

Bas Rouge

In the storied and historic town of Easton in Talbot County Maryland, down the quaint Federal Street, lined with red brick sidewalks and tall cast iron street lamps, is a new iteration of renovated, aged buildings transformed into five epicurean enterprises. Each destination beautifully melds sophisticated, timeless décor with exquisite food, drink, and attentive service in an atmosphere of distinction. The premier establishment, Bas Rouge, epitomizes Old World elegance with unpretentious ease and a modern, sophisticated palate.

Patrons and passersby are transported into a setting that is akin to a charming European town. In fact, the county is one of the oldest centers of European settlement in the New World. Its long history has always been linked to the water that surrounds it. With more than 600 miles of tidal shoreline, it has the most of any county in the United States.

In the kitchen is a dedicated team of six years with Executive Chef Harley Peet overseeing the culinary vision of the parent company, Bluepoint Hospitality, and its menus. Peet, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and longtime resident, boatsman, and fisherman on Maryland's Eastern Shore, has a gift for preparing seafood dishes with hyper-local ingredients. British born, Chef de Cuisine, Phil Lind is a constant fixture at the helm of Bas Rouge. Lind is inspired by his deep affection for European classics, providing a foundation for his contemporary contributions on the menu.

Seasonal starters might include *Charred Leek and Curried Ricotta with Shiitake Mushrooms, Red Endive, and Toasted Hazelnuts; Crudo of Organic Salmon, lightly anise cured, and Blood Orange Salmon Roe and Kaluga Caviar; Grilled Head-On Shrimp with a Cucumber-Jalapeño Salad, Mango Aguachile, and Puffed Rice; Wagyu Beef Tataki with a Cashew-Tofu Cream, Radish, and Soy-Ginger Dressing; and Käsespätzle with Caramelized Onions and Parmesan Cheese; Russ & Daughters Osetra Caviar is offered year-round, with Blinis and Crème Fraîche.* Entrées range from *Wiener Schnitzel with Lingonberries, Warm Fingerling Potato Salad, and Mâche; to Brioche Crusted Rockfish with Charred Fennel, Pearl Onion, Fennel Purée, and Bouillabaisse and Veal Roulade with Parsnip Purée, Shaved Brussels Sprouts, and Truffle Jus; to a Kurobuta Pork Chop with Warm Polenta, Peach Salad, Plum and Beet Purée, and Charcuterie Jus.*

Bluepoint Hospitality Group's dedicated head baker, chef Glenn May, provides an enticing daily bread service of mixed offering from classic *Sourdough, Sesame Semolina, and Rosemary & Garlic* at lunch, to a *selection of a Seeded Baguette, Poppy Seed Brioche Roll, and a Cheddar Scone* at dinner service. Desserts are the 'piece de resistance' with a *Crème Fraîche Cheesecake, Poached Quince, Candied Yuzu, and Honey Ice Cream* and an impeccable *Dark Chocolate Pecan Tart with Pecan Praliné, Cocoa Nib Nougatine and Vanilla Ice Cream.* The presentation of each dish is enhanced by fine Bernardaud porcelain.

Executive Pastry Chef, Thomas Raquel is the mastermind behind the intricately designed cakes presented on an extravagant Austro-Hungarian-Style cake trolley that will be presented and served table-side. An array of cakes will be offered from unique layered presentations to featured tortes like the time-honored *Viennese Layer Cakes*, *Sachertorte*, *Dobos Torte*, and a *Fruit Strudel*.

Bas Rouge has been honored for five consecutive years with *Wine Spectator's Best of Award of Excellence*. Paralleling the European focus of the cuisine and complementing it with a curated collection of hundreds of exceptional labels from France, Austria, Germany, and California. By-the-glass options include numerous vintage and non-vintage Champagnes, as well as Sherry, Port, and Madeira. In this haven for wine connoisseurs, the glassware, handcrafted by expert craftsmen in Austria heightens the full flavor of the varietal with its aesthetic modern detail of an impressive featherweight feel. Additionally, a collection of rare Single Malt aesthetically pleasing, Scotch complements the spirits list, showcasing exceptional skill from the six whiskey regions in Scotland.

To pair the exquisite wine collection, Andrea Barnes, the head cheesemonger and purchaser for Bluepoint Hospitality, hand picks a wide variety of fifteen cheeses, both American and European, to suit all preferences from Goat, Cow, Sheep, Blue, and Alpine Cheeses. Additionally, these are presented tableside on a glass enclosed custom-made cheese cart. A marble top was strategically placed as part of the design for its cooling properties, keeping the cheese at a tempered climate.

From the black pin-striped awnings shading its exterior to the fluid gold script of its name on each window, Bas Rouge projects an atmosphere of restrained elegance and quiet luxury. And most recently, a posh new annex – two years in the making – has been added to the restaurant. It opens into an exclusive setting with walls adorned with an ash-amber hued veneer wall covering and gilt lined geometric shapes. The deeply rich, cobalt blue velvet seating and window banquette adjacent to three modern smoky, Niro Marquina black marble-top tables adds an impressive balance to the Calcutta Gold marble-top bar with two white leather stools – all was well worth the wait. Twenty-six new seats perfectly compliment timeless, expertly hand-crafted furnishings in mahogany browns and sun-kissed hues with chairs in corduroy linen or cocoa-colored velvet mohair, banquettes in textured chenille gold, supple taupe curtains in gaberdine and silk grace the windows, silk covered scones with a velvet trim, star pendants circa 1970, floor-to-ceiling antiqued, glass mirrors, and plush, golden wheat colored carpet to soften the sound of the room.

Inside the original main dining room of twenty-eight seats, its palette balances dark neutrals against creamy whites with satisfying glints of gold and burnished brass. The most exuberant pattern is underfoot, in cement encaustic tiles setting a decisive tone of European glamour with a bold medieval design. The delicately painted white walls are articulated by elaborate crown moldings and contoured panels, inset with antiqued mirrors that play with light and expand the intimate space; plaster rope molding defining the panels is hand-brushed with delicate gold highlights. Grounding this airy lightness is a handsome array of dark and weighty elements: an antique Viennese banquette curves expansively within one corner of the dining room, upholstered in plush burgundy and gold; deep blue velvet banquettes pick up a predominant color of the floor tiles; a curved mahogany bar and cabinetry inset with bronze details, the work of a local craftsman, echo the Biedermeier klismos chairs, also polished dark wood, with taupe upholstered seats.

Bas Rouge gets its rare sense of residential luxury from designer Shaun Jackson's liberal use of antiques and art, an extension of Bluepoint Hospitality's principal Paul Prager's own love of collecting. 19th- and early 20th-century oil paintings by masters of the Austrian and German hunt schools, framed in heavy gold, hang alternately with ornate brass sconces. A 19th-century Lobmeyr crystal chandelier sparkles over the corner banquette. A black French Empire-style sideboard, marble-topped and fitted with gilded accents, holds an opulent alabaster vessel, richly *cloisonné* in turquoise and sometimes used as a wine cooler. A solid silver English meat trolley dating from 1910 lends a touch of Edwardian theatricality to the formal dinner service, and monumental arrangements of fresh flowers provide ever-changing seasonal color and drama.

Seating just fifty-four patrons [plus limited sidewalk seating, in season,] Bas Rouge offers European refinement and culinary brilliance, all in the charming coastal town of Easton.

For More Information:

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