

Et Voilà! French Bistro French wines, lovely ambiance and delicious food By Madison Teague Photos by Julien Grebassa

Nestled along Adams Avenue, Et Voilà! French Bistro has a picture perfect view of the bustling University Heights coterie. Its prime location is fixed in the vibrant epicenter between Normal Heights and University Heights.

As you walk in, you'll pass the charming patio al fresco. The cozy interior is reminiscent of a traditional French bistro with a stylish twist.

Well-versed in fine dining, Et Voilà's owner, Ludo Mifsud, redirected from the stuffy stereotype attached to most upscale restaurants. The space is polished and elegant, illuminated by old-style globe lighting. Et Voilà's sultry ambiance creates a romantic and relaxed atmosphere for couples, families and friends.

Executive Chef Vincent Viale has mastered the art of blending French classics with his own innovative flare. The extensive menu is replete with both traditional and contemporary

French dishes. A few recognizable standards filling the menu include, duck confit, coq au vin, steak tartare, onion soup gratinee, moules frites, escargot, etc.

Viale creates nostalgic French recipes inspired by varying regions of France, showcasing French classics with contemporary presentation. He first worked with seasonal agriculture, which inspired his appetite for the culinary arts. In 1999, he earned his diploma in "Culinary Art, Art of the Service and the Table" at the culinary school Lycée Hôtelier Savoie Leman of Thonon-Les-Bains, in eastern France.

Et Voilà's brilliant menu is a canvas to be painted with reds and whites. Traverse the far reaches of France through Et Voilà's curated wine list, with a wide variety of different bottles and wines by the glass. Choose from an abundance of French wines, where notes of elegance and appreciation for the finer things capture

the sophistication of the French themselves.

It's time to make your way from the wine cellar to the bar. It doesn't need to be midnight in Paris to imbibe in classic French aperitifs. Et Voilà's master mixologist, Sami Saltagi, is sure to shake, stir and garnish his way to your heart. Each of his complex cocktails are a work of art. He experiments with classic cocktails, incorporating cultural flavors that take his drinks to a new level of novelty. These innovative and vibrantly colorful cocktails offered at Et Voilà are truly a one-of-a-kind experience. His unique artistry can be attributed to his cross-cultural upbringing.

Born in Florence, Italy, and raised in Damascus, Syria, Saltagi's interest in food and beverage originated at home among his family of foodies. Saltagi arrived in the United States in 2004, where he developed an interest in mixology. Throughout his illustrious career behind the bar, Salt-



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agi worked to master and perfect classic cocktail recipes, while adding creative twists and incorporating ethnic spices and cultural flourishes. He has been instrumental in creating cocktail recipes and establishing bars for up-and-coming restaurants in San Diego.

Since Saltagi began mixing things up on Adams Avenue, Et Voilà's cocktail menu has captured the attention of cocktail connoisseurs all over America's Finest City.

Saltagi's spirited dedication behind the bar seems to be contagious throughout the restaurant. The enthusiasm is transparent among the entire staff. The servers are polished, professional and accommodating. Each has acquired a wealth of knowl-

edge and an extensive understanding of the menu and wine list. They are able to confidently educate customers about French cuisine while maintaining a humble disposition, which is no easy feat.

The satisfaction of an authentic French dining experience is a rarity in San Diego. Thankfully, Et Voilà exceeds all expectation. Misfud and his talented staff believe that culinary excellence is the definitive standard of French cuisine. This principal is what sets Et Voilà apart from the rest.

Et Voilà is open daily for dinner, with weekend brunch and a happy hour from Sunday through Thursday.