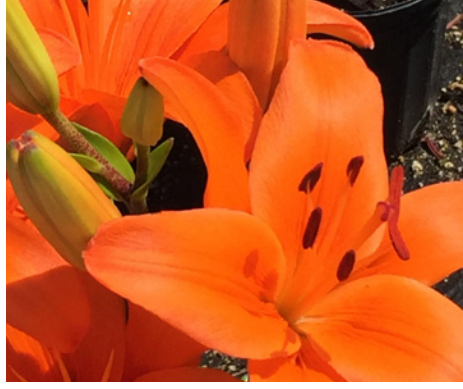


# Behind the Scenes of one of Nova Scotia's **FINEST** *Dining Rooms*

By **Lori McKay**

Fox Harb'r is known for its 18-hole championship golf course, private jetport and deep-sea marina, but did you know the prestigious five-star resort also offers a unique food destination? With a tranquil décor that includes fresh lilies from their own greenhouse on the tables and a picturesque view of the green and the Northumberland Strait, guests will find local fare and sustainable seafood in abundance on the menu.



Utilizing fresh local ingredients, executive chef Shane Robilliard has created a menu at Fox Harb'r that celebrates Nova Scotia.

Robilliard, who has been with the resort for a year and a half, has brought a number of new initiatives to the Cape Cliff dining room — No. 1 on that list is his commitment to sourcing local, which starts with their seafood.

"All the seafood is local. I fish my own trout out of our trout ponds. That's about as local as you can possibly get," says Robilliard, who is also food and beverage director at the resort. "We buy lobster in Pugwash, which is just 20 minutes away. Our lobsters aren't out of the water much more than 20 minutes before they're in our restaurant. That's pretty cool."

Cape Cliff is certified by Ocean Wise, a Vancouver Aquarium conservation program that educates and empowers consumers about sustainable seafood.

"We only use Ocean Wise certified seafood products here, and that's a big thing for me," says Robilliard. "I believe in sustainability and nurturing the ocean. Ocean Wise and sustainability in general isn't talked about that much on the east coast... People don't think about it in their day-to-day operations or day-to-day purchases. I think it's important that we as chefs take that and run with it, and educate people as much as we can."

And seafood is front and centre on Cape Cliff's menu, with lobster being their top request.

"When people come to the Maritimes one of the first things they look for is fresh lobster. We're fortunate that we have some of the freshest lobster that you're ever going to find anywhere. There's lobster ravioli, one-and-a-half-pound lobsters, there's lobster benny, there's lobster frittata, there's lobster pasta, there's lobster rolls, of course. There's even a lobster poutine on the menu. We do lobster big time."

He said they hosted a few larger events this summer and in a three-day period they went through 510 lobsters.

In addition to seafood, Fox Harb'r is reducing the restaurant's carbon footprint in other ways.

The resort has been growing its own produce on a smaller scale for about 10 years, but Robilliard has taken it to another level and partnered with Fox Harb'r horticulturist Michael Steward to grow their own salad greens, vegetables and herbs, which creates a unique dining experience for guests.

"If you're a chef and there's a guy who wants to grow food for you, I don't understand how you could not want to use that," says Robilliard with a laugh. "We use as much local as we can. Our chicken farmer, who raises all of our chicken as well as our eggs and our turkeys, is only about 15 minutes away. I go to Truro every

**"Shane Robilliard's hands-on approach — working daily with his culinary team in developing a very successful kitchen brigade — has been very rewarding for the resort. His leadership has led his service team to reach new heights in service excellence, which has been noted on a daily basis by our guests and members."**

— Kevin Toth, president Fox Harb'r



## *Did you know?*

**Fox Harb'r has two man-made trout ponds on the property, which they stock yearly.** The ponds are also available for guests for recreational fishing (and releasing). The rock removed from the ground for the ponds was used to build the \$22 million rock seawall that protects the resort's coastal land from erosion, a process that took four years to complete.

Saturday to buy as much produce as I can from local suppliers. I buy stuff at the Pork Shop...As much as humanly possible, we buy local."

Originally from British Columbia — or "from away," as Nova Scotians call it — Robilliard worked as a chef at The Fairmont in B.C. for 10 years. When he moved to Nova Scotia six years ago he spent a few years in the front of the house, instead of the kitchen, learning valuable management experience. He was the general manager at a number of Halifax restaurants and ran his own restaurant for a short time.

"But I was missing the kitchen side of things and when Kevin (Fox Harb'r president Kevin Toth) was in need of someone, it was literally the perfect job for me because I get to do both. I get to run a half million dollar wine program, be the chef of an amazing food and beverage operation and I get to do some pretty cool stuff."

Wine is a big part of the Fox Harb'r experience, and Cape Cliff houses one of the largest wine cellars in Atlantic Canada, with 270 selections from all over the world.

"We're doing as much as we can with the local product, but we also have a huge selection of international wines," says Robilliard. "We have a heavy focus on Bordeaux. Anything from a \$5,000 Bordeaux ... We also have scotches on the list that are \$250 an ounce."

The resort has also started its own vineyard and has entered into a partnership with Jost Vineyards. They hope to have their first grapes ready for 2018.

People often associate the resort — which is owned by former Tim Hortons owner Ron Joyce — with a private club, but the resort is looking to change that image. You don't have to be a member to dine at Cape Cliff or take in one of Fox Harb'r's other activities — be it golfing, clay shooting, or a visit to the spa — but you do need to call ahead of time and make a reservation. ■



Shane Robilliard, chef



RECIPE COURTESY  
Shane Robilliard

## Digby Scallop and Northumberland Lobster Terrine

Vanilla Scented Yukon Gold Potato, Wilted Spinach and Vanilla Beurre Blanc  
(Serves 4)

### Ingredients

#### For the Terrine

2-1 1/2 lb lobster  
400g fresh sustainable Digby scallops  
120ml heavy whipping cream  
3 sprigs of dill, finely chopped  
5 pc of chives, finely chopped  
salt and pepper

#### For the Potatoes

2 large Yukon gold potatoes  
600g baby spinach  
150ml heavy cream  
200ml fish stock  
1L chicken stock

2 vanilla bean pods split in half lengthwise  
100ml white wine  
1 shallot, finely chopped  
300g butter, unsalted and cubed into half-inch cubes at room temperature  
Salt and pepper

### To prepare the terrine:

Cook the two lobsters in a large pot of salted water for five minutes, just until they are cooked enough to remove from the shell. Dip in ice water after to shock cool them. De-shell and chop all the tail, knuckle and internal meat into half-inch cubes. Reserve claws to the side. In a food processor, place the scallops and puree until smooth. Add cream, herbs

and season. Remove scallop puree and fold in chopped up lobster meat in a stainless steel bowl. Lay out 20" of saran wrap on a table and place the scallop and lobster mix in a line in the middle of the saran about 1" thick. Fold over the saran width wise and then use the saran to roll the mixture into a log shape. Wrap this log in tin foil and seal as best you can on the ends. Just before you're about to serve, poach this in seasoned water for approx nine minutes on a low boil.

### To prepare the potatoes:

Cut the Yukon gold potatoes into 1" thick slices and use a 3" round cutter to make perfect silver dollar shaped discs; you will need a total of 12 discs. Place in chicken stock that has had half of the vanilla pod scraped into it, and the pod tossed in as well. Season the chicken stock with a little salt. Simmer on low heat for 10 min. Sauté half of the shallots on low heat until translucent, then add the spinach and half the white wine and wilt the spinach. Add a splash of cream, salt and pepper and reserve.

### To prepare the beurre blanc:

Sauté the other half of the shallots in a heavy bottom stainless steel pot. Add 150ml of the cooking liquid for the potatoes, the fish stock, scrape the other half of the vanilla bean pod and put the paste in and simmer until reduced by three quarters. Reduce heat to very low and add the butter cubes one at a time, whisking constantly so the butter emulsifies. Once the last of the butter is incorporated, strain and set aside.

### To assemble:

Place three potato discs on the bottom of the plate, place creamed spinach on top. Cut the terrine into four pieces and one piece on top of the spinach. Place one claw in top then drizzle the entire dish with the beurre blanc. Garnish with fresh pansy petals to bring bright colour to the dish.



## Pan Seared Rainbow Trout

Minted Cous Cous & Brunoise Vegetables  
(Serves 2)

### Ingredients

1 whole Rainbow trout or two filets of Rainbow Trout  
2 cups cous cous  
3 sprigs mint  
2 cups light fish stock or chicken stock  
1 tsp finely chopped shallots  
1/2 yellow bell pepper finely diced  
1/2 red bell pepper finely diced  
2oz finely diced carrot  
2oz finely diced green zucchini  
2oz finely diced yellow zucchini  
1tblsp capers  
Juice of one lemon  
2oz white wine  
4 lemon segments (fine part of the lemon between the fiber that holds the lemon together)  
4 oz butter  
Fresh chopped fine herbs

1 oz vegetable oil  
3 oz all purpose flour  
Salt and pepper

If you have a whole trout you will need to filet, de-bone and dry the two filets of trout. If you are using a filet, you just need to dry the filet off.

### To prepare the couscous

Bring stock to a boil and season well with salt and pepper. Add mint that has been very finely sliced and cous cous, and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 15 minutes.

### To prepare the filet of trout

Make three small incisions into the skin so that the trout filet doesn't curl when it is put in the frying pan. Season well on both sides with salt and pepper. Dredge in flour on both sides. Heat pan to smoking hot then fry with the skin side down first, until the skin is crisp, then

turn over and finish for approximately eight minutes in a 350-degree oven.

### To prepare the sauce

Saute shallot in a small amount of the butter on medium heat; add all the other vegetables once the shallots are translucent. Add oil and lemon juice and simmer until reduced by 3/4, add lemons, herbs, capers and simmer for one min. Reduce heat to very low and then add butter, whisking until the butter is incorporated but not simmering. If you boil the butter it won't emulsify.

### To Serve

Spoon the cous cous into the middle of the plate, lay the filet on top and then spoon half of the sauce/vegetables on top of the trout. Always serve the skin side up in order to show off the nice crispy skin. Garnish with edible flowers or micro greens.