

LOCATION: POUND RIDGE, NEW YORK • SPECIALTY: FARM-TO-TABLE CUISINE • ATMOSPHERE: CASUALLY ELEGANT

Scallops  
in lemon  
cauliflower  
sauce

## The Inn at Pound Ridge

A top New York chef opens a relaxed eatery just over the state line.

BY **MARY KATE HOGAN**  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **FRANCESCO TONELLI**

Even though the city's only a short train ride away, it's always a happy occasion when a top New York chef decides to open a restaurant in our neck of the woods, aka the country. In the case of Jean-Georges Vongerichten's Inn at Pound Ridge, we are now the lucky neighbors of a world-renowned culinary artist with a global empire—restaurants from New York to Paris to Shanghai—who chose our backyard as the setting for his new outpost, a renovated, circa-1833 inn. In fact, Vongerichten has been making the reverse-commute to

his country home in Westchester for the past ten years. Two years ago, he purchased the historic building (once known as Emily Shaw's Inn) that would undergo a massive reinvention. Designer Thomas Juul-Hansen led a team that preserved original floors and stonework while bringing in modern touches such as upholstered settees in ultra-soft leather. With whitewashed barn beams everywhere, a soft palette of grays and whites and the scent of four working fireplaces filling the rooms, this two-level dining space envelops you in rustic warmth.



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Foie gras  
terrine

## QUICK BITES

1. The candle-illuminated wine cellar on the lower level would make a romantic spot for a special celebration.

2. Jean-Georges Vongerichten has restaurants in St. Barths, the Bahamas and Los Cabos, but this is his first destination that is not in a city or at a resort.

3. There's plenty of space to dine and unwind as the restaurant has two levels, two bars and four cozy fireplaces.


When we arrived a few minutes late for our Thursday night dinner reservation, the hostess couldn't have been more pleasant. (To score a coveted table, you can book up to a month ahead of time.) We were guided to the lower-level dining room, which overlooks a stone patio and garden, where the last rays of sun were streaming in. With hanging, paper-shaded lamps casting a subtle glow (lighting is by Herve Descottes) and Ray Lamontagne playing in the background, we started our meal on a seriously relaxing note. Adding to the laid-back feeling, wood tables are topped with simple paper placemats, antique floral butter plates and vintage silver.

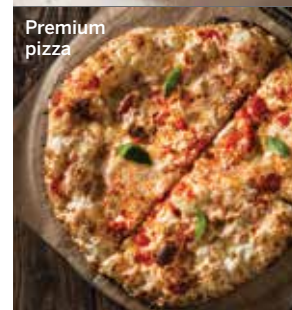
Our server, dressed in a plaid shirt, described the one nightly special, a dry-aged rib eye steak, and handed us menus. This is seasonal, farm-to-table fare with husband-and-wife chef team Blake and Melody Farrar (alums of other Vongerichten restaurants) heading up the kitchen. Yet the menu seems more casual than you might expect, with foie gras listed alongside pizza. Of course, we ordered both. What's not to love about a foie gras terrine paired with sour cherries and topped with crunchy, candied pistachios, plated with a white port gelee? A colorful beet salad blends the freshest baby vegetables with yogurt, baby greens and

a drizzle of balsamic vinegar for a mellow, earthy starter. These tender beets came from California, but in season, they'll be plucked from local gardens. We also relished the peekytoe crab crostini, a cool, seafood salad on warm crusty bread.

For entrées, the offerings are versatile and a surprisingly good value as they range from \$25 to \$38. My favorite of the evening: the grilled lamb chops in a smoky chili glaze over a bed of sautéed onions and broccoli rabe. Those who prefer seafood count a roasted hake with grated ginger dressing; sautéed scallops in meyer lemon-cauliflower sauce; and lobster with chili among the options.

Desserts here appeal to the kid in us, from the butterscotch pudding to seasonal doughnuts. An old-school cookie plate features cherry chocolate-chips, a coconut-caramel cookie, lemon roll and cheesecake square. For me, the must-order treat is the salted caramel sundae, a recipe the pastry chef brought with her from ABC Kitchen.

While some star-chef restaurants are places you visit once or twice and check them off your list, The Inn at Pound Ridge is the opposite. With this relaxed-but-elegant spot, we're looking for any excuse—from a night out with friends to “I don't feel like cooking”—to go back. 

Beet  
saladPremium  
pizza

## THE INN AT POUND RIDGE

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Thomas Mantione, CFP®, CPWA®, CIMA®  
Senior Vice President–Wealth Management  
Private Wealth Advisor  
203-719-2922  
thomas.mantione@ubs.com

UBS Financial Services Inc.  
677 Washington Boulevard  
Stamford, CT 06901-3707  
203-719-2922 866-860-7266

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