

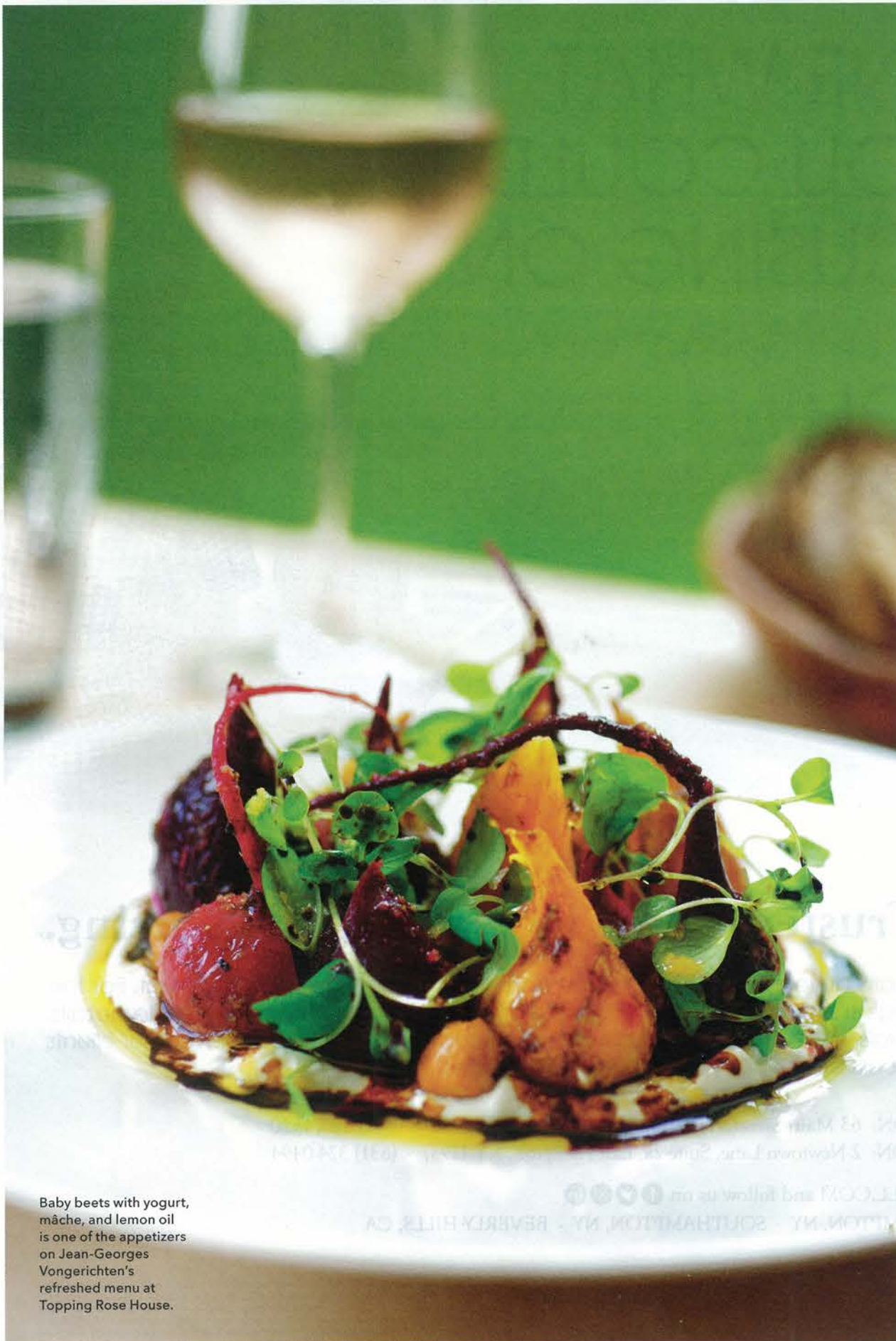
HAMPTONS

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JEAN-GEORGES VONGERICHTEN TAKES OVER TOPPING ROSE HOUSE



Baby beets with yogurt, mâche, and lemon oil is one of the appetizers on Jean-Georges Vongerichten's refreshed menu at Topping Rose House.

EVERY ROSE

IN HIS NEWEST EAST END ENDEAVOR, RENOWNED CHEF **JEAN-GEORGES VONGERICHTEN** REIMAGINES THE HISTORIC TOPPING ROSE HOUSE AS A BEACH-CHIC DESTINATION.

BY **SCOTT FELDMAN**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DOUG YOUNG**

What will you do to change things at Topping Rose House but keep customers satisfied?

It's 75 seats inside and 70 outside and open all year long. They have a beautiful garden, and we are looking forward to making it work this season and moving forward. We thought the restaurant was beautiful, but with the white tablecloths, everything wasn't beachy enough. So we took the same tables and took the white tablecloths off and sanded the oak and kept them natural. We also changed the chef and [changed] things around to make it more simple and beach chic.

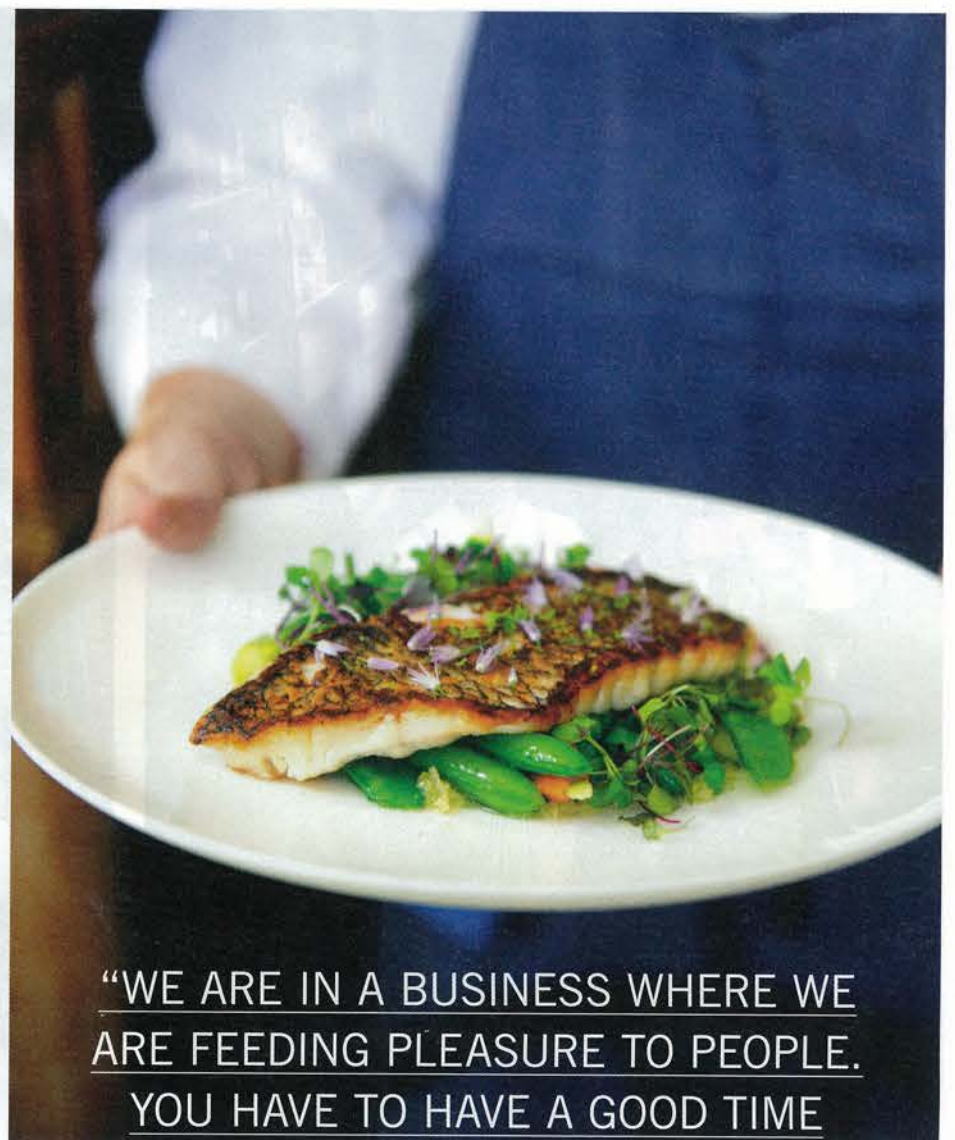
Was it a difficult project to take on?

It was an easy transition—the team was here. We haven't touched one thing in the kitchen except adding a pizza oven. The owner made a small investment and we really updated the look and feel.

What can we expect the new menu to look like?

It's refreshing—there will be a signature pizza, grilled seafood, and some pasta.

A vodka thyme lemonade, made with Crop Organic Meyer lemon vodka. RIGHT: Jean-Georges Vongerichten's locally sourced, seafood-focused menu includes black sea bass with ginger-scallion seasoning, spring peas, and lime.



"WE ARE IN A BUSINESS WHERE WE ARE FEEDING PLEASURE TO PEOPLE. YOU HAVE TO HAVE A GOOD TIME WITH IT. YOU CAN'T DRIVE YOURSELF CRAZY WITH ONE DISH."

—JEAN-GEORGES VONGERICHTEN

There will be something for everyone on the menu. Sometimes as a chef you don't think this way, but I always also try to think as the customer and [figure out] what they would want. It's important that there is something for everyone. **Any signature dishes?** We really are going to try to use everything local. We are trying to make it a seafood-centric place. The lobster avocado on a warm bun will be delicious. A lot of shellfish—I found an

escargot farm about five miles away from the restaurant and will create a great escargot dish. We are going to work with the local farmers to fill the menu with great produce. Sixty percent of our vegetables come from the garden, but in a couple of weeks, 100 percent. Even the bouquets on the table will be flowers from our gardens. **The pig roast on Sundays was a favorite. Anything you're planning to do for a**

special evening?

We will continue the pig roast but want to [include] some simple, not composed dishes—simple gray monkfish, lobster, sea bass, and you choose the sides. When you are in vacation mode, you don't want a composed dish but want a great piece of fish and lemon—something simple.

It sounds like you're looking to create more of a casual atmosphere.

A place like ABC was farm-to-table; this is sort of fisherman-to-table. **Have you embraced using the local farms and suppliers?** Yes, we source ingredients grown, raised, and caught by our friends who share our

commitment to serving great food. We support Feisty Acres Farm, the Milk Pail, Good Water Farms, Amagansett Sea Salt, Saturn Farms, Multi Aquaculture Systems, Niman Ranch, East End Mushroom Company, the Truffle Lady, MarGene Farms, Amber Waves, Bette & Dale's Organic Produce, Balsam Farms. >>