

# MÉLANGE

## Exploration of Food, Art & Drink A Brunch Experience



To step into Mélangé is like entering into a world of wonderment and magic. Owner Chef Lan Bradeen inherited a deep love for cooking from her Vietnamese mother and an appreciation of wine and whiskey from her Scottish father. After graduating from college with degrees in Religion and Chinese Medicine, she honed her craft in restaurants that specialized in international cuisines. Her culinary style can best be described as an exploration of food, art, and drink.

Our journey into her brave new world began with an impressive selection of aperitifs, aptly described on the menu as Unbridled Spirits. The ingredients in the Green Bloody Mary read like a who's who of power antioxidants--raw juices of freshly squeezed tomatillo, celery, and cucumber; garnished with a delectable selection of charcuterie, cheese, and crudité all beautifully displayed on a blue glass tray. Our Mimosa had champagne dancing flirtatiously with freshly squeezed orange, mango, pear, and guava juice. The flavors of our special Mimosa were further enhanced with berries and a baby sorbet cone. Our free spirits were finally unleashed after one sip of Corpse Reviver #2. Poured straight out from an apothecary bottle, its formula contains botanical elixirs powerful enough to bring the dead back to life. No incantation needed here. No decent brunch would be complete without a good brew of Java. Coffee à la Mélangé came in the form of an Irish Cold Brew made with an energizing shot of Irish whiskey and available in hazelnut or vanilla flavors.

Justly revived and awakened, we proceeded to our brunch course. First on the list of Chef Lan's Fancy Fixins was her

French Toast: This, however, was no ordinary breakfast that you might remember from your childhood. Think multigrain bread, cinnamon pears, fresh raspberries, blackberries, starfruit, smoky butter, and salted PX syrup. PX, or Pedro Ximénez, is a dark, sweet sherry with flavors of molasses and raisins. This unique syrup is made by concentrating the juice of Pedro Ximenez sherry until it becomes a dark rich reduction. Its fresh-off-the-smoker flavor blended sinfully well with the smoky butter, which was smoked in house. We felt all grown up now.

With our senses barely recovering from the feeling of ecstasy after relishing the smoky butter and PX syrup on toast, Fried Chicken and Waffle was laid out to tempt us. There aren't too many foodies who do not like a good fried chicken. Chef Lan's boneless chicken breast is rubbed in seasoned flour using black and white pepper. While the herbs and spices used in her seasoning remains a secret, white pepper, which is widely employed in Asian recipes, flavored the protein with a seductive, spicy earthiness. Smoky butter and three house jams--salted PX maple syrup, rhubarb cranberry jam, smoked blackberry jam, and guajillo berry jam--accompanied the waffle.

The Eggs Benedict brought us back to an era where traditional British teatime was observed with religious fervor. Two poached eggs oozed their golden goodness over sundried-tomato crumpets and house-cured bacon. A bergamot-tea-and-



chive Hollandaise sauce masterfully brought together all the flavors--like an exquisite work of art. A side of roasted fingerling potatoes completed the dish. We felt blessed.

Our journey took us next to south of the border with Chilaquiles, a traditional Mexican breakfast dish of fried tortillas and roasted poblano peppers bathed in guajillo salsa until tender. Fresh avocado and flavorful chèvre cheese provided elegance in the presentation of this comfort food. Two baked eggs provided a creamy sauce that united all the flavors and ingredients together, making it a wholesome and hearty breakfast to start the day. Chef Lan uses authentic corn tortillas and we were pleasantly surprised that her sophisticated version of Chilaquiles has a subtle yet true Mexican essence that does not overwhelm the senses. Olé!

Mélangé is a proud member of Suncoast Food Alliance, an organization dedicated to connecting farmers and chefs of the Tampa Bay area. The ingredients used are sourced from local farms and from small and environmentally conscious proprietors. Being mindful spreads good karma all around.



Mélangé believes that the exploration of food, art, and drink are essential to having a fulfilled existence. Eastern philosophy dictates that when the body is in harmony with its mind and soul, and all three are travelling on the same journey as one unified being, life becomes a state of bliss. Through the intoxicating aromas, flavors, and textures of Chef Lan's culinary offerings, and the bewitching concoction of tinctures and herbs used in her spirited cocktails, our senses were lifted to a higher state of consciousness. We returned to our daily lives, and to reality, having attained nirvana at Sunday brunch.



*Don't forget to let them know Kim and Sandra sent you!*

**Mélangé**  
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Dining Hours  
Monday-Sunday 6pm-12am  
Sunday Brunch 11:30am-3pm