Creative Use Guide for the Lava Plate

Gourmet Plate GLA-W81/W101 (Lava)

Introduction

The Gourmet Plate GLA-W81/W101 in Lava represents the perfect marriage of form, function, and innovation. Available in two versatile sizes (8-1/4" and 10-1/4"), this sophisticated plate provides an exceptional canvas for culinary creativity. The rich, deep lava tone creates a dramatic backdrop that enhances the visual appeal of ingredients while maintaining a refined aesthetic.

What truly sets this plate apart is its special glaze finish—the same technology used in the prestigious ONYX SERIES. This innovative surface is scratch-resistant and designed to resist fingerprints, ensuring that the plate remains pristine throughout service. For chefs and establishments that prioritize both visual impact and practical durability, the Lava Gourmet Plate offers an unparalleled combination of aesthetic appeal and functional excellence.

This comprehensive guide explores creative culinary applications specifically designed to leverage the unique attributes of the Lava Gourmet Plate. From elegant main courses to sophisticated appetizers and desserts, along with professional plating techniques and visual presentation strategies, this guide will inspire chefs to create memorable dining experiences that showcase both their culinary artistry and the distinctive beauty of these plates.

Main Course Applications

8-1/4" Size Applications

The 8-1/4" Lava Gourmet Plate offers an elegant canvas for intimate main course presentations. The deep, rich lava tone creates a sophisticated backdrop that adds drama and intensity to carefully plated dishes, while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate remains immaculate throughout service.

Color Complementary Protein Presentations

- **Pan-Seared Scallops with Parsnip Purée**: The golden-brown scallops and ivory purée create a striking contrast against the dark lava background, with the scratch-resistant surface maintaining its pristine appearance despite utensil use.
- **Herb-Crusted Rack of Lamb**: The pink interior of perfectly cooked lamb stands out beautifully against the lava background, with the herb crust creating a textural border enhanced by the plate's rich tone.
- **Seared Duck Breast with Cherry Reduction**: The burgundy tones of the duck and cherry sauce create a sophisticated harmony with the lava plate, while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate's edges remain clean during service.

Architectural Compositions

- **Vertical Beef Tenderloin**: Create height with a tower of sliced tenderloin, using the lava plate to showcase the gradient of doneness while the scratch-resistant surface allows for confident plating with metal tools.
- **Layered Vegetable Terrine**: Arrange colorful vegetable layers in a geometric pattern, using the dark lava background to enhance vibrant colors while creating a cohesive composition.
- **Deconstructed Beef Wellington**: Position components in an artistic arrangement, using the lava plate to highlight the pink tenderloin while the pastry elements create textural contrast against the smooth plate surface.

Textural Contrasts

- **Crispy-Skinned Chicken with Creamy Polenta**: The contrast between crispy chicken skin and smooth polenta is visually enhanced by the dark lava background, with the fingerprint-resistant finish maintaining the plate's elegant appearance throughout service.
- **Seared Scallops with Cauliflower Three Ways**: The caramelized scallops create golden accents against the lava plate, while the various textures of cauliflower add visual interest against the scratch-resistant surface.

10-1/4" Size Applications

The larger 10-1/4" Lava Gourmet Plate provides an expanded canvas for more elaborate main course presentations, allowing for negative space and artistic saucing techniques. The fingerprint-resistant finish is particularly valuable on this larger surface, ensuring the plate remains pristine even with more handling.

Negative Space Compositions

- **Sliced Beef Tenderloin with Red Wine Reduction**: Position the sliced beef off-center with a dramatic sauce arc, using the lava plate's empty space to create visual tension while the scratch-resistant surface allows for confident sauce application.
- **Roasted Monkfish Tail with Saffron Sauce**: The white fish creates a focal point against the dark lava background, with the golden saffron sauce creating an artistic pattern that remains undisturbed on the fingerprint-resistant surface.
- **Duo of Lamb**: Present two different preparations of lamb with strategic spacing, using the lava plate to unify the composition while maintaining distinction between elements.

Artistic Saucing Techniques

- **Venison with Blackberry Gastrique**: Create dramatic sauce patterns that complement the lava plate, connecting elements of the dish while adding visual movement against the scratch-resistant surface.
- **Seared Halibut with Beet Emulsion**: The vibrant beet sauce creates a striking contrast against the dark lava plate, allowing for artistic brushstrokes that remain pristine throughout service.
- **Pork Tenderloin with Apple Cider Reduction**: The golden-brown sauce creates a beautiful contrast against the lava background, with the fingerprint-resistant finish ensuring the plate's edges remain clean during tableside service.

Composed Plates

- **Seasonal Harvest Plate**: Arrange a colorful array of seasonal vegetables with a protein centerpiece, using the lava plate to enhance vibrant elements while creating a cohesive composition.
- **Surf and Turf Presentation**: The larger plate accommodates both seafood and meat elements with appropriate garnishes, with the dark lava background adding drama and sophistication to the presentation.
- **Whole Roasted Quail with Ancient Grain Risotto**: The lava plate provides a dramatic backdrop for the golden-brown quail, with the risotto creating a textural bed that complements the plate's color.

Appetizer Applications

8-1/4" Size Applications

The 8-1/4" Lava Gourmet Plate provides an elegant foundation for refined appetizers and small plates. The deep lava tone creates a dramatic backdrop that enhances the

visual appeal of starters, while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate remains pristine during pass service and delivery to the table.

Elegant Canapés and Amuse-Bouche

- **Tuna Tartare with Avocado**: The deep red tuna and bright green avocado create a striking color contrast against the lava plate, enhanced by the scratch-resistant surface that allows for precise plating.
- **Goat Cheese and Beet Terrine**: The layered terrine creates a sophisticated harmony with the lava plate, while the white goat cheese provides striking contrast against the dark background.
- **Seared Foie Gras with Fig Compote**: The golden-brown foie gras creates a rich contrast against the lava background, with the fingerprint-resistant finish ensuring the plate's edges remain clean during service.

Small Composed Plates

- **Prosciutto with Seasonal Fruit**: Arrange thin slices of prosciutto with melon or figs in a circular pattern, using the lava plate to enhance the visual appeal of this classic pairing.
- **Crab Cake with Microgreens**: The golden crab cake creates a beautiful contrast against the dark lava background, with the green garnish adding a complementary color accent.
- **Roasted Beet Carpaccio**: The layered beets create a sophisticated harmony with the lava plate, while goat cheese and pistachios add contrasting elements against the scratch-resistant surface.

Textural Contrasts

- **Crispy Pork Belly with Apple Purée**: The contrast between crispy pork and smooth purée is visually enhanced by the dark lava background, with the fingerprint-resistant finish maintaining the plate's elegant appearance throughout service.
- **Tempura Vegetables with Ponzu Dipping Sauce**: The light, crispy tempura batter stands out beautifully against the dark lava plate, with the scratch-resistant surface allowing for confident placement of the dipping sauce.

10-1/4" Size Applications

The larger 10-1/4" Lava Gourmet Plate offers more space for creative appetizer presentations, allowing for artistic arrangements and shared plates. The fingerprint-resistant finish is particularly valuable for these communal presentations, ensuring the plate remains pristine despite multiple diners interacting with it.

Shared Appetizers

- **Antipasto Selection**: Arrange a curated selection of cured meats, cheeses, and marinated vegetables in an artistic pattern, using the lava plate to highlight the various colors and textures while the scratch-resistant surface withstands the use of serving utensils.
- **Seafood Plateau**: Present a selection of raw and cooked seafood items—oysters, shrimp, crab claws—arranged in a circular pattern, with the dark lava plate providing a dramatic backdrop that remains fingerprint-free despite tableside service.
- **Mediterranean Mezze**: Arrange colorful Middle Eastern dips, olives, and flatbreads in a geometric pattern, using the lava background to enhance the vibrant colors of the various components.

Artistic Arrangements

- **Carpaccio of Beef with Truffle and Parmesan**: Thinly sliced beef arranged to cover the plate with artistic placement of shaved truffle, Parmesan, and microgreens creates a stunning presentation against the dark lava background.
- **Citrus and Fennel Salad**: Arrange various colors of citrus segments in a geometric pattern with shaved fennel, using the lava plate to enhance the vibrant colors of the fruit.
- **Roasted Vegetable Mosaic**: Create a colorful arrangement of roasted vegetables in a geometric pattern, using the lava plate to unify the composition while highlighting each element against the scratch-resistant surface.

Interactive Appetizers

- **DIY Lettuce Wraps**: Arrange components in separate sections on the plate, allowing diners to build their own wraps, with the lava background helping to visually organize the elements while the fingerprint-resistant finish maintains the plate's appearance throughout the interactive dining experience.
- **Tableside-Finished Steak Tartare**: Present the base tartare on the plate with accompaniments arranged around it for tableside mixing, using the lava plate to create a sophisticated presentation that remains pristine despite tableside preparation.
- **Deconstructed Salad Niçoise**: Arrange components of the classic salad in an artistic pattern, allowing diners to combine elements as desired, with the lava plate providing a dramatic backdrop that highlights each ingredient.

Dessert Applications

8-1/4" Size Applications

The 8-1/4" Lava Gourmet Plate provides an elegant foundation for refined dessert presentations. The deep lava tone creates a dramatic backdrop that enhances the visual appeal of sweet finales, while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate remains pristine during the final course of the meal.

Elegant Plated Desserts

- **Dark Chocolate Mousse with Gold Leaf**: The dark chocolate creates a rich harmony with the lava plate, while the gold leaf garnish adds a touch of luxury against the scratch-resistant surface.
- **Vanilla Panna Cotta with Berry Coulis**: The stark white panna cotta creates a striking contrast against the dark lava background, with the berry coulis creating a sophisticated accent.
- **Lemon Tart with Italian Meringue**: The bright yellow tart and white meringue peaks pop against the dark lava background, creating a visually stunning presentation.

Architectural Desserts

- **Chocolate and Hazelnut Tower**: Create vertical height with alternating layers of chocolate mousse and hazelnut dacquoise, using the lava plate to showcase the textural elements while the fingerprint-resistant finish maintains the plate's elegant appearance.
- **Deconstructed Black Forest**: Arrange components of this classic dessert—chocolate cake, cherry compote, whipped cream—in an artistic pattern, with the lava background enhancing the cherry elements.
- **Caramel Tuile Nest with Seasonal Fruit**: The delicate golden tuile creates a beautiful contrast against the dark lava plate, with colorful seasonal fruits adding vibrant accents.

Textural Contrasts

- **Crème Brûlée with Shortbread**: The caramelized sugar top of the crème brûlée creates a golden accent against the dark lava plate, while the scratch-resistant surface allows for confident placement of the delicate shortbread.
- **Chocolate Textures**: Present various textures of chocolate—mousse, ganache, soil, tuile—arranged in an artistic pattern, using the lava plate to highlight the subtle variations while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate remains pristine.

10-1/4" Size Applications

The larger 10-1/4" Lava Gourmet Plate offers more space for elaborate dessert presentations, allowing for artistic arrangements and shared desserts. The fingerprint-resistant finish is particularly valuable for these final impressions, ensuring the plate remains immaculate throughout the dessert course.

Shared Desserts

- **Petit Four Selection**: Arrange an assortment of miniature pastries in a geometric pattern, using the lava plate to highlight their colors and textures while the scratch-resistant surface withstands the use of serving utensils.
- **Cheese and Fruit Plate**: Present a curated selection of cheeses with accompaniments—honey, nuts, dried fruits—arranged in an artistic pattern, with the dark lava background providing a sophisticated backdrop.
- **Chocolate Fondue for Two**: The central chocolate pot surrounded by dippable items creates an interactive dessert experience, with the lava plate providing a dramatic foundation that remains fingerprint-free despite multiple diners interacting with it.

Artistic Arrangements

- **Seasonal Fruit Carpaccio**: Thinly sliced fruits arranged in an overlapping pattern with herb-infused syrup and edible flowers create a stunning presentation against the dark lava background.
- **Plated Soufflé with Accompaniments**: The larger plate accommodates a soufflé with sauce, ice cream, and garnishes while maintaining visual balance, with the lava tone enhancing the overall composition.
- **Trio of Crèmes**: Present three different flavored crèmes—vanilla, chocolate, coffee—with complementary garnishes arranged in a harmonious pattern, using the lava plate to unify the presentation.

Interactive Desserts

- **Tableside-Finished Crêpes Suzette**: The lava plate provides a dramatic backdrop for the tableside flambé, with the scratch-resistant surface withstanding the heat and activity of tableside preparation.
- **Deconstructed Tiramisu**: Arrange components—ladyfingers, mascarpone cream, coffee syrup, cocoa—for diners to combine as desired, with the lava plate helping to visually organize the elements while the fingerprint-resistant finish maintains the plate's appearance throughout the interactive experience.

- **DIY Ice Cream Sundae**: Present a central scoop of premium ice cream with surrounding ramekins of toppings, using the lava plate to create a sophisticated presentation of a playful dessert that remains pristine despite multiple servings.

Plating Techniques

Universal Plating Techniques

The Lava Gourmet Plate with its scratch-resistant, fingerprint-resistant finish offers unique opportunities for sophisticated plating techniques that leverage its deep tone and practical durability. These techniques can be adapted for both the 8-1/4" and 10-1/4" sizes.

Color Theory Applications

- **High Contrast Compositions**: Create striking arrangements using white, yellow, or bright green elements that create maximum contrast against the dark lava background.
- **Monochromatic Sophistication**: Develop elegant compositions using various shades of brown, burgundy, and deep red that create a sophisticated harmony with the lava plate.
- **Metallic Accents**: Incorporate gold or bronze elements (such as edible gold leaf or bronze dust) that create luxury accents against the dark lava surface.

Negative Space Utilization

- **Asymmetrical Balance**: Position food elements off-center, using the lava plate's empty space as an intentional design element that creates visual tension and interest.
- **Framing Techniques**: Use the dark lava background to frame the central food element, creating a "picture within a picture" effect enhanced by the scratch-resistant surface.
- **Rule of Thirds**: Position key elements at the intersection points of an imaginary grid dividing the plate into thirds, using the lava background to enhance this classical composition technique.

Textural Contrasts

- **Height Variation**: Create architectural compositions with varying heights that cast subtle shadows on the lava surface, adding dimensional interest.
- **Smooth Against Rough**: Juxtapose smooth, polished elements (such as purées or gels) against textured components (such as crumbles or crisps) to create tactile interest enhanced by the dark background.
- **Wet Against Dry**: Contrast saucy or moist elements with dry, crisp components, using the lava plate to highlight these textural differences while the fingerprint-resistant finish maintains the plate's elegant appearance.

8-1/4" Size-Specific Techniques

The smaller 8-1/4" plate requires more precise, concentrated plating techniques that maximize the limited space while maintaining elegance. The scratch-resistant surface is particularly valuable here, allowing for confident plating with metal tools.

Precision Plating

- **Centralized Focus**: Create a singular, refined central element surrounded by minimal, precisely placed accompaniments, leveraging the fingerprint-resistant finish for immaculate presentation.
- **Miniature Landscapes**: Develop small-scale, detailed compositions that tell a cohesive story within the limited space, with the scratch-resistant surface allowing for intricate work.
- **Concentric Circles**: Arrange elements in circular patterns that echo the plate's shape, using the lava background to enhance the geometric precision.

Sauce Applications

- **Micro-Dotting**: Apply tiny dots of contrasting sauces using a precision pipette, creating delicate patterns that stand out against the dark lava background.
- **Fine Lines**: Draw extremely thin sauce lines using a squeeze bottle with a small tip, creating delicate patterns enhanced by the dark backdrop.
- **Minimal Pools**: Create small, precisely shaped pools of sauce that serve as beds for central elements, using the lava plate to highlight their clean edges while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the presentation remains pristine.

10-1/4" Size-Specific Techniques

The larger 10-1/4" plate allows for more elaborate plating techniques that utilize the expanded canvas while maintaining visual cohesion. The fingerprint-resistant finish is particularly valuable on this larger surface, ensuring the plate remains pristine even with more handling.

Sectional Plating

- **Triptych Arrangements**: Divide the plate into three distinct sections, each containing related but different elements that create a narrative progression, with the scratch-resistant surface allowing for confident sectioning.
- **Quadrant Division**: Organize the plate into four sections with complementary elements that create a balanced composition when viewed as a whole.
- **Circular Progression**: Arrange elements in a clockwise pattern that guides the diner's eye around the plate in a deliberate sequence, with the fingerprint-resistant finish ensuring the entire presentation remains immaculate.

Dramatic Saucing

- **Broad Strokes**: Create bold, sweeping sauce patterns that utilize the larger canvas, using contrasting colors that stand out against the dark lava background.
- **Negative Space Saucing**: Apply sauce in patterns that intentionally leave areas of the lava plate exposed, creating a dynamic interplay between food and plate.
- **Multi-Sauce Compositions**: Use several different sauces in a cohesive pattern, leveraging the lava background to unify the various colors and textures while the scratch-resistant surface allows for confident application.

Visual Presentation Strategies

Universal Visual Strategies

The Lava Gourmet Plate with its scratch-resistant, fingerprint-resistant finish provides a dramatic, sophisticated canvas that enhances visual presentation through contrast, balance, and harmony. These strategies apply to both the 8-1/4" and 10-1/4" sizes.

Color Strategies

- **White Element Emphasis**: Use white components (such as fish, dairy, or certain vegetables) as focal points that create maximum contrast against the dark lava background.
- **Vibrant Accent Colors**: Incorporate small amounts of bright colors (such as microgreens, edible flowers, or citrus segments) that create vibrant focal points against the lava plate.
- **Metallic Integration**: Echo the sophisticated lava tone with bronze or gold elements (such as edible gold leaf or bronze dust) to create a cohesive visual narrative.

Compositional Approaches

- **Focal Point Clarity**: Establish a clear visual hierarchy with a single dominant element, using the lava background to enhance its prominence.
- **Visual Flow Creation**: Arrange elements to guide the diner's eye in a deliberate path across the plate, using the dark background to support this movement.
- **Balanced Asymmetry**: Create intentionally off-center arrangements that maintain visual balance, using the lava plate's drama to support dynamic compositions.

Thematic Presentations

- **Seasonal Storytelling**: Design presentations that reflect the current season, using the dark lava background to enhance autumn and winter themes or create striking contrast with spring and summer elements.
- **Cultural References**: The lava plate with its scratch-resistant, fingerprint-resistant finish provides an elegant canvas for presentations that reference artistic or cultural traditions.
- **Ingredient Celebration**: Create presentations that highlight a single premium ingredient in various preparations, using the lava background to unify the composition while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate remains pristine throughout service.

8-1/4" Size-Specific Strategies

The smaller 8-1/4" plate requires focused visual strategies that maximize impact within a limited space. The scratch-resistant surface is particularly valuable here, allowing for confident plating with metal tools.

Intimate Presentations

- **Detail Emphasis**: Create highly detailed, jewel-like presentations that reward close inspection, using the lava background to make fine details pop.
- **Minimalist Elegance**: Embrace simplicity with just a few perfectly executed elements, allowing the lava plate to become an active part of the presentation.
- **Concentrated Color Palettes**: Work with a limited color scheme that creates a cohesive relationship with the lava background, avoiding visual chaos in the smaller space.

Visual Techniques

- **Precise Garnishing**: Apply micro garnishes with tweezers to create exact placement that stands out against the dark lava background, with the scratch-resistant surface allowing for confident plating.
- **Edge Awareness**: Position elements with intentional relationship to the plate's edge, using it as a framing device while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the rim remains pristine.
- **Textural Highlighting**: Use the lava background to emphasize textural differences between elements, creating visual interest despite the limited space.

10-1/4" Size-Specific Strategies

The larger 10-1/4" plate allows for more elaborate visual strategies that utilize the expanded canvas while maintaining cohesion. The fingerprint-resistant finish is particularly valuable on this larger surface, ensuring the plate remains pristine even with more handling.

Grand Presentations

- **Narrative Compositions**: Create story-telling presentations with multiple elements that form a cohesive narrative, using the lava background to unify the composition.
- **Negative Space Utilization**: Intentionally leave areas of the lava plate exposed as part of the design, creating breathing room that enhances the overall presentation.
- **Multi-Component Arrangements**: Present several distinct elements in a harmonious arrangement, using the lava background to tie together diverse components while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the entire presentation remains immaculate.

Advanced Techniques

- **Geometric Patterning**: Create precise geometric arrangements that utilize the full canvas, using the lava background to enhance the visual impact.
- **Circular Echoing**: Arrange round elements to echo the plate's shape, creating a harmonious composition enhanced by the scratch-resistant surface.
- **Border Awareness**: Position key elements to interact intentionally with the plate's edge, using it as a framing device while the fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the rim remains pristine.

Photography Considerations

When photographing dishes on the Lava Gourmet Plate, consider these strategies to maximize visual impact:

Lighting Approaches

- **Side Lighting**: Use directional lighting from the side to create subtle shadows that enhance textural elements against the dark lava background.
- **Diffused Overhead**: For presentations with height, use soft overhead lighting to highlight vertical elements while maintaining the rich lava tone of the plate.
- **Backlighting**: For translucent elements, consider backlighting to create a glowing effect that contrasts with the solid lava background.

Composition Techniques

- **Overhead Perspective**: Capture geometric patterns and arrangements from directly above to showcase the relationship between food elements and the lava plate.
- **45-Degree Angle**: For presentations with height, shoot from a 45-degree angle to capture both the vertical dimension and the relationship with the lava background.
- **Macro Details**: Use close-up photography to highlight the interaction between specific elements and the lava plate's surface, showcasing the scratch-resistant finish.

Color Management

- **White Balance Adjustment**: Carefully set white balance to accurately capture the true lava tone of the plate and the natural colors of the food.

- **Contrast Enhancement**: Slightly increase contrast to emphasize the distinction between food elements and the dark lava background.
- **Highlight Control**: Manage highlights to prevent overexposure on white elements against the dark lava background, preserving detail in bright components.

Practical Benefits of the Scratch-Resistant, Fingerprint-Resistant Finish

The innovative glaze finish of the Lava Gourmet Plate offers significant practical advantages beyond its aesthetic appeal:

Service Excellence

- **Maintained Presentation Integrity**: The fingerprint-resistant finish ensures that plates remain pristine from kitchen to table, preserving the chef's artistic vision throughout service.
- **Reduced Touch-Up Requirements**: Service staff can handle plates confidently without leaving visible fingerprints, eliminating the need for wiping or touch-ups before presentation to guests.
- **Enhanced Tableside Service**: For dishes finished or served tableside, the scratch-resistant, fingerprint-resistant finish ensures the plate remains immaculate despite additional handling.

Operational Efficiency

- **Increased Durability**: The scratch-resistant surface withstands the rigors of daily use, maintaining its appearance over time and reducing replacement costs.
- **Streamlined Plating Process**: Chefs can work confidently with metal tools and utensils on the scratch-resistant surface, allowing for more precise and efficient plating.
- **Simplified Cleaning**: The fingerprint-resistant finish makes plates easier to clean and maintain, reducing polishing time and labor costs.

Culinary Advantages

- **Confident Tool Usage**: The scratch-resistant surface allows chefs to use metal plating tools without concern, enabling more precise and intricate presentations.

- **Enhanced Sauce Application**: Sauces maintain their intended patterns and positions on the plate's surface, with the fingerprint-resistant finish ensuring clean edges and borders.
- **Consistent Presentation Quality**: From the first plate of service to the last, the innovative finish ensures consistent presentation quality throughout the dining period.

Conclusion

The Gourmet Plate GLA-W81/W101 in Lava with its scratch-resistant, fingerprint-resistant finish offers exceptional versatility and sophisticated elegance for culinary presentations. By leveraging the unique attributes of this plate—its deep lava tone, innovative glaze finish, and two versatile sizes—chefs can create memorable dining experiences that elevate both the food and the overall aesthetic.

The dark lava color provides a dramatic backdrop that can either complement or contrast with various ingredients, allowing for creative color theory applications. The innovative scratch-resistant, fingerprint-resistant finish—the same technology used in the prestigious ONYX SERIES—ensures that the plate remains pristine throughout service, maintaining the integrity of the chef's artistic vision from kitchen to table.

Whether creating intimate appetizers, sophisticated main courses, or elegant desserts, the Lava Gourmet Plate serves as both a practical serving vessel and an integral part of the culinary presentation. By applying the techniques and strategies outlined in this guide, chefs can maximize the impact of their culinary creations and provide diners with a truly memorable visual and gastronomic experience.