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MEDIA WATCH

By Robin Mather Jenkins

Manuel Vila-Garcia, maitre d' at Ambria, is one of Saveur's 100 favorites--No. 24, to be precise--in the January issue. Vila-Garcia is the only Chicagoan so honored. He's lauded for smoothly managing the happiness of diners at the four-star Lincoln Park restaurant.

Elsewhere in print: Bon Appetit names a Florentine favorite, the ricotta dumplings called gnudi, its dish of the year. We think maybe it's because the name is fun to say: nudie. Bon Ap also lists its restaurant trend of the year (gastropubs), its topic of the year (sustainable seafood) and a bunch of other things of the year. ... Midwest Living's February issue, on newsstands now, offers the top 20 of everything it covers, including its 20 best recipes, as the magazine celebrates its double-decade.

On the tube: Save an hour on Saturday afternoons for PBS: "Joanne Weir's Cooking Class" starts at 3 p.m. on WTTW-Ch. 11, followed by "Real Simple" at 3:30 p.m. The latter's new co-host, Dena Querubin-Blizzard, joins Rob Keefe and Cydnee Welburn.

On the Web: Recipe4Living.com offers user-rated recipes, coupons, daily recipe e-mails and chat features for dedicated home cooks; star chef Wolfgang Puck contributed commentary to the site ... Videojug.com offers step-by-step videos on a variety of topics, including food. The videos are sometimes inadvertently funny--we would be exhausted by the time we reached "Step 10: Present the canapes to your guests" if we were making stuffed potato canapes--but the advice is sound and easy to follow. (It's also the place to go if you want to learn how to talk about animals in British sign language.)