

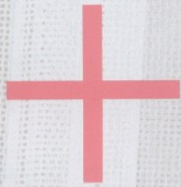
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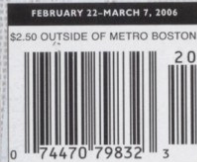
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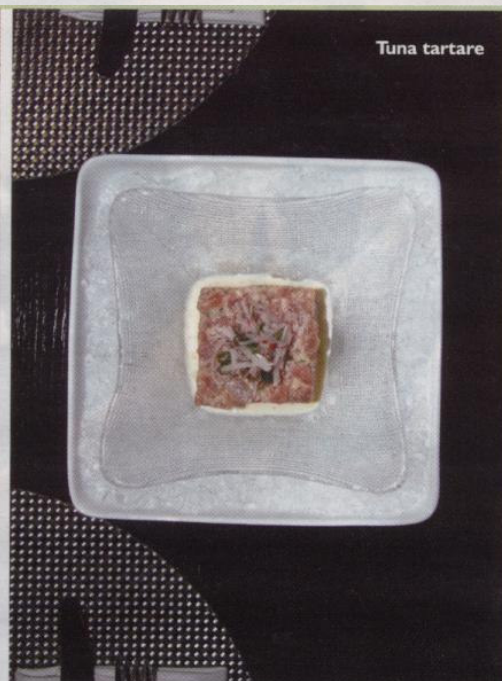


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THE WORD

EDITED BY ERIN GRAHAM



NEW IN TOWN

All in the Family

What's black and white and looks like the lovechild of Davio's and Stella? Sorellina, the newest restaurant from the powerhouse partners behind Mistral and Teatro. With the ultra-stylish Italian restaurant Sorellina, Paul Roiff and his crew unleash a crack culinary team: executive chef/partner John Delpha, chef/owner Jamie Mammano (chef at Mistral) and chef/partner Robert Jean (chef at Teatro). It's a lot of hype to live up to, but Sorellina exhibits the same qualities that have made Mistral and Teatro such hits.

The swish space (formerly Salamander) was designed by Susan Orpin and Celeste Cooper, the restaurateurs' go-to design girl. (She also did Mistral, Teatro, XV Beacon and the Federalist.) Her clean, dramatic style shines through in Sorellina's striking, high-contrast décor: All 125 seats are crisp white, matching the all-white dinnerware and big, white ceiling panels, while the walls are jet black.

Like the décor, Sorellina's food is anything but boring. Waiters, dressed to complement the color scheme, bring warm chiavata bread with Vermont butter to your table to get things started. The menu is divided into a few categories: primo (starters like the fonduta, a sharp-cheese fondue, \$14); pasta (dishes like macheroncelli, five-inch long macaroni tossed in butter sauce with American kobe beef meat balls and thin

slices of pecorino toscano, come in small portions, \$13, or large, \$24); and secondi (like the chef's favorite, a monkfish prepared piccata style with Mediterranean vegetable ragout, \$28). Contorni, or sides, include truffled fries with parmigiano (\$11) and eggplant gratinata (\$10), which are, like the entrées, big enough—and delicious enough—to justify the prices.

Even though Sorellina is less boisterous than Mistral and the two offer totally different types of food, Sorellina still invites comparisons: Its name means "little sister" in Italian, and a giant black-and-white mural fuzzily depicts a French countryside landscape, both nods to Mistral. Other comparisons are food-driven, namely Sorellina's tuna. It's no secret that Mistral's tuna tartare has a loyal following. But it was a surprise to staffers that Sorellina's tuna (chopped raw, with mostarda aioli and chili vinegar, \$18) divided tuna fans into team Mistral and team Sorellina in just weeks. "It's already become a huge tuna competition," GM Mark D'Alessandro laughs.

Dessert aficionados could soon be taking sides too, since it's Mistral's pastry chef, Shane Grey, who's whipping up Italian-inspired delicacies like limoncello-citrus tiramisu (\$12) and mocha-meringue semifreddo doused with caramel (\$9). 1 Huntington Ave., Boston (617-412-4600). www.sorellinaboston.com. —EG