

Best New Arizona Charm

Rancho Pinot Grill
6208 North Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale
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It's a kinder, gentler Arizona these days, where upscale restaurants don't limit themselves to impressing us with exotica from faraway lands.

The new fine dining experience celebrates the products born and raised in our own Valley of the Sun. Chefs like Rancho Pinot's Chrysa Kaufman insist on using locally grown or raised organic produce, eggs and dairy products as much as possible.

That's why we can usually be assured that the produce we're enjoying in Kaufman's dishes, such as wood-oven roasted vegetables with crispy risotto-wheatberry cake, came from a local grower. Or that the quails we're feasting on were raised at a local farm.

Rancho Pinot celebrates Arizona heritage in the 21st century, with its funky cowboy-chic interior. It celebrates the take-it-easy Western past, with Kaufman's commitment to "Slow Food," an international organization that promotes cooking from scratch, using the freshest, artisan boutique ingredients.

Of course, everything tastes magical, from roasted beets with toasted almonds, sheep's milk feta and spicy greens to Nonni's Sunday Chicken, braised with white wine, mushrooms, herbs and onion over toasted polenta.

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