



Just like a plump ripe fig, the girl & the fig food is fresh, healthy, and bursting with flavor. With a seasonal menu featuring garden vegetables, herbs, and an abundance of creativity, the rustic Provencal-inspired cuisine allows earth's true and natural flavors to shine.

Owner Sondra Bernstein quietly opened the girl & the fig in 1997 originally in Glen Ellen, California. Slowly people began to discover the rustic French food and the unique way of marketing and presenting it. In 2000, she relocated the restaurant into more upscale quarters on the northwest corner of the square in Sonoma in the historic Sonoma Hotel. Over the past twenty years the girl & the fig has made its mark in Wine Country and has been a longtime favorite for both locals and visitors to the area. the girl & the fig continues to be featured in many magazines as well as on national television.

One of the signature dishes is a memorable salad prepared with arugula, goat cheese, pancetta, pecans, and grilled fresh figs in season. Other imaginative native entrees feature local seafood, lamb, rabbit, and duck—all served with a wonderful array of grains, pastas, and fresh vegetables. The reasonably priced wine list, a Wine Spectator and Wine Enthusiast award winners, concentrates on wines made with Rhône varietals from California and abroad. Wine flights paired with local artisan cheeses are a popular light meal.

Sondra believes the dining experience should continue after your time at the restaurant. She wants her guests to be able to take home a tangible piece of their experience from the girl & the fig and a memory of their visit to wine country. December 2011 brought the release of Sondra's celebration of Sonoma's bounty—Plats du Jour—a coffee-table style book featuring full page color photos and intimate stories of local food purveyors along with over 100 recipes as a follow up to the first the girl & the fig Cookbook, published by Simon & Schuster in 2004.

The other way to make the "fig" experience last is through the "FIG FOOD" product line. This includes jam, chutney, compote, vinegar, vinaigrette and herb blends that are sold nationwide. These are all natural, artisan produced gourmet food products that are available in the restaurants, at www.thegirlandthefig.com and in stores nationwide. A healthy balance of elegance and offbeat personality, unparalleled cuisine and attentive staff, result in a refreshingly unique and wholly pleasurable dining experience that will linger long after the meal itself.



Sondra Bernstein – Proprietor

One sure thing that can be said about Sondra Bernstein is that, as an authentic Restaurateur, her restaurants are a true expression of her personality. Many of the guests who frequent Sondra’s establishments feel as if she is a friend of theirs, which is understandable given her close attention to ensuring that their experience is distinctive and memorable. Her passion for the hospitality business is her driving force and continues to inspire her to create and recreate. Sondra is the proprietor of the girl & the fig in Sonoma, the fig café & winebar in Glen Ellen, and a unique event space in Sonoma known as Suite D. Full-service catering along with a food truck, dubbed “the fig rig,” round out her fig empire. She is the author of the *the girl & the fig Cookbook* published by Simon & Schuster in April 2004 and her newest book, *Plats du Jour: the girl & the fig’s Journey through the Seasons in Wine Country*. Her gourmet food product line is available nationwide under the girl & the fig label. the girl & the fig and the fig café & winebar offer country food with a French passion.

In 2008, Sondra opened ESTATE at the historic property known as “The General’s Daughter,” which featured rustic Italian home cooking, and use of the extensive gardens and fruit trees on the premises. Though no longer in operation, the time spent at ESTATE added another layer of passion in the development of the girl & the fig’s MANO FORMATE charcuterie and salumi program. These artisanal cured meats can be found weaved through the daily menus as well as many of the cheese plates.

Her short story ... D.C. born, Philadelphia bred, BFA from Philadelphia College of Art (photography), TGI Friday’s Trainer & Team Leader for their national restaurant openings, graduate of The Restaurant School (culinary & restaurant management), Operations Manager for several restaurants in Philadelphia (The Fish Market & Marabella’s) and Los Angeles (Alice’s Restaurant & Tavern on Main), and Director of Operations for Viansa Winery in Sonoma County.

The long story ... Sondra has spent over twenty years dedicated to the hospitality business. With a passion for food and wine, the trip from Philadelphia to Sonoma County was inevitable. Having restaurants in Sonoma County is a tribute to the efforts of the farmers, ranchers, cheesemakers and, of course, grape growers & vintners in this bountiful landscape.

The restaurants themselves are mixed media collages that incorporate all of the five senses. Her philosophy of dining is as follows; “dining is an analogy to theatre. First of all, you need to start with the real thing (in theatre = raw talent) (in dining = raw product). Then it takes a lot of practice before the curtain goes up. The passion, the intensity, the teamwork, and the integrity all drive the work to a climax (guest satisfaction & personal accomplishment).”

On the surface the collage of the senses is as follows:

Sight encompasses the physical space as well as the finished plate

Smell, obvious as it may be, is necessary to enhance the other senses

Sound would inevitably be our choice of music

Touch would be on two levels, the textures of the food & wines, as well as the emotional touch (memories & feelings) that the experience can bring

Taste is the one that keeps them coming back for more

Below the surface, you will find lots of subtle nuances and details that round out the dining experience. To put all of these elements together requires hard work and dedication. Sondra has surrounded herself with very talented and passionate people that share the philosophy that life is a work in progress. Important tenets that run through the restaurants are the use of the local products when available, a focus on wine education with the guests and staff through variety and tasting, and allowing the staff to contribute on whatever level they are inspired to do so. Sondra has created restaurants that she believes in, that she enjoys working in and that make people happy. And the food is really good too!