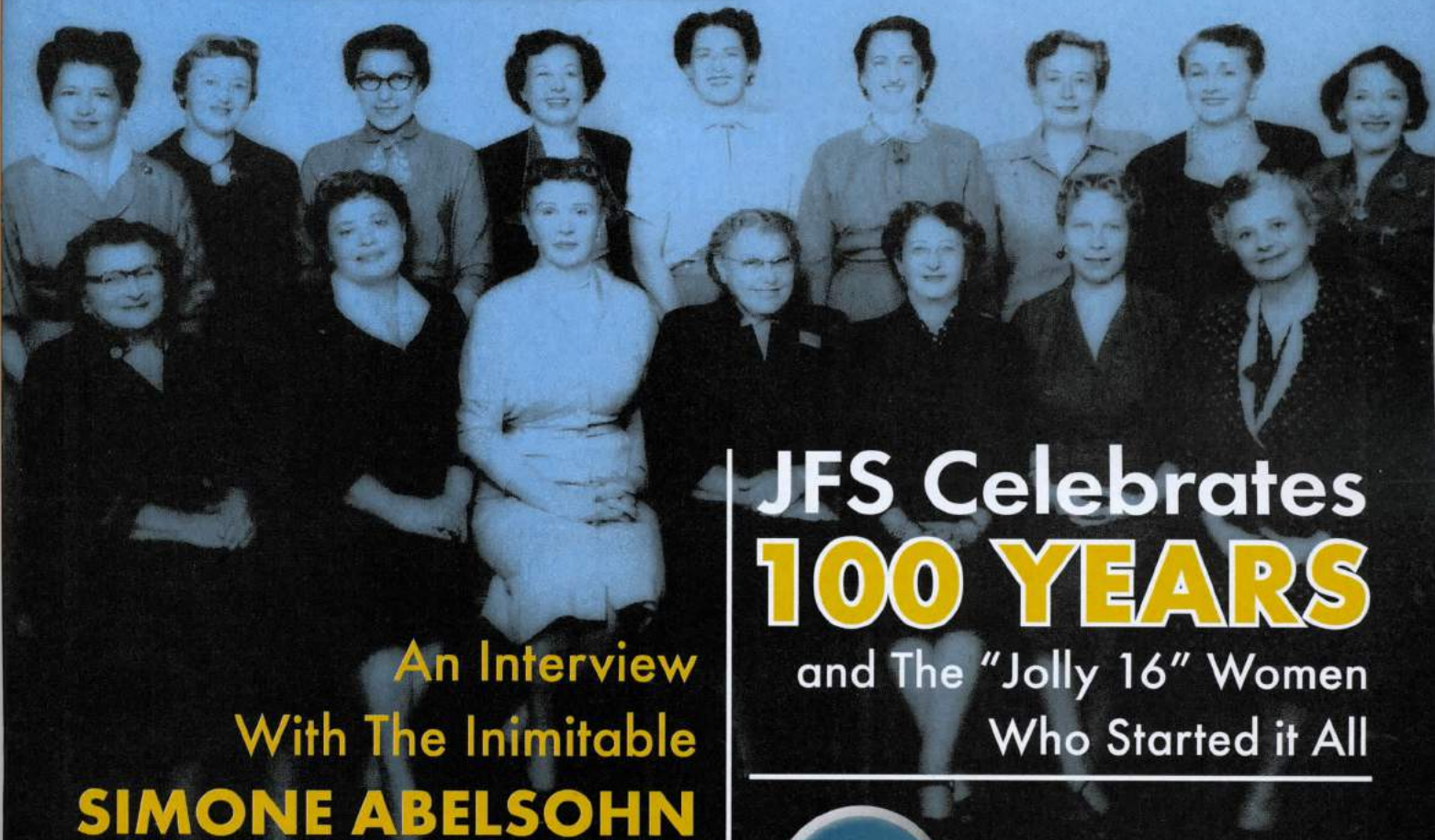


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A Restaurant With a View

BY EILEEN SONDAK

Nine-Ten is not just a number. It's the name of one of the finest restaurants in La Jolla – and all of San Diego, for that matter. This highly acclaimed dining destination has earned a coveted Zagat rating, and boasts an award-winning chef, Jason Knibb – an early champion of farm-fresh local artisan ingredients. Knibb trained with Wolfgang Puck and other master chefs, before putting Nine-Ten on the culinary map.

Located in the Grande Colonial Hotel, Nine-Ten has been a magnet for food connoisseurs for 16 years. But the restaurant isn't about to rest on its laurels. It just underwent a \$300,000 renovation that includes a revitalized dining room and bar, updated sidewalk patio area, and spectacular ocean-view terrace. The sophisticated ambience now has a modern vibe that makes it even more attractive to discriminating diners. Impeccable service and valet parking are just frosting on the cake.

The contemporary California cuisine is always evolving at Nine-Ten.

As Chef Knibb explained, "I find the most culinary pleasure in blending an eclectic mix of classic techniques with modern styles inspired by the ethnic diversities of San Diego." As a result, traditional dishes show up on the menu with "a simple, elegant twist."

The appetizer menu is huge (there are 11 to choose from), and each dish has Chef Knibb's signature on it. Take the roasted carrots and carrot falafel (\$15) for example. This is not like any falafel you've ever tasted, and the roasted carrots are sublime. It ranks as one of the top 10 appetizers in contemporary cuisine. Chef Knibb features Hudson Valley foie gras (\$25) among the spectacular starters at this upscale eatery, so take advantage if you're a fan of this elegant classic.

Even salads get the royal treatment at Nine-Ten. Try the roasted vegetable salad (\$15) and enjoy a garden of freshly roasted Brussels sprouts, broccoli, radishes, fennel, and carrots, topped with hazelnut crumbs and dressed with black truffle vinaigrette. You may have had pear and Belgium endive salad (\$15) at other restaurants, but Chef Knibb prepares his with a special "twist" – Asian pear, Boucheron cheese, dried cranberries, pecan and champagne vinaigrette.

If you need further incentives to make your next special occasion dinner at Nine-Ten, check out the



entrée list. It includes mouthwatering wild Coho salmon with a savory Castelvetro olive relish (\$37), Baja striped bass with Manila clams and maitake mushrooms (\$36), a fabulous 10 oz. New York steak with spring onions and a confit of crispy baby potatoes (\$39) and roasted Colorado lamb loin with roasted eggplant (\$37). Need I say more?

The chef has a cheese course to tempt you after dinner, and it's well worth indulging in at least one cheese selection (\$7). You can share four varieties with the table for \$20.

The desserts are exquisite, thanks to the artistry of pastry chef Jose Alonzo III. Among the delicious treats is half-baked chocolate cake with caramel sauce (\$10), banana crunch bar (\$11), coconut flan with pineapple jelly – paired with strawberry sorbet (\$11), Greek yogurt panna cotta with compressed apples and grape sorbet (\$11) and an assortment of seasonal sorbets (all made in-house, along with the ice cream). You can sample three silky sorbets for \$8.

Nine-Ten serves breakfast, lunch and dinner daily (a menu brunch on Sunday), and it goes without saying that the restaurant features a well-balanced and extensive wine list. Reservations are recommended. ✨

