

# San Jose Mercury News

Striking A French Note - 2001

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Berkeley, ever the oddity, has restaurants that wouldn't exist elsewhere in the Bay Area. Take La Note. The restaurant happened by chance. Dorothee Mitrani-Bell was neighbors with a woman who was looking for a space for her jazz school. She found it on heavily trafficked Shattuck Avenue, and downstairs there was room for a restaurant. As Mitrani-Bell recalls 3-1/2 years later, "She said, Come see this space! I'd just had a baby and had no money." So against her better judgment and weakened by homesickness for her native France, Mitrani-Bell opened La Note... As she says, she is "total French." Raised in Paris, she spent a lot of time in old castles that her parents renovated. "We always lived in ruins and would have long meals in the freezing cold." Still, Mitrani-Bell grew to love great food and design and went off to study architecture at the University of California Berkeley. "La Note is my opportunity to express my nostalgia for France"...