

# Adventures in Dining

By Charles Jenkins

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There are times when you go out to dinner and you know exactly the particular cuisine that will please your palate. Maybe you have a strong yen for something Japanese; or you could be thinking it's time for some French fare; perhaps a taste of the unique flavors of India, Greece, or Spain? Feeling the urge for a little something from Belgium, Germany or Tahiti?

You could consider a citywide progressive dinner that might take, let's say, an entire day; if you could find them all. Or you could make reservations at Global Restaurant in south Charlotte. In June of 2006 Chef Bernard Brunet and his wife Shannon decided to open their own restaurant. Bernard grew up in Nice, France, where his grandfather was a disciple of the legendary French chef Georges Auguste Escoffier. Shannon grew up in Boone, North Carolina. They met while working on a cruise ship traveling the world.

Global has a refined look, a cozy bar and lounge, fully stocked with a nice wine list, and an intimate dining room for about 50 guests, including a few tables outdoors on the patio. As you enter the restaurant you'll probably be warmly greeted by Shannon; and before you leave, Chef Bernard will have come by to make sure you were pleased with your dining experience. In between, the friendly and professional wait staff will take great care of you.

Let's take a culinary journey around the world, courtesy of Global Restaurant. Beginning with appetizers, there are Bombay Fried Oysters (India) – a delicacy from the Pacific Coast served in a "nage" or mixture of curries. There's also a Moroccan Delight (Middle East) – a skewered duo of lamb and beef tenderloin served with hummus and drizzled with a lamb reduction. Care to stay in the country? I very much enjoyed the Baton Rouge Crab Cake (Louisiana), resting on a bed of wilted organic greens and Chef's "Beurre Blanc" sauce. Each evening there are specials. On this visit the chef was offering escargot in a puff pastry – absolutely exquisite! If you want to start on a grander scale, there is a Global Cheese Platter with premium cheeses from around the world.

For the soup de jour on my visit, Chef Bernard had prepared an asparagus and white bean soup – a creative marriage of flavors creating a delightfully thick and creamy puree. The restaurant also offers She Crab Soup (South Carolina) on a regular basis. The menu has two delectable salads with a global flare: The Organic Spring Mix (France) – grilled pear D'Anjou and red radishes, tossed with raspberry vinaigrette; and the very flavorful Endive Salad (Belgium) – a mix of blue cheese, pecans, tomatoes, chives, apple and almond vinaigrette.

The entrées will take you around the world as well: Organic Chicken Ziti (Greece) – grilled chicken breast tossed with sun dried tomatoes, Cremini mushrooms, Kalamata olives, Feta cheese and a pesto sauce; Paella (Spain) – a combination of rice, green peas, red pepper, real Chorizo sausage, chicken, Prince Edward Island mussels, shrimp and sea scallop tossed with saffron flavor; and Maple Leaf Duck Breast (Germany) – gently roasted and topped with a fig sauce, accompanied with a potato gratin and braised red cabbage. I thoroughly enjoyed the Braised Lamb Shank (South of France, Provence) – resting on orzo pasta and topped with a lavender rosemary lamb sauce.

In addition, you'll find several fresh seafood considerations such as tuna, escolar and bronzini, along with vegetarian offerings like Penne ala Vodka (Italy/US) – penne pasta tossed in a creamy Vodka tomato sauce; and Squash Ravioli (US/Georgia) – homemade, served with wilted greens and topped with a sweet red wine grape sauce.

The dessert selections continue your journey spanning the globe. A Trio of Crème Brulee (France) with chocolate, mocha and vanilla; and Coconut Delight (Italy) – a light Italian butter crème with sweet coconut, layered with a moist almond cake and topped with toasted coconut. Most scrumptious is the Tarte Normande (France, Normandy) – apple tart served warm then topped with a quenelle of whipped cinnamon cream. And then there's the devilishly decadent Chocolate Dacquoise (France/Switzerland) – bittersweet chocolate mousse with layers of vanilla sponge cake, topped with a Swiss chocolate mirror - wow! Just add the cappuccino or a Grand Marnier and you're feeling wonderful and worldly.

Global Restaurant is located in the Toringdon Market Shopping Center at Johnston Road and 485 in Ballantyne. They are open evenings beginning at 5 p.m. for drinks and appetizers (6 p.m. for dinner) and are closed on Sundays. They open for lunch for private functions. Appetizers average \$12; soups and salads about \$8; entrées \$25 and desserts \$9. Make reservations and see it all at [www.global-restaurant.com](http://www.global-restaurant.com). 704-248-0866