



## First Look: Rich Table in San Francisco

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Sarah and Evan Rich met while working at Bouley in New York. "She was my boss," jokes Evan, "and she cornered me, and asked for my number. I said 'oui, Chef!'" (Sarah's version of the story is a little different.) When they moved west, the couple intended to open their own spot as soon as possible, but found themselves working in top San Francisco restaurants like Coi, Michael Mina, and Quince instead.

"Getting into this industry, opening your own place was always the dream," says Evan. The couple had even admired their new restaurant's Hayes Valley space, and poked their heads in two years before they saw the Craigslist ad saying that the airy, light-filled restaurant at 199 Gough was available. This week, their dream is coming true in the form of their new restaurant, **Rich Table**.



*Chefs Sarah and Evan Rich.*

The time they spent at Coi, Bouley and the rest wasn't wasted, though —" Coi taught us respect for vegetables, respect for technique," says Evan Rich, " and we can't turn our backs on our past. These places taught us how to cook." At Coi, Rich learned to make his own **cultured butter**, which is served at Rich Table with bread that Sarah makes each morning. An amuse served at Bouley inspired **Rich Table's addictive sardine chips**—a filleted sardine is threaded through each potato chip before it's fried, and served with whipped horseradish creme fraiche.

Though Rich Table is a much more casual restaurant than any of the places where the couple trained, Sarah Rich says, "I think the food here reflects our background and our history."



*Wild fennel levain and house cultured butter*

Her husband adds: "This place is about cooking food we'd want to eat, about making an environment we'd want to hang out in." A large portion of the menu features **bar-friendly bites and snacks**. There's California wine on tap (including Broc Cellars "Sans Soufre" Carignan) and an assortment of glasses and bottles sorted by price. "We wanted to offer wine that could be delicious but reasonable," notes Evan, explaining that the list was meant to appeal to geeks and nongeeks alike, and to feature passionate winemakers. The cocktail list focuses on local spirits and seasonal fruit, including **a martini shaken with cypress tips**. "To me," says Evan, "St. George's Terroir Gin, it's so herbaceous, it just reminds me of Marin County." Once the fresh cypress is added, Rich says, "this drink speaks to where we live."



*Adding whipped burrata to the tomato salad.*

**The dishes are market-focused** ("One of the things that's really important is the fresh vibrancy of the ingredients," notes Evan) but they're often prepared with a bit of an unexpected twist. Freshly baked levain offers a burst of herbal flavor from wild fennel, and the creamy burrata in a tomato salad is blended with spicy mustard oil. "This isn't uber-complicated food," explains Sarah, "but it has flavors that might be unique and interesting."



In addition to the snacks and a la carte options, a **\$70 six-course tasting menu** will feature exciting finds from the market and off-the-menu items. "One thing that's special about that is the element of surprise—it lets the diner be in our hands," says Evan. He's pretty pumped to get started. "We've been working for this our whole lives, and now it's here," he says, eyes gleaming.

**[Check out the food in the slideshow >>](#)**

### **Rich Table**

199 Gough Street, San Francisco, CA 94102 ([map](#))

415-355-9085; [richtablesf.com](http://richtablesf.com), reservations through [Seatme.com](http://Seatme.com), closed Tuesdays.