

The

FIVE

MOST EXCITING THINGS IN DINING NOW

BY JOHN MARIANI

Esquire
**BEST NEW
RESTAURANTS**
2012



**DREW
NIEPARENT**

It's safe to say that Drew Nieporent has had a good ride to the top. From the moment he opened Montrachet in 1985 with money borrowed from his parents, he not only changed perceptions about French haute cuisine by making it more modern and unpretentious, he also showed how a restaurant can help transform a neighborhood, in this case by throwing light onto the grim, dark streets of TriBeCa. Nieporent has always been the consummate American host, roaming his restaurants nightly, knowing just how much to kibitz with his guests, dropping just the right number of names.

With the help of Robert De Niro in 1994, he brought master sushi chef Nobu Matsuhisa to New York, showcasing a wholly new style of Japanese-Peruvian cuisine that led to branches of Nobu all over the world. When Montrachet ran its course, he reinvented

THE NIEPARENT FILE:

OWNER: Myriad Restaurant Group
RESTAURANTS OPENED SINCE 1985: 35
MICHELIN STARS: 5
HIGHLIGHTS: Nobu, Montrachet, Tribeca Grill, Corton, Rubicon

it as the spare and exquisite Corton, yet again shaking up ideas about French cuisine. And while Corton is intimate, he can go as big as his personality—expansive places like the iconic Tribeca Grill in New York, the late

wine-driven Rubicon in San Francisco, and his 350-seat Acela Club at Citi Field in Flushing. Nieporent never fails to innovate. Ever ebullient, always on, lighting up his cigar outside his restaurants, Drew Nieporent is the great and gregarious restaurant showman. If you're happy, he's happy.

PLUS: **OUR FAVORITE HOSTESS**
COOKING ADVICE
(FROM THE CHEFS)

RESTAURATEUR SPOTLIGHTS:
ONE LEGEND, ONE UP-AND-COMER

FIVE TALENTED CHEFS TO WATCH
THE WILDEST RESTAURANT WE ATE AT ALL YEAR

RECIPES AND ESQUIRE'S AWARDS:
DISH OF THE YEAR | CHEF OF THE YEAR
THE BEST NEW RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR