

# Plated Prestige

LEARN HOW THE DINING EXPERIENCE YOU’LL GET AT NEWPORT BEACH COUNTRY CLUB STACKS UP AGAINST A REGULAR RESTAURANT IN TOWN.

By Ashley Ryan

**W**ith dining experiences in abundance, Newport Beach Country Club is a foodie’s paradise. But, where restaurants place most of their emphasis on the cuisine, the culinary team at NBCC knows that members continue to come back for the club’s unparalleled ambiance and service.

“When somebody remembers a ‘regular’ at a traditional restaurant or bar, it’s considered an above-and-beyond experience,” says Vincent Miranda, who joined NBCC as chef de cuisine in mid-June. “Here at NBCC, everybody is a regular; every member gets a unique and intimate experience. That could be a drink preference, a certain tee time or your favorite dish on your birthday. Going above and beyond is the standard for club life and I think that’s something truly special.”

Read on to discover some of the similarities and differences you’ll notice dining at NBCC versus your standard restaurant in Newport.

## AN INSIDER’S PERSPECTIVE

There are many differences between a restaurant and a country club, but what Miranda says stands out to him most in his short time at NBCC is the type of ingredients and supplies they have access to in their kitchens. “We truly want for nothing at the club,” he explains. “The abundance and quality of product we get to use is unmatched. Kitchen equipment is all virtually new or maintained to seem like it’s new. Working with well-trained staff who want to be here and look forward to their jobs is also an enormous boon.”

Miranda says that most restaurants are driven by different drivers. But at NBCC, we run fine dining differently.

Because there is less focus on profit, the staff gets to be more creative and expand their talents in a safe,



nurturing atmosphere—one that they simply feel passionate about working in. “We all thoroughly enjoy working at the club, so it’s imperative that any incoming staff share our passions and ambitions,” he explains. “I’ve learned here that we operate many different moving parts to achieve a smooth and steady country club. It’s important that we are all on the same page. Traditional restaurants have a lot of turnover with their staff, whereas here at NBCC we have many employees who have been here 10, 15 [or] even 20+ years. In my opinion, that’s very admirable and points to a well-run organization.”

In addition to the Seahorse Grille, the food and beverage staff at the club has a hand in the many events that take place there as well. “When we have a wine tasting or a big golf tournament, we really get to shine,” he adds. “These are the most exciting events all year and there’s a sense of showing off. ... It’s very prideful working at a country club, so dining at any of our wonderful events is truly special. You’re going to see and taste many things we have been working on and knowing only a few people in the whole county get to partake makes it unique.”

## EXPERIENCES THAT TRANSCEND

While it’s a thrill to work at NBCC, it’s also a great place for the members to relax and enjoy a meal or even a simple cocktail. “The benefits for diners is a gorgeous setting, stellar staff with aptitude and intimate relationships that can be built up—not only for us, but for future generations of the club where tradition meets innovation,” he explains.

Miranda says that he most enjoys interacting with the members, as it’s exciting to interact with dynamic individuals and provide them with a real experience that transcends what they’re getting at other dining venues.

“Dining at a country club is more enjoyable, because it feels like it’s here for you,” he says. “... We are trying to provide an experience that you cannot find anywhere else. Traditional restaurants somewhat serve their own purposes, where a country club is here for our members and that wonderful exclusivity leads to an elevated experience.”

That type of exclusivity ensures that those who are in the restaurant are supposed to be there and gives them the freedom to do things like throw together a table for 20 little leaguers in cleats. They are simply able to provide a



level of service that won't be experienced elsewhere.

The relaxed yet elevated ambiance at the club is also crucial to making the property what it is. “You could be having a glass of wine during our weekly pasta night, listening to live music with your family, or you could be out with some friends on the back nine enjoying some cold beers and the wonderful weather,” Miranda reveals. “Ambience and mood can change a typical day out into an unforgettable experience.”

Miranda describes working at a country club like an entire city that is working toward a common goal. “The sense of community is tremendous,” he says. “Some members are here for business, discussing things that nobody outside of their field could understand. Some are here for social and

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recreational reasons. Some are here for health and beautification. All those members networking and building relations with the backdrop of a world-class country club is truly remarkable. It’s something traditional restaurants just cannot compete with and feeds into the idea of exclusivity being a good thing.”

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