

Encore introduces Jardin restaurant at Wynn Las Vegas

by [Grace Bascos](#), Special for USA TODAY | Published on January 10, 2016

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The culinary landscape at the [Wynn Las Vegas](#) continues to transform with the opening of Jardin at Encore on Friday. The new restaurant will take the place of Botero (whose chef Mark LoRusso took the reigns of Costa di Mare) with chef Joseph Zanelli, who was part of the opening team at Wynn in 2006, at the helm. Zanelli spent the past few years off-Strip with restaurant group Elizabeth Blau and Associates, opening local favorites such as Honey Salt, Made L.V. and Andiron, all on the Westside. At Jardin, he's created menus for breakfast, lunch and dinner with a focus on contemporary American fare.

"I think it's important to cook stuff that you like to eat," explains Zanelli. "This is a beast; it's the largest volume restaurant I've ever opened with as many services besides the room service operation I did for Encore. You want to construct the menu so you can facilitate [service] and get it out in a timely fashion, but also bring something new to the table, stuff that you normally don't see in a three-meal period in a hotel." One that's sure to be a favorite right off the bat is Zanelli's take on the sweet-savory interplay of chicken and waffles. Instead of waffles, French toast has a section cut out of the middle, then an egg is cooked inside for an upgraded toad-in-the-hole. A piece of fried chicken tops it all, along with Espelette peppers, strawberries and maple syrup. Fried chicken makes another appearance as a killer chicken sandwich at lunch, but a stacked Cuban sandwich will be fighting for your attention midday.

Lighter options include yellowtail and beet tartare, as well as kale salads. Dinner's signature item is about the best version of meat and potatoes you can get: Wagyu rib cap that is pinwheeled, sliced and roasted before it's paired with rustic fork-mashed potatoes with chives and crème fraîche and a peppercorn sauce. For dessert, there's the cute flower pot chocolate cake layered with chocolate butter cream and topped with fondant flowers in an edible pot.

And if you'd like more of a fine dining experience, Jardin will offer a three-course prix fixe menu for \$55 during dinner.

Roger Thomas of Wynn Design and Development re-imagined the dining room to utilize the floor-to-ceiling windows, allowing natural light to create a garden-like feel true to the restaurant's name, with pops of white and gold touches. The restaurant has lightened up in all ways possible; where Botero was strictly open for dinner, now guests can see what the space looks like during the day while indulging on Zanelli's fare. And gone is the giant, bronze Seated Woman statue by Colombian artist Fernando Botero that occupied the middle of the dining room (though the hotel is tightlipped on how they got the massive work of art out).

After the launch of Costa di Mare and the [new buffet](#), Jardin is another piece of the luxury resort's culinary puzzle falling into place. Wynn and Encore's dining big picture is looking even more delicious.