

Real Travel Adventures



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A San Francisco institution, the Big 4 Restaurant on the ground floor of The Scarlet Huntington Hotel, is named after the 19th century businessmen, philanthropists, and most distinguished and talked about citizens of the city who built the Central Pacific Railroad – C. P. Huntington, Charles Crocker, Mark Hopkins and Leland Stanford. These men’s life journeys from California pioneer beginnings to national importance coincided with a long and colorful era of Pacific Coast history. At the top of their careers, the “Big Four” all resided in the exquisite Nob Hill mansions, and almost daily were featured in the local press in references to their varied activities. The Big 4 Restaurant’s

ambiance recaptures the era of the Big Four with opulently decorated dining room, period furnishings, antique artifacts, and celebrated original dark wood bar – a hub of the bourbon and whiskey revival.

Nearly obsessed with all things citrus by dinner time, I started my lavish meal at the Big 4 with Bitter Delight – a blood orange-colored cocktail made of Campari, Combier, fresh grapefruit, and prosecco. It was followed by seared foie gras (thank you, California, for bringing this delicacy back!) garnished with mache, port cherries, toasted pistachios and brioche.

Perfectly grilled Berkshire pork chop came with a side of roasted root vegetables in cider sauce.

For dessert, I ordered the seasonal panna cotta Milano with Campari gelee, shortbread cookie, and of course, a slice of candied orange.

The Big 4 Restaurant, led by the Executive Chef Kevin Scott is the place I'll be happy to return to – for an elegant dinner, excellent service, and a slice of California history.