

# Sunset Strip Restaurant Mirabelle, a Hollywood Favorite, Celebrates Revamp

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*The transformed interior of Mirabelle on the Sunset Strip; below, a selection of seafood charcuterie from the new menu.*

**Owners George and Lenore Germanides are hosting a private reopening party to mark the transformed decor and ambitious new menu of the restaurant frequented by Halle Berry and others.**

Forty-one years ago, when **George Germanides** and his new bride, **Lenore**, purchased Alfie's, a hamburgers-and-hotdogs joint at 8768 W. Sunset Blvd., it already was drawing a steady stream of celebrities. "Royalty then was **Little Richard** and **Jim Morrison**," says Lenore. Soon, once they had obtained a liquor license, the space was transformed into **Mirabelle**, which lured the likes of **Lana Turner** and Gov. **Jerry Brown** -- then serving in his first, full-head-of-hair term -- for dishes like shrimp scampi and chef's salad.

After four decades, most restaurants (those very few that survive) are invariably stuck hopelessly in their pasts. But Mirabelle, at the same address and under the same mom-and-pop ownership, has come quite a long way, with a decidedly challenging, even cutting-edge menu and an adventurously confident new postmodern-rococo décor by noted designer **Thomas Schoos** to match. (Teddy bears in bejeweled display cases? Mad Hatter-worthy oversized chairs beneath a 1960s-style arc floor lamp? Why not!)

The crowd remains as industry-oriented as ever, with TMZ attempting to bribe employees for dirt on a regular basis. The location, immediately next to offices like **Mark Mothersbaugh's** Mutato Muzika music production company, as well as a mere linen napkin's toss from innumerable Hollywood Hills homes, makes it an eternal show business nexus. (**Quentin Tarantino** wrote quite a bit of the script for *Pulp Fiction* at the restaurant; later, he met **Samuel L. Jackson** there to discuss the actor's part as Jules Winnfield.)

**Halle Berry**, a regular, insisted that the Oscar party for *Monster's Ball* be held there in 2002. "Of course, Lionsgate had other ideas of where they would have it after she was nominated," says Lenore. "She said, 'That's great, but I'll be at Mirabelle!'" The Germanides are hosting a soiree of their own Thursday night to celebrate the restaurant's transformation.

Their daughter, **Justine Giannini**, notes: "My dad is not very advanced on pop culture. Mötley Crüe would come in full costume from the Whiskey and he would say to them, 'Why would you dress like women?' They loved him!" George and Mirabelle were both given dedications in the liner notes to the band's debut album, *Too Fast for Love*.

New chef **Michael Bryant**, who trained under the famed **Norman Van Aken** and most recently cooked at the Hall at Palihouse Holloway, has crafted a menu on which seafood charcuterie is the star. Expect variations ranging from octopus terrine with scented Tunisian chilies and monkfish glazed in a Japanese grape sauce with brandied pickled blueberries to hamachi cured in rum with pickled kumquats and Scottish "salmon-pastrami" on rye drizzled with horseradish. Of the decidedly avant-garde menu, and its distance from the far more straightforward offerings of Mirabelle's early days, George wryly observes: "People don't want to have a five-pound steak with potatoes on the side anymore."