



the  
**Lark**®

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## **A Taste of the Adriatic: Istria, Slavonia & The Dalmatian Coast.**

The East coast of the Adriatic Sea, with its incredible beauty and local bounty, has become one of the most sought after travel destinations in the world. What is unknown to many food & wine lovers in America is that Istria, Slavonia, and the spectacularly beautiful Dalmatian Coast of Croatia, just across the Adriatic Sea from Italy, have some of the oldest wine histories in the world. The eclectic cuisine of the region, shaped by its history of Venetian, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian rule, as well as its location between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea, is an absolute foodie heaven. This is why we have found it our calling to bring this bountiful part of the world to you!

We have focused our attention on local recipes, and solely small-production, family-owned wineries rich with generations of winemaking history; they know how to make wine only one way – by hand and with the utmost respect for nature. Each of these exciting wines is paired with traditional dishes from the regions they come from. We are pleased to say that we will be guided on this fascinating journey by Mr. Ilya Shchukin, our charming wine expert and importer of the artisanal wines that will be featured during the event. Please join us for this very special and unique event Tuesday or Wednesday, September 30th and October 1st at 7:00 p.m

### **Menu & Wines**

Grilled *Škampi*, *Lignje* (Calamari) & Mussels with Garlic, Parsley & Olive Oil  
Mlinci (Flatbread)

**Kozlović Malvazija 2013 Istria**

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Osijek Fish Paprikash with Branzino, Pike, Sweet Paprika & White Wine  
Enjingi Graševina 2012 Slavonia

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Dalmatian Beef *Pašticada* over Croation-Style Gnocchi with Sun-Dried Plums, Fig,  
Prosek & Rosemary

**Piližota Babić 2012 Dalmatia**

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A refreshing interlude

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Peka: Roasted Lamb (or Chicken, your choice) Under-the-Bell  
(Cooked outside under a large cast iron bell surrounded by very hot coal)  
Roasted Potatoes with Onion and Artichoke

**Zlatan Plavac Mali 2010 Dalmatia**

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Istria Palacinke (crepes) filled with Ricotta & Apricot  
Warm Chocolate Drizzle & Walnuts  
Bonbons & Coffee

**Kozlović Muscat 2011 Istria**

The cost of this exceptional dinner is only \$107 per person, including the five wines! (Other beverages, tax and gratuity are additional.) Should you opt not to drink the wine package we will credit you \$20. The last date for cancellation or reduction of reservations without charge is September 23rd. To make reservations e-mail us at [bookings@thelark.com](mailto:bookings@thelark.com) or call our office at (248)661-4466.

**Small Plates Week.** Back by popular demand, we will be offering small plates Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, September 9th, 10th & 11th. As always, Chef John will be featuring Lark specialties as well as creative new dishes. The full menu will be on our website [thelark.com](http://thelark.com) by Friday, September 5th. Prices for small plates will range from \$6 -\$25. We will be offering our regular menu these days as well so please let the office ladies know which menu you would like when booking your table. See you then!

**Ramblings.** Prompted by the hopeful renaissance brewing in Detroit, media attention has pinpointed the best and the worst residential neighborhoods in the city. Always named the best are the **Indian Village** homes north of East Jefferson Avenue and the “University District” of **Sherwood Forest** and Palmer Woods, so described because of their locations close to the main campus of the University of Detroit (Mercy).

Back in the 1960s Burt Binder, my home builder and land developer partner, bought a home in Sherwood Forest, loved the locale and recommended a home to me that he discovered for sale in even more upscale **Palmer Woods**, north of Seven Mile Road and west of Woodward Avenue. It was a true mansion and, despite condition problems, a steal at \$40,000. Mary and I bought it and moved in after completing close to \$20,000 of repairs in 1960s dollars. Most costly were those needed for its slate roof. Yes, of course the roof was slate! What would one expect on a mansion with many bedrooms and baths; assorted fireplaces including those in the “parlor”, library and master bedroom; a “powder room”; butler’s pantry; sun room; greenhouse; central vacuum system; incinerator, and well-located buttons to push to call servants to serve. Oh, and a very large attached garage topped with servant quarters and a “linen room”. T’was home enough and yet not complete, lacking a servant and an appropriate dog. Mary promptly hired a live-in housekeeper, while I contemplated what would be the appropriate breed of dog. What would an English lord of the manor choose? A Bull Mastiff, a breed created by pairing a Mastiff with an Old English Bull Dog--the huge one! A hound to maim or kill poachers on one’s country estate. His name seemed obvious--Marmaduke. No, not named after the cartoon dog. Our Marmaduke was named years before the cartoon began. I sent the cartoon’s creator a note and a photo of Marmaduke. He responded with a nice note and an impressive drawing of the dog with a greeting and his autograph.

All of this history was prompted by daughter Adrian’s suggestions that I write a piece about the dinner parties we hosted for friends at our manse. They’d average about 10 guests, sometimes more. Mary and I had never before fed such a throng. While living in another mansion while attending Georgetown Law School in D.C., I did once host over 20 friends who were stuck in D.C. on Thanksgiving Day. If you ever face such a problem, I will give you a tip: make the main course either a beef rib roast or Beef Stroganoff with noodles. Easy to prepare and all the prep work can be done in advance. These dishes appeal to almost all but vegans or those allergic to meat. Another tip. Serve only wine, not booze. The risk of someone else (you’re excused) getting drunk is too high when there are many guests. That could be a disaster.

Our most memorable dinner at the manse included a treasure hunt. Couples were newly created. Your partner could not be your significant other. Our sprawling, many-roomed house was a perfect setting, even including a huge lighted attic and many store rooms for one purpose or another. And the drinks that evening had not been limited to wine. Everyone was in a jolly adventurous mood. You might guess the result. Two couples really got along with their new partner, to say the least,

and agreed to future meetings, leading to at least one divorce. Obviously, no more treasure hunts. Of course we always hosted a New Year's Eve dinner for about five couples. Because of the holiday gifts we'd all received at Christmas parties, it seemed an opportunity to exchange "White Elephant Gifts". Many were hilarious. It was forbidden to bring any gift received from any other participant. The amazing 1982 morel mushroom season, during which our offspring harvested some 7,200 fungi, prompted a special dinner where every course included morel mushrooms. It was loved by all!

Since a New Year's dinner party meant guests would be imbibing and still be at our manor after midnight, all were invited to and did stay overnight. There was room for all.

Shopping at a gourmet grocer one day, I was amazed to find a can of 100 snails. Too appealing to resist, I purchased a can and 100 shells; prepared them all at once and froze them in packs of 12. A handy and quickly available appetizer for guests. Thus inspired, we also hosted a party featuring snails in garlic butter. Everyone approved—not a picky eater present.

Another annual dinner celebrated St. Patrick's Day. We most remember the year after we moved from Palmer Woods to our new home on West Bloomfield Lake. A heavy snowfall the day before made it almost impossible to reach our home a long way in from Walnut Lake Road. The main course was always Maine Lobsters which we were forced to bring to our home by sled. It's a fun night, so much so that every couple showed up, regardless of the blizzard-like conditions.

Mary and I now live in our four-story home we built in West Bloomfield Lake. We moved there in December 1972 accompanied by five children and a Labrador retriever. Now there's just the two of us, but the surroundings are so beautiful and the local and visiting wildlife so abundant, varied and captivating that we've never discussed moving. An example of the appeal is happening as I write this note. Mary heard a gentle noise coming from the hearth of the massive fireplace in our parlor. She tracked those sounds on Google and thought that brown bats may have adopted a new home. What seemed odd, however, was when Mary mimicked their calls they replied. Bats aren't that congenial. More exploration on Google solved the riddle. Chimney swifts had built a nest atop the fireplace damper to lay and hatch their eggs. Some homeowners might be irritated; we felt honored. The soft noises continued now and then on some days we also noticed the swifts flying about our home and the bordering lake feeding on insects before darting straight down our chimney. Because of the small lake and the very large undeveloped nature reserve to our north, we are spoiled by visiting critters. All kinds of squirrels and chipmunks, of course; the same swans from spring to autumn each year; whitetail deer including fawns and yearlings, the muskrat and new baby, heron, ducks galore, cormorants and a variety of song birds (no larks). Not so welcome and thankfully absent this year is the black rat snake. I like snakes, and the God who made us made and loved all things great and small, but these snakes are large & nasty and seem as willing to attack you as they are to flee. But, fortunately they noted they weren't welcome in our area so all is perfect again.

**Chef John's Cooking Class.** Join Chef John at his next cooking class scheduled Saturday, October 11, 2014. He will be demonstrating dishes he experienced while on vacation in northeast Maine. This will include his favorite lobster dish. Class begins at 11:00 am. Reservations can be made by calling Louise at 734-812-1312. Reserve early as the classes fill up rapidly.

**Larks Take To The Trees.** Mary and I have four sons and a daughter Adrian, who is General Manager of The Lark. Two of our sons (both physicians married to physicians) and their families live in the Carolinas, one North and one South. #3 son Kurt, of North Carolina, and his family recently visited us. His three Metro Detroit siblings planned enjoyable activities for them, including an outing at the new **Adventure Park** near our home in West Bloomfield. Mary, a good and brave sport, joined in the fun. Here is an excerpt from an article by Anthony Wellman in the truly excellent publication West Bloomfield **Today**:

The Adventure Park features “tree platforms at different heights positioned throughout the forest and connected by “crossings” that may be either challenge bridges or zip lines that climbers navigate, going from platform to platform. A series of crossings is known as a “treetop trail.” Each park features a number of these color-coded trails of different challenge levels (much like color-coded ski runs) ranging from beginner through advanced.”



Though the literature details the first two levels as being easy, for young children, Mary and Adrian felt quite differently! They chose to do the second level with the rest of the family, presuming they were more capable than the 5-7 year olds for which the first level is meant. Much to their distress, they quickly found themselves clinging for dear life, perched atop a wire, 15-20 feet in the air! Mary was the only grandmother crawling on all fours through wire hoops along the 1/2” wire, and jumping from swing to swing while having only hanging ropes to hold on to! Daughter Adrian was in the front and begged to come down when she nearly plunged off the side. She called over a worker and asked him to help Mary, fearing the worst. He checked on Mary and reported back to Adrian that grandma was fine and she should worry more about herself!

For more information, special or extended hours or other updates visit [WestBloomfieldTrees.org](http://WestBloomfieldTrees.org). The Adventure Park may be reached directly by email at: [Info@WestBloomfieldTrees.org](mailto:Info@WestBloomfieldTrees.org). Telephone: (248) 419-1550.

*Jim Lark*