ity (and higher price) than those typically found in flights. We tried a sommelier's selection of Pinot Noirs that included a spicy and playful 2000 Santa Maria Valley *Foxen* "Bien Nacido," a very fruity Russian River Valley *Gary Farrell*, and a disappointingly unfocussed and insipid *Bouree* Santenay 1er Cru "Les Gravières" from Burgundy.

We ended the meal with a dessert of colorful *coulis* of mango and berries surrounding a firm lemon tart that was topped by a lotus-shaped wafer. A captivating dollop of ginger and cilantro-vanilla glaze sat atop the wafer, next to a ball of raspberry sorbet.

This article was written by Jeffrey Riggs, Senior Contributing Editor to *Cognoscenti Magazine*.

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#### **Bloom**

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