

Westword

Best Local Cookbook

Rioja

The Perfect Bite

1431 Larimer St.

303-820-2282

www.riojadenver.com

The hardback cover, a photo of Jennifer Jasinski's braised artichoke and white-truffle tortelloni — a recipe that has made grown men break down in tears faster than negotiations between PETA and the Pork Board — is the first stunning glimpse into *The Perfect Bite*, Jasinski's self-published cookbook comprising 76 Rioja recipes, including the chef's signature tasting menu, and page after page of glorious photography. Every recipe, insists Jasinski, was tested three times — by her. While those recipes aren't for the timid, the directions are clear and to the point, and if you can pull one off in your kitchen, you'll have earned yourself a culinary gold star.

Best Free Bread

Rioja

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We try our very best not to fill up on bread before dinner comes, but that's no easy task at Rioja. The restaurant's given serious thought to its complimentary carbohydrate accompaniment, so it doesn't serve you stale chunks of ciabatta. Our mouths start watering as soon as we spot the employee charged with bread service, lugging a beautiful basket of crumbly goat-cheese biscuits and thick slices of baguette, full of fat olives that imbue the slices with just a hint of brine, all exquisite breads made by City Bakery. And since that bread basket keeps coming around, it's tough not to eat three or four rounds before the appetizers even hit the table.

Best of

DENVER

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