

Nesting Instinct

Via Allegro's birds fill each other with pride

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by Kim Dietrich

With the larger-than-life passion it's known for, Via Allegro responds to the tapas trend with a dish that also embraces the grand spirit of sharing. Loosely inspired by turducken – the unappetizingly named Cajun crowd feeder in which a roasted deboned turkey is stuffed with a deboned chicken – Via Allegro chef Lino Collevicchio also nests three deboned birds. But his “Threesome” comprises a pheasant holding a whole rock hen, filled in turn with a prosciutto-wrapped quail (\$99.90 for two people). At the centre he hides a cache of plump, golden raisins, pine nuts and a decadent foie gras farce. Roasted to succulent tenderness and presented in a gleaming réchaud pan, the next of birds is bedded with rich barley risotto, white asparagus and a king oyster mushroom forestière and presented with a side plate of baby vegetables. A thick, heady sauce of pomegranate and cranberry adds final notes of sweetness.