



A three-beet-and-ricotta salad.

GREAT GEORGE

You might think that Dallas diners would be jaded by now with the panorama of choices they have when it comes to sophisticated restaurants. But with its sleek design, more evocative of Manhattan than Midland, **GEORGE** has truly captured the city's attention. Stylish types from the Highland Park and Preston Hollow neighborhoods—many of them familiar with the cuisine of chefs/owners George and Katie Brown from attending events catered by the pair—are now regulars at George.

George's modern American fare, like braised short ribs with a Zinfandel demi-glace served with butternut squash or rice-flour-crust

sea bass with green-mango slaw, is zesty and flavorful, with a constantly changing array of seasonal ingredients. A mix of whites and ivories dominates the dining room's clean design, with dramatic dashes of color coming from the stunning collection of local artwork and photographs, the tabletop florals and, of course, the food. 7709 Inwood Road; 214-366-9100.

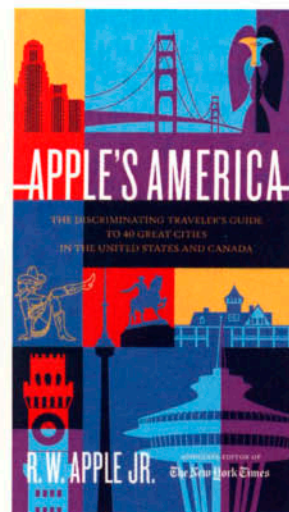
SALLY HORCHOW

ORCHIDS ON DISPLAY

One of the best remedies for the midwinter blahs is a visit to the annual **ORCHID SHOW** at the New York Botanical Garden. The event grows more ambitious every year, so this time around, expect to be exhilarated and overwhelmed by an astonishing array of tens of thousands of blooms. The show takes place in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory and also in the Orchid Rotunda, which, this year, features a display of exquisite slipper orchids, highly prized by collectors and recognizable by their drooping, bell-shaped flowers. In the conservatory, you will see orchids from Asia and the New World—some familiar and some you never even knew existed (like the *Laelia gouldiana*, right). Observe everything from huge *Vanda* hybrids in dramatic Day-Glo colors to the tiniest miniature orchids. There's been a lot of talk lately about orchids becoming a mass-market commodity. That may be true of some varieties, but it certainly doesn't apply to these rare and beautiful plants. February 26 to March 27. Bronx River Parkway at Fordham Road, Bronx, New York; 718-817-8700; nybg.org.



JANE GARMEY



APPLES OF HIS EYE

In matters of culture and cuisine, it's hard to find someone with more refined taste than R. W. Apple Jr. That's what makes his new book, *Apple's America: The Discriminating Traveler's Guide to 40 Great Cities in the United States and Canada* (North Point Press; \$22), such a treat. An updated collection of urban profiles he wrote for the *New York Times*, it's a marvelously opinionated, highly selective compendium of hotels, restaurants and sights. But it's Apple's eloquent details that stick with you, such as his description of crossing San Francisco's Bay Bridge at dawn as the city's towers "rose bronzed and beautiful from their cloudy beds." Simply delicious.

ELIZA SCOTT HARRIS