

# *La Confrérie de la Chaîne des Rôtisseurs*

*The Bailliage of  
Greater Washington, D.C.*



## *A Taste of History*

*Featuring What the Founding Fathers  
Served Their Most Distinguished Guests*

*February 12, 2020*

THE JEFFERSON  
WASHINGTON DC



## Entertaining in the Time of the Founders

The Founders understood that sharing a meal had political as well as social value and had to find the right balance between sufficiently grand to impress guests and appearing “monarchical.”

George Washington reserved Thursday nights for dinners with congressional leaders and close personal friends. These were formal affairs held in the executive mansion in Manhattan for 20-25 people and began promptly at 4:00pm. George sat in the middle of one side of a long table while his wife Martha sat opposite him. After the meal, Washington offered a toast and the ladies would join Martha in the drawing room for coffee while the men remained in the dining room for wine and cigars. Washington was not much of a conversationalist and often left his company after just a few minutes. Thomas Jefferson observed that the first president had “neither copiousness of ideas nor fluency of words” and John Adams “marveled at his gift for silence.” On Fridays, Mrs. Washington hosted less formal “levees” for larger groups, which her husband preferred. John and Abigail Adams continued the tradition of levees once they moved to the White House, hosting as many as a hundred guests and serving refreshments buffet-style. James Madison’s wife Dolley’s skills planning and executing elaborate soirees “invented” the role of First Lady.

Thomas Jefferson, in contrast, did away with levees at the White House and substituted the handshake for bowing from the waist as the proper way to greet a president. Formal events took place in the State Dining Room, but he preferred dinner parties for 8-14 guests in the Green Room. He used round tables to encourage conversation and seated his guests “pell mell” without regard to status. By the end of his first term, every member of Congress had received an invitation to dinner. He also did away with toasts. As one guest observed, “The dinners are neat and plentiful, and no healths are drunk at table, nor are any toasts or sentiments given after dinner. You drink as you please and converse at your ease.” Superb wine was a hallmark.

Guests at the executive mansion, the White House, Mt. Vernon, Monticello, or Benjamin Franklin’s home in Passy, France, arrived to fully set dining rooms with porcelain serving dishes arranged symmetrically. Dinner might be only two or three courses, but each course consisted of 8-32 covers. The most impressive dish — the “piece de resistance” — would be in the center of the table and “hors d’oeuvres” — literally “outside the work” — were placed around the main dishes at the same time, not as appetizers before the meal. More guests didn’t mean more food, though, just more covers. The downside: Guests at large dinners didn’t get to taste each dish, just those within

reach. After the first course, a top tablecloth was removed. After the dessert course, the remaining tablecloths were removed and fruit, nuts, sweetmeats, and wine followed.

Retiring from public life didn’t mean leaving hosting duties behind, nor was there any stipend provided for former ambassadors or presidents who were expected to entertain dignitaries and their entourages. Benjamin Franklin’s home in Philadelphia was near Independence Hall so drafters of the Constitution frequently made him a de facto host after he returned from 26 years abroad. Just a year after retiring back to Mt. Vernon, the Washingtons entertained 650 guests. Peter Fossett (son of enslaved cook Edith) noted “streams of visitors” at Monticello and described life there after Jefferson’s retirement as “a merry-go-round of hospitalities.”



*These three-inch tall Chinese export porcelain pots-de-crème, made for the American market, are from a service made for Thomas Jefferson and date to circa 1800-1810. The pattern — a simple underglaze blue spearhead border with gilded highlights, typical of the aesthetic of the Federal period — is augmented with an armorial crest surmounted by knight’s helmet flanked by flourishes and bellflower swags above a shield centered with a gilded initial “J.” It has been suggested that Governor and Mrs. Christopher Gore of Massachusetts, while on a diplomatic mission to London, ordered the service for President Jefferson as they ordered an identical one for themselves with the initial “G.”*

## Passed Canapés

Duck Egg Royale, Winter Truffle

Green Tea-Cured King Salmon, Ginger, Potato Chip

*J M Sélèque Le Quintette NV*

*Pierry, France*

*Winemaker Jean-Marc Sélèque studied at Chandon in Napa Valley and in Australia's Yarra Valley before returning to the domaine his grandfather established in 1965. He brings a patient approach to his Champagne, leveraging organic techniques in the vineyards, working with wild yeast, fermenting at lower temperatures, and instituting longer ageing on the lees and during secondary fermentation in the bottle. The Quintette, his only blanc de blancs, features chardonnay from vines planted between 1950 and 1990 in five plantations in the Marne Valley, the Côte des Blancs, and Pierry. Vitification is 60% in oak barrels and 40% in stainless steel tanks, without fining or filtration. It is blended with 20% reserve chardonnay from a solera started in 2012.*

**Duck Egg Royal, Winter Truffle:** Larger than a chicken egg with an especially large yolk, duck eggs were a treat at elegant dinners. Then as now, truffles were guaranteed to impress guests. Benjamin Franklin served them at his seven-course feasts in Paris. Thomas Jefferson's enslaved chef James Hemings served them while Jefferson was ambassador to France and later to Alexander Hamilton and James Madison at the famous "dinner table bargain" in New York.

**Green Tea Cured King Salmon, Ginger, Potato Chip:** American colonists were so fond of green tea that they protested the tax imposed by the British by dumping 45 tons of it into Boston Harbor in 1773. They called it "bullet tea" because it was shaped like bullets when shipped. The Founders served Atlantic salmon on both sides of the Atlantic but did not encounter King Salmon until the Lewis and Clark Expedition reached the Pacific coast. Today, the King (aka Chinook) Salmon is the state fish of Oregon. Ginger was popular but used almost exclusively in baked goods. Among the items appearing in the monthly accounts of Benjamin Franklin's maître d' Jacques Finck were black pepper, dry mustard, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, mace, coriander, garlic, saffron, and vanilla beans. While in France, Franklin attended an "all-potato dinner" hosted by potato promoter Antoine-Augustin Parmentier in 1778 and became a vocal proponent of the tuber's nutritional value.

## Amuse Bouche

Shrimp with Garlic

*Pierre Péters Cuvée de Réserve Brut*

*Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, France*

*Founded in 1858, Pierre Péters estate, in the heart of the "Côte des Blancs" in the village of Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, has been a family house for six generations and has produced grand cru blanc de blancs Champagnes since 1919. The Cuvée de Réserve is 100% grand cru chardonnay with at least 40% reserve wine from a perpetual reserve begun in 1988. Initial aging is in stainless steel and oak casks followed by aging en tirage for 24 month; it was disgorged in June 2017.*

**Shrimp with Garlic:** Mt. Vernon's website boasts an authentic recipe for shrimp with garlic that George and Martha Washington served. Shrimp were plentiful off the coasts of North and South Carolina as well as Georgia. When President Jefferson completed the Louisiana Purchase, he expanded shrimp harvesting to the Gulf Coast. It remains America's favorite shellfish and the U.S. harvests 650 million pounds a year, more than any other country. Even so, much of the shrimp consumed today is imported. Garlic was a staple and grew easily up and down the east coast.

## Orchard Point Oyster

Iced Beurre Blanc, Hazelnut Milk, Ossetra Caviar

*Jean-Marc Brocard Chablis 1<sup>er</sup> Cru Vau de Vey 2017*

*Préhy, France*

*Jean-Marc Brocard followed the advice of his father and studied engineering rather than agriculture. His wife's family, however, were winemakers, and they brought him back into the world of vine and wine. He planted his first vines in 1973, and within a few years built Domaine Jean-Marc Brocard in the heart of the Chablis region. Since 1997, Jean-Marc's son, Julien Brocard, who also studied engineering but returned to viticulture, has managed the winery. The chardonnay grapes for this wine are grown on the east-facing slope on the Serein river where the cool exposure highlights the classic minerality of the Chablis terroir.*

**Oysters:** The original fast food, enjoyed by rich and poor alike. Jefferson ate 50 oysters at two dinners in a row in Holland, but pronounced American oysters "far superior." James Madison and his wife Dolley served oysters to the Marquis de Lafayette in 1824 at their Virginia home, Montpelier. The richest source was the Chesapeake Bay although they were harvested up and down the east coast. Orchard Point is a family-owned operation in Kent County, MD, on the Chester River.

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**Beurre Blanc:** A stew stove would be required to emulsify the butter and wine or vinegar properly. Most cooking was still done over an open hearth, but the White House was equipped with a coal-fired stove necessary to prepare delicate sauces. Jefferson brought back a stew stove from France to his home at Monticello.

**Hazelnuts:** Robert Prince established the first commercial nursery in Flushing, NY, in 1737. George Washington sent armed guards to protect it during the Revolutionary War. Just after Washington was elected president in 1789, he visited the nursery via river barge.

### **Black Salsify & Seckel Pear**

**Goat Milk Yogurt, Flax Seed Cracker, Winter Mâche**

**Schloss Gobelsburg Grüner Veltliner Ried Steinsetz 2015**  
**Gobelsburg, Austria**

*The first mention of Schloss (Castle) Gobelsburg is in a document dated 1074. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Habsburgs expanded the site with a Renaissance manor, which was completely rebuilt in 1725 and today is the home of the winery. Winemaking in the region can be traced to a nearby Cistercian monastery as far back as 1137. The terroir of the Ried Steinsetz vineyard features sediment from the Danube and Traisen Rivers, and the vines for this grüner veltliner average 25 years old. The wine is aged in 660-gallon Austrian oak casks.*

**Black Salsify:** Also known as “scorzonera,” black salsify is rarer and tastier than the more common white salsify. Jefferson’s cousin Mary Randolph published one of the first American cookbooks (The Virginia Housewife) in 1824 and wrote of salsify, “They are a very excellent vegetable, but require nicety in cooking.”

**Seckel Pears:** The only truly American variety, it was not introduced from European cultivars but likely originated from wild seedlings discovered near Philadelphia in the early 1800s.

**Goat Milk Yogurt:** Milking goats arrived in Jamestown, VA, and Plymouth, MA, with the earliest settlers.

**Flax Seed Cracker:** Flax was very important to the early republic, but more for its fiber than its culinary value. Flax could be spun into linen in the north while cotton produced cloth in the south. Flax was prized for clothing, bedding, and especially sails. Dolley Madison was known for creating the role of “First Lady,” being a wonderful hostess, and serving a “seed cake” in which she used caraway seeds and possibly flax seed as well.

**Winter Mâche:** One of the few tender greens that grows in winter, we know that Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson all served it to guests while they were in Paris.

### **Virginia Black Bass**

**Kohlrabi Spaghetti, Chervil Aioli, Blue Crab Nage**

**Loimer Riesling 2012**  
**Langenlois, Austria**

*Known for deep gorges in its upper reaches, the Kamp River flows into the wide Kamptal Valley just before it flows into the Danube. The valley features optimal climate and soil conditions for viticulture, enabling Loimer’s hometown of Langenlois to produce more wine than any other town in Austria. Winemaker Fred Loimer took over the family’s 160-acre estate in 1997 and since 2006 has followed strict organic principles. He is now focused on traditional winemaking techniques; his single-vineyard wines are aged in 660-gallon acacia barrels and spend extended time on their lees.*

**Virginia Black Bass:** Black bass are the most popular freshwater game fish in the world and the mid-Atlantic is one of the best places to catch them. For 40 years, George Washington operated three seine-net fisheries on ten miles of the Potomac shoreline, processing more than a million fish a year. It was by far his most profitable venture at Mt. Vernon. A member of his household wrote that Washington “ate heartily at dinner but was not particular in his diet, with the exception of fish, of which he was excessively fond.” Perhaps he found fish easier to eat with his dentures. When he retired from office, he and his wife still hosted guests often and began to think of their home like an inn. He confessed, “My manner of living is plain...a glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready...those who expect more will be disappointed.”

**Blue Crab Nage:** New Englanders love their cod, southerners love their shrimp, and for those lucky enough to live in the Mid-Atlantic, the blue crab reigns supreme. Preparing seafood a la nage (“in the swim”) combines steaming and poaching in stock flavored with herbs and white wine, a technique the Founders knew well.



## Partridge with Foie Gras & Truffle Belgian Endive, Grape Juice Reduction

***Viñedos del Contino Rioja Contino Graciano 2006***  
***Laserna, Laguardia, Spain***

*This estate dates from the 16th century, and its history is reflected in its name. The “contino” was the officer in charge of a guard corps of a hundred soldiers who, from the times of the Catholic Monarchs onwards, protected the royal family “de contino” – continuously. According to tradition, Saint Gregory, the patron saint of vineyards, passed through the lands of this same Rioja property, giving rise to the use of his figure in this winery’s logo, and his name for some of the plots now planted with vines. The estate’s 150 acres benefit from an outstanding combination of soils and Atlantic-Mediterranean climate. Made from 100% graciano grapes from a single vineyard, the wine is aged for 15 months in new French and Hungarian oak barrels, and a further 12 months in the bottle.*

**Partridge:** We know that Washington, Adams, and Jefferson all hunted, ate, and served game birds. When the Continental Congress had to flee from the British in Philadelphia in 1777, Adams wrote that they departed quickly, “chased like a covey of partridges.” The poultry portion of the menu from Franklin’s Christmas Eve feast in France in 1783 sounds like a Christmas song: “6 thrush, 4 capons, 3 partridges, 2 chickens, 2 French hens, one pheasant, and one duck.”

**Foie Gras:** Thomas Jefferson arrived in Paris the same year Chef Jean-Joseph Clause obtained a patent for paté de foie gras. Just two years before, Antoine de Beauvilliers opened the first luxury restaurant in the west, La Grande Taverne de Londres. Jefferson and Franklin were both patrons, often getting take-out that included foie gras.



## Braised Beef Short Rib Rutabaga, Savory Cabbage

***Château Daugay Saint-Émilion Grand Cru 2009***  
***Saint-Émilion, France***

*This 14-acre estate, which takes its name from geai, meaning “jay,” was founded in 1807, although records of the name “Daugay” go back more than 500 years. Château Daugay is situated at the foot of the southern and southwestern part of the Saint-Émilion slope, giving it superb sun exposure conducive to excellent ripening of the fruit of its 40-year old vines. The estate’s well-proportioned clay and limestone soil offers the right balance of coolness, drainage, and trace elements for the varietals grown there. This classic Bordeaux blend of 50% merlot, 40% cabernet franc, and 10% cabernet sauvignon is vinified in stateless steel vats, then aged in 35% new French oak barrels for 18 to 20 months before bottling.*

**Braised Beef Short Rib:** If anything was de rigeur for upscale meals served by the Founders, it was beef. Bouef Bouilli, Boeuf à la Mode, and Boeuf à la Daube, and many other dishes graced dining tables at home and abroad. Braised beef short ribs were served at Mt. Vernon during Washington’s time and more recently at the July 4, 2019 dinner in the Mt. Vernon Inn. The Jefferson Cookbook includes a recipe for Pot au Feu that begins, “Take 3 pounds of beef, the short ribs are the best...”

**Rutabaga, Savoy Cabbage:** Monticello Garden Historian Peter Hatch claims Jefferson was the first American to grow rutabaga in addition to growing 29 varieties of cabbage. Cabbage was second only to lettuce in frequency of appearances on the shopping list of Etienne Lemaire, Jefferson’s maître d’ at the White House. All of the Founders ate it and probably served it.



## Dessert with the Founders

### *Oremus Late Harvest Késői Szüret Tokaji Cuvée 2015 Tolcsva, Hungary*

*Founded in the 1620s, Oremus has 81 acres of vineyards mostly on hillsides that rise steeply above the village of Tolcsva in the heart of the Tokaj-Hegyalja appellation. Its climate is well suited for the desirable botrytis fungus that creates noble rot. This blend features furmint along with kövérszőlő, zéta, and sárga muskotály grapes, with at least half of the fruit being botrytized. The wine is fermented slowly, stopping on its own at 12% alcohol. It is aged for six months in small barrels in a labyrinth of hand-hewn cellars dating back to the 12th century.*

Sugar came in hard cones wrapped in blue paper and was so expensive that the lady of the house often kept it locked in a special cupboard. Desserts were a sign of wealth in the early republic and it was typical that several different cakes, tarts, and puddings would be served simultaneously to show generosity towards one's guests. Because they were special, desserts comprise a significant portion of early American cookbooks. Unlike vegetables and routine fare, cooks made them less often and were therefore less likely to know them from memory. Martha Washington made trifle with sherry and cream and for large gatherings, her enslaved cooks made a pound cake that called for 40 eggs and five pounds of butter. Dolley Madison was famous for her cake baking skills. Eliza (Schuyler) Hamilton was of Dutch ancestry and made speculoos cookies for her large family.

## Chocolate Pot de Crème Gingerbread Crouton, Orange Sorbet

**Valrhona Chocolate Pot de Crème:** Valrhona has been producing chocolate in the village of Tain L'Hermitage in France since 1922 using cocoa beans from their own plantations in Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. It is certainly more refined than the chocolate the Founders knew, which was mostly from West Africa and was sold in large blocks that would be chopped and melted to drink. John Jay carried shards of chocolate in his pockets at all times. Many people thought it had medicinal properties and it was included in soldiers' rations during the Revolutionary War. Recently two Chinese export porcelain pots de crème pots made for Jefferson circa 1088-1810 were sold at auction.

**Orange Sorbet:** The Founders prized citrus fruits and iced desserts. Ice houses and underground cellars were used to store large blocks of ice hauled from rivers during the winter.

## Meyer Lemon Almond Petit Gâteau Genoa Fluffy Sponge, Lemon Jelly Marzipan, Maple Syrup Ice Cream

**Meyer Lemon Almond Petit Gâteau:** Meyer Lemons are named for Frank Meyer, the USDA botanist who discovered them in China and brought them back to the U.S. in the early 20th century. Less tart than other lemons with a bergamot fragrance, it is safe to say the Founders would have loved them. Almonds were a favorite, but they had to be imported from Europe, usually Italy. Jefferson tried, unsuccessfully, to grow almond trees at Monticello. The only place in the U.S. that grows them commercially today is California. "Petit gateaux" would have appeared often at festive dinners.

**Genoa Fluffy Sponge, Lemon Jelly, Marzipan, Maple Syrup Ice Cream:** The Founders would recognize and relish this dessert. Sponge cakes relied on eggs for leavening because baking powder did not come along until the 1840s. Flour, sugar, and vanilla were all expensive ingredients, ideal for demonstrating one's standing in the community. Jellies made with fruits or wines were popular—and labor-intensive. The lemon and almond flavors were favorites. Ice cream was the ultimate in fashionable dessert courses. Alexander Hamilton first introduced it to George Washington at a dinner in New York, an event so momentous that both recorded the date: June 13, 1789. Jefferson served it frequently to delighted guests at state dinners in the White House. His favorite was vanilla and his handwritten recipe is preserved at the Library of Congress. Maple syrup was revered by the Founders for several reasons. The sugar maple tree is native to North America, an exceptionally strong hardwood, and unlike sugar cane, it did not involve slave labor to grow and harvest. Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia and a group of Quakers promoted maple sugar (derived from the syrup) as a more humane substitute for cane sugar. Jefferson joined the cause in 1790 and even speculated on the U.S. becoming an exporter of maple sugar. Ultimately the public preferred cane sugar and Jefferson turned his attention once again to France, where sugar was being made from beets.

***Susan Sullivan Lagon, Ph.D.***  
***Hotel Historian of The Jefferson***



Before semi-retiring in 2015, Professor Lagon spent 30 years teaching at Georgetown University, where she served on the faculties of both the Government Department and the Government Affairs Institute (GAI). She taught American Government and Constitutional Law to undergraduates on campus and courses about Congress for federal agency personnel on Capitol Hill. She has spoken for more than 500 international visitors' programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and continues to lecture for GAI and the Canada School of Public Service.

For the past five years, she has served as the Hotel Historian at the Jefferson Hotel, four blocks north of the White House, where she offers tours and interprets Jefferson's political, culinary, and architectural contributions to American life. She is certain it is the best job in the hospitality industry.

She earned her B.A. and M.A. in Government and Foreign Affairs at UVA and her Ph.D. in Government from Georgetown University.

***The "Founders"***

The term "Founders" refers to those involved in governing from independence (1776) through the 1820s — the first few decades of the early republic. Many were also "Framers," the forty men who drafted and signed the Constitution in 1787. Research for this dinner focused on eight prominent Founders: Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison.

***About The Jefferson***

In 1923, Washington, DC, welcomed a new luxury residential building four blocks north of the White House: The Jefferson Apartments. The beautiful Beaux Arts design by architect Jules Henri de Sibour was the first building erected on 16th St. between Lafayette Square and Scott Circle. The apartment building was converted into a hotel in 1955 and quickly became the address of choice for discerning travelers.

Today, guests enjoy The Jefferson's unique collection of antique furnishings, curated art, a noteworthy collection of books and nine framed original documents bearing Thomas Jefferson's signature. Jefferson's passion for gracious hospitality, fine dining, superb wines, fine art, books and travel find expression throughout the property.

***Executive Chef Ralf Schlegel***

The Michelin-starred and only Forbes five-star rated restaurant in the nation's capital features executive chef **Ralf Schlegel**, a native of Germany with extensive experience in prestigious European kitchens. Leading the kitchen since 2014, Schlegel oversees **Plume** restaurant, **Quill** lounge, and the entire culinary program at **The Jefferson** hotel.



At the age of 11, Ralf Schlegel and his family fled from East Germany to the West, where they began to prosper, and his culinary journey began. His daily chores took place after his homework, by preparing the mise-en-place for dinner in the kitchen of one of his town's famed restaurants and hotels run by his parents, who were master-trained chefs and hoteliers.

Ralf excelled through Germany's rigorous training program for chefs and, like his parents, became certified as a *Staatlich geprüfter Küchenmeister* (state-certified kitchen master). His career experience includes leadership posts at a number of acclaimed German and Austrian restaurants and hotels, as well as various positions in Italy, Denmark, and Sweden. Before joining the team at The Jefferson, he spent two years as executive sous chef at Marcel's in Washington, DC.

David Bueno, General Manager of The Jefferson, says of Schlegel; "Ralf has been an integral member of the staff since he started here in 2011 as executive sous chef. His hard work and talent have contributed to the great success of The Jefferson, and to the critical acclaim of Plume in particular. At the helm of the culinary program, his remarkable creativity will flourish, and it is exciting to see his constantly evolving vision."

That vision is evident in the menu of "authentic" cuisine Schlegel develops for Plume, based on his notion of Washington as a steakhouse town. Making use of the finest ingredients and his extensive technical expertise, he presents exquisite cuisine with the advantage of a clear international perspective.

In addition to the honors garnered by Plume, The Jefferson has attracted top rankings from *Travel + Leisure*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, and *U.S. News and World Report*.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE BAILLIAGE OF GREATER WASHINGTON, D.C.

**STEP INTO SPRING AT SEVEN REASONS**  
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2020

**SUMPTUOUS SURPRISES AT SUSHIKO**  
TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020

**GRAND INDUCTION AND GALA DINNER  
AT THE FOUR SEASONS**  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2020

**HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS AT THE WILLARD**  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020

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