

From top: The spinach spaghetti alla frutti di mare; Joey Parks preps dough in his pasta room in Andrea's spacious kitchen.



EXPERIENCE

Use Your Noodle

With a pasta-making class at Andrea, you'll impress at your next dinner party.

If you've dined at The Resort at Pelican Hill's Andrea (andrea.nb.com), then you know ordering at least one plate of pasta is *sine qua non*. That's because 17 types of dough are handmade daily in a temperature-controlled pasta room by Joey Parks. Indeed, this pastaia makes magic happen—and you can experience it, as my husband and I do, with a private **Art of Pasta Making** class (\$120 per person). The program gives neophytes (like yours truly) the chance to learn a new skill. But it's more than a class; it's a peek at the people behind Andrea—and a chance for the team to get to know you. "It's nice teaching [our guests] what I've learned," says the New Hampshire-born Parks. "I also enjoy how they inspire me." While I won't share all the tips of the trade (you'll have to take the class), here's how our visit goes. Parks gives us the scoop on creating basic pasta dough and gnocchi—a sampling from his menu created based on what's popular (cavatelli), what's in season (he works with his fellow culinary pros) and what he wants to test (like a new corn and three-cheese agnolotti filling). We begin by combining the dry ingredients on the counter and forming a well in which go the egg yolks and oil. (Take Parks' advice and make a large hole, otherwise you'll be chasing your pasta-to-be around the table.) We then knead the dough until it bounces when pressed with a finger. Parks remains patient despite my lack of



coordination: The best way to knead, he says, is with the palm of the hand. "You'll have dough before you know it," he quips. (I do, with his help.) While the dough rests, we move on to the gnocchi. Naturally, I struggle. "Don't worry," laughs Parks. "My first gnocchi weren't the best either." (A modest statement from a gent who worked at Richard Blais' Juniper & Ivy.) We return to the basic dough when the gnocchi are finished, making tagliatelle with an authentic wooden cutter after Parks flattens the dough. This I do with relish before our session comes to a close. Each class ends with lunch, during which we taste our creations—dressed up with a pungent Bolognese for the gnocchi; and a squid ink sauce, shrimp and tender squid tentacles for the tagliatelle. A final thought? While I'll never call myself a pastaia, I now am confident that we can try again in our kitchen—and serve our guests too. —KS