

A Nolet's Vesper at The Big 4 restaurant and bar, San Francisco

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During my 2014 winter holiday travels in the San Francisco Bay Area I made the trek to a few of the wonderful bars and lounges, both historic and new, that San Francisco has to offer.

I remembered that my old friend Peter Mintun once played (*for 16 years*) at the famous L'Etoile restaurant and bar on Nob Hill, and that it (*and the Huntington Hotel it is part of*) had recently undergone a multi-million dollar restoration. The restaurant and bar had changed previously into The Big 4, and the hotel is now known as the Scarlet Huntington San Francisco. Happily, they have kept the historic feel to the bar and restaurant, and it feels like walking into a piece of San Francisco history. What a wonderful respite from an afternoon of shopping, and a climb up the famously steep Taylor street to the top of Nob Hill. The cocktail menu features several classics as well as contemporary craft cocktail creations. I was treated to a classic Vesper (*Ian Fleming's famous creation from his 1953 novel Casino Royale*) made with Nolet's gin, which brings light floral notes to the vodka and lillet. Why didn't I think of using Nolet's for this cocktail! I will from now on.

Nob Hill, San Francisco, CA, USA