

FOOD & *Spirits*

Volume 1 / Issue 3 \$4.95 FREE IN OMAHA METRO

The Omaha Metro's Only Guide for Food, Dining, Spirits and Wine.

MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION

Publisher's Pick: Market Basket pg 15

Spring BBQ Review pg 11

Food & Spirits Magazine -
American Culinary Federation
Heartland Chapter President's
Medallion for Culinary Publishing





Harker's Carolina BBQ Sandwich.
Photo by David Ahlquist.



For the past 30+ years, the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College has taught work ethics, vision, passion and leadership to culinary, hospitality, research and management students. The program is among the top rated programs in the USA, among more than 1000 programs nationwide and is known for its excellent graduates. The Institute is currently constructing the new 35,000 sq ft Institute for the Culinary Arts and Alumni Conference Center, which will accommodate more than 1000 students.



The front view of the new Institute for Culinary Arts and Alumni Conference Center displays vivid colors.

The front lobby of the new culinary Center will be made of brick and copper and have ample glass for a feeling of openness.

SEVEN REASONS THAT THE **INSTITUTE FOR CULINARY ARTS** IS THE SPOT:

SMALL CLASSES mean hands-on learning and catered instruction (average 12.1 student-to-teacher ratio in lab classes)

AWARD-WINNING FACULTY bring a breadth of experience, a depth of knowledge and a passionate involvement in the world of food

CUTTING EDGE COURSES root students in culinary tradition while providing freedom enough to navigate the ever-changing contours of the culinary landscape

LOCAL CONNECTIONS and national recognition translate into meaningful internships, significant careers and fellowship for a lifetime

AFFORDABLE TUITION keeps the dream of pursuing your passion within reach

TOP TIER STUDENTS provide leadership and peer-based learning throughout the program

GROUNDBREAKING FACILITIES pair the traditional structure of a culinary program with the intimate nature of a community college



The new Culinary Theater will be used for class, guest speakers, and professional development for area chefs.



CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE OF CULINARY EDUCATION IN THE MIDWEST

This new facility will provide countless hands-on, guest-centered, life-time learning experiences for the culinary leaders of tomorrow. By integrating the traditional structure of a culinary program with the intimate nature of a community college, the Institute for the Culinary Arts is breaking new ground with its progressive curriculum and wide open possibilities for students. This is the place to experience food in the Midwest.

 **METROPOLITAN**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**INSTITUTE**
FOR THE
CULINARY
ARTS

FOOD & Spirits
MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION



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FOOD

- Round table barbecue review - an in depth look at ribs and other related barbecue fare.
- The publisher picks his top dining experience of the quarter and tells you all about it.
- Breaking down a chicken is hard to do but Chef Brian O'Malley will show you how.



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INDUSTRY

- Ron Samuelson looks at government regulation in the industry and how it effects the bottom line.
- Culinary kudos to the kitchen staff that makes it all happen in a kitchen near you.
- The ACF's (Heartland Chapter) latest Omaha Standard looks at the wonderfulness of fries.



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SPIRITS

- A libation conversation with Dan Crowell about how to make the perfect cocktail.
- Marq Manner takes a look at the booming microbrew industry and tells you where to find some good suds.
- Pinot Noir makes a great summer wine and our resident wine expert tells you what you need to know.

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Local BBQ Reviewed

We invited a chef, a food reviewer, a barbecue expert and my neighbors to take a look at barbeque from 10 different places in town and tell us what they thought. We came away with a comprehensive ranking of ribs and a ton of other favorites that will be sure to leave you craving some barbeque.





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Our publisher picks his favorite place of the quarter and tells you all about it. This time, Market Basket and Chef Justin Beller make the grade.



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Chef Brian O'Malley tells you about the benefits of buying whole chickens and, even better, what to do with them after you get them in the kitchen.



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A new column explores culinary experiences to be found 'off the beaten path' in the Omaha metro.



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If it's wine you're looking for, John Fischer takes a look at Pinot Noir and pairs it with a fabulous recipe.



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Bourbon is one tasty beverage and our spirits expert gives you the low down on this Southern libation.



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Microbrew beers are making a name for themselves in the Omaha metro area and throughout the Midwest.

NATIONAL FOOD & SPIRITS DAYS

MAY

- 19 Devil's Food Cake Day
- 20 Pick Strawberries Day
- 22 Vanilla Pudding Day
- 23 Taffy Day
- 24 Escargot Day
- 25 Wine Day
- 26 Blueberry Cheesecake Day
- 26 Cherry Dessert Day
- 27 Grape Popsicle Day
- 28 Brisket Day
- 29 Coq Au Vin Day
- 30 Mint Julep Day
- 31 Macaroon Day

National Barbecue Month
National Hamburger Month
National Salad Month

JUNE

- 4 Cheese Day
- 4 Cognac Day
- 7 Chocolate Ice Cream Day
- 10 Herbs & Spice Day
- 14 Strawberry Shortcake Day
- 17 Eat All Your Veggies Day
- 19 Dry Martini Day
- 22 Onion Rings Day

National Candy Month
National Dairy Month
National Iced Tea Month
National Seafood Month

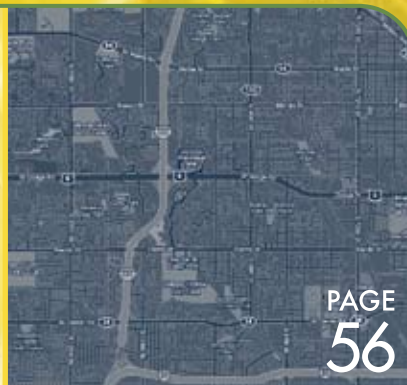
JULY

- 3 Eat Beans Day
- 6 Fried Chicken Day
- 10 Piña Colada Day
- 13 French Fries Day
- 19 Daiquiri Day
- 21 Junk Food Day
- 27 Scotch Day
- 31 Cotton Candy Day

National Baked Bean Month
National Culinary Arts Month
National Hot Dog Month
National Ice Cream Month

Restaurants, Bars, Lounges, Hotels & Specialty Shops Listing

Our listing of restaurants, bars, lounges and specialty shops in the Omaha metro area has been revamped and is more comprehensive than ever. Find your favorite place to eat, drink or stay from over 1,000 different locations.



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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to the third issue of Food & Spirits Magazine. The last quarter has been an exciting time for us, and for Omaha, and a lot has happened in a seemingly short time period.

Food and Spirits Magazine will present our first event, Rock, Stock & Barrel, on September 13 at Soaring Wings Vineyard. The all day (noon to 10:30 p.m.) event will be a benefit for the Food Bank and feature

some of the finest musicians, food and wine that the Omaha metro area has to offer. I'm completely honored at the line-up of stellar performers we have booked which include Kyle Harvey, Matt Cox, Brad Hoshaw, Scott Severin and the Milton Burlesque, The Whipkey 3, Sarah Benck and the Robbers, The 'Wholes, and Big Band Reprise (an 18 piece big band). Food tastings will be provided by Villamonte's Cuisine and the Culinary Institute at MCC while the wine, by the glass or bottle, will be for sale, with a portion of the proceeds going to the Food Bank, from Soaring Wings. All in all, I couldn't be happier with the way the event has taken shape and my sincere thanks to everyone involved. With tickets being just \$25 for the entire day, which includes food, I'm hoping we can get a lot of people out there and have a boat load of fun while also raising some funds for one of the most worthy organizations in town.

We've also lined up our first annual industry awards. Voting is done entirely by industry professionals with only one vote per individual. Awards will be presented in 18 categories - Best BBQ, Best Burger, Best Mexican, Best Steakhouse, Best Italian, Best Upscale Cuisine, Best Pizza, Best Legacy Restaurant, Best New Restaurant, Best Bar/Lounge, Best Wine Selection (Restaurant and Retail), Best Beer Selection (Restaurant and Retail), Best Locally Produced Spirit, Wine or Beer, Best Bartender, Best GM and Best Chef. Top five finalists will be announced in our August issue and awards will be given out to the top three winners at Rock, Stock and Barrel. Ballots have already been mailed out and so far there seems to be a great reaction to some certifiable industry awards that actually mean something and weren't won because the ballot box was stuffed.

As the last three months have been exciting for the magazine, it's also been a dynamic time for the food and spirits industry in Omaha.

The Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College will be groundbreaking a new 35,000 square foot culinary center. While the Culinary Institute has, for years, been one of the top community college food schools in the country, the new center will provide the students and fabulous instructors an even better platform for food excellence. As you can see in the magazine, the new center looks incredible and is worth checking out even if you're not a student.

The Omaha food and spirits scene also seems to be rockin' and surviving the economic downturn better than many other cities in the country. While the restaurant and bar scene continues to be a dynamic industry, with closings happening on a weekly basis, openings continue to outpace those that close their doors. The smaller, independent owners and non-chains, despite higher food costs, seem to be adapting and prospering in spite of the dire predictions we hear.

As I said at the beginning, it's an exciting time for Omaha and the food and spirits industry. It's great to be a part of it and I suspect that it will continue to thrive and evolve, more than ever, in the coming months. We hope you enjoy the latest issue - we're evolving too and trying to create the magazine you want to see. As always, let us know what you like, and what you don't - we're listening.

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EXPERT'S PANEL



DR. JOHN FISCHER

Dr. John Fischer is a member and two-time president of the Omaha Branch of the International Wine & Food Society, past director of the Nebraska chapter of LADV, and the founding member of the Council

Bluffs Branch of the International Wine & Food Society. He teaches a course on matching wine with food at the Institute for the Culinary Arts in Omaha and is the author of the books, "The Evaluation of Wine – A Comprehensive Guide to the Art of Wine Tasting" and "Wine and Food – 101."



PAUL URBAN

Paul Urban is the executive chef at Lucky's 1001. At 27, Paul has been in the restaurant industry for 13 years, working at approximately 25 restaurants, both locally and abroad. In 2006 Paul graduated from The

Institute of the Culinary Arts, Omaha NE, with a degree in Culinary Arts and Management. Paul recently received the 2007 State of Nebraska ProStart mentor of the year award. As a member of the Slowfood movement, Urban and the staff work with local farms in an attempt to stay local, fresh and sustainable.



PAUL KAVULAK

Paul's first professional life was spent working in IT. Most recently as the SVP of Enterprise Technology Integration for West Corporation and while this occupied his daylight hours, most of the others were

consumed by an immersion in beer. Not physically – his passion exists in beer and brewing. Prior to starting up Nebraska Brewing Company with his wife, Kim, Paul had been homebrewing for roughly 17 years. This passion formed the basis for a dogged pursuit of perfection in numerous beer styles and beer history. Livin' the dream.



BRIAN O'MALLEY

Brian O'Malley is a chef-instructor at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College. As President of the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary Federation, Coach of the Junior Culinary

Competition Team, Board Member of the Nebraska Food Cooperative and the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Father of two, and Muse Extraordinaire for Sage student bistro O'Malley spreads his passion for local and sustainable cuisine liberally throughout the community.



ANN SUMMERS

Ann Summers is a writer, amateur naturalist, mother, and cook. She is the author of two children's nature books and a new book on healthy lunch tips and nutrition called Healthy Lunch, Healthy Mind. She

believes that fresh local food is the best present we can give ourselves and our children.

Meet the fully qualified panel of industry experts who have devoted their knowledge to this issue



RON SAMUELSON

Ron Samuelson has co-owned M's Pub for over twenty years with business partner Ann Mellen. They also own Vivace, which will soon celebrate 15 years of operation in the Old Market. Ron's 33-year

restaurant career has spanned from Dallas and Denver to Omaha, with stints in the kitchen as well as front of house management for both corporate and locally owned concepts. He has served as President of the Omaha Restaurant Association, is a recent inductee to the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame, and is currently serving a five year term on the board of the Downtown Business Improvement District.



JEREMY HUNTER

Jeremy Hunter has lived off and on in Nebraska for 18 years. He has been in the industry for nearly 20 years. His experience as a food service warrior spans from starting out as a dishwasher to owning his own

pizza restaurant. He has been a part of every aspect of the industry, but loves being a server and bartender above all. When he is not behind the bar or helping customers, he can be found with a nice microbrew and a glass of Grand Marnier.



JOHN LARKIN

John Larkin is co-owner of Jake's Cigars & Spirits in both Omaha and Lincoln. He's been smoking and selling cigars for close to 10 years having begun his career as a tobacconist right out of high school in Salt

Lake City. John moved to Lincoln in 2002 to run Jake's for longtime friend Alex Roskelley. After serving a tour in Iraq with the Army Reserve he came home and bought into the original Jake's in downtown Lincoln. In August 2006 John and Alex opened a new shop in downtown Benson where he now resides with his fiancé. John spends most of his time smoking cigars while questing after the best beers, bourbons, and wines he can get his hands on.



JOHN FINOCCHIARO

John Finocchiaro is co-owner of Johnson Brothers Finocchiaro, LLC, a Nebraska wholesale wine, spirits, and beer distributor. Formerly the owner of Finocchiaro Wine Co., Inc., John has been in the wine distribution

business for the past 25 years and the Finocchiaro family's association with the Nebraska wine industry has been continuous for the past 73 years, since 1935. John was a Certified Public Accountant before entering the family business and is a Certified Specialist of Wine.



DAN CROWELL

Dan Crowell, cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed 'spirits nerd', hails from Omaha where he talks incessantly (even occasionally to other people) about the virtues of what he calls 'investigative

imbibement'. An eternally fascinated student of the distillers' art, he encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.

COMINGS & GOINGS

Upcoming food, wine and spirits related area events

Food & Spirits Magazine

Food & Spirits has announced its 1st Annual Industry Awards sponsored by the Culinary Institute at Metropolitan Community College. Voting will be done only by industry professionals in 18 separate categories. The top five finalists in each category will be announced in Food & Spirits Magazine's August 15th issue and awards for the top three will be announced and presented at Rock, Stock and Barrel on September 13th at Soaring Wings Vineyard.

Rock, Stock and Barrel

The 1st Annual Rock, Stock and Barrel will be presented by Food & Spirits Magazine and sponsored by the Culinary Institute at MCC on September 13th at Soaring Wings Vineyard. The event, which is a benefit for the Food Bank, will be held from noon to 10:30 p.m. and will feature Sarah Benck and the Robbers, The Whipkey 3, Kyle Harvey, Matt Cox, Brad Hoshaw, Scott Severin and the Milton Burlesque, The 'Wholes and Big Band Reprise (an 18 piece big band). Tickets for the entire day are \$25 and include food tastings throughout the day. Call 203-6145 for ticket information or you can buy the tickets through all ETIX locations and online. Advance tickets sales begin June 1.

McKenna's Blues Booze & BBQ and Anchor Inn

McKenna's will be opening a new location at the Anchor Inn in downtown Omaha along the river. Look for the local BBQ favorite to open by June. Word has it that Anchor Inn will look to be open year round with the new addition.

Trovato's

Trovato's will be updating and expanding their menu in the coming weeks. The new menu will also feature freshly made pizza dough and ciabatta bread.

Farmer's Markets

Rockbrook Village's Farmer's Market began at the beginning of May and will continue until the beginning of October. The Omaha Farmer's Market (downtown) is also open and will run until October 11. As well, word on the street is that Benson will also have a farmer's market every Saturday through the summer.

Blue Sushi

The brilliant minds behind Blue, Roja and Bianco are starting another Blue location in the former Jobber's Canyon building in downtown Omaha. Renovations are in the works with plans to be open in late June or early July.

Institute for the Culinary Arts at MCC

Groundbreaking for the new 35,000 square foot Culinary Institute (look inside the front cover) will be held May 22. On June 28th at the Farmer's Market at Rockbrook Village the masterful chefs from Metro Community College Institute of Culinary Arts will be demonstrating recipes, food preparation and free tastings using items from the day's Farmers Market offerings. Learn how to prepare easy and fun recipes using local, fresh foods.

Jake's Cigars and Spirits

Jake's will be expanding into the location right beside their current space. The original location will remain the same while the new spot will offer up an outdoor smoking area, a bigger bar and more lounge seating.

Ted's Nebraska Grill

The last remaining Ted's Montana Grill was rebranded as Ted's Nebraska Grill. The big man himself, Ted Turner, even made it to town for the reopening.

Food Bank

On June 27th the Bank of the West Celebrates America's annual concert at Memorial Park will be held. Bank of

the West is partnering with The Food Bank in an effort to combat hunger. Those who attend Bank of the West Celebrates America are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items and toiletries to donate. Donation sites will be set up at entrances to Memorial Park along Dodge Street and Underwood Avenue, and barrels will be set up throughout the park for those who would like to donate. Bank of the West Celebrates America bears will be sold at Memorial Park for \$5 each, with all proceeds going to The Food Bank. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of food and beverages at the event will be donated to The Food Bank.

Harry & David

Harry & David has opened its first Omaha location at the Village Pointe Shopping Center. The gourmet boutique specializes in gourmet fruit, jelly and jams, candy, peanuts and a host of other groovy items.

Omaha Press Club

The Omaha Press Club has moved to Joslyn Castle while the member's dining room undergoes major renovations. Look for the Press Club to open back up on top of the First National Bank building in September.

Austin's Steakhouse

The last Austin's Steakhouse has closed its doors and will reopen sometime this summer as a Famous Dave's Barbeque restaurant.

Taste of Omaha

Taste of Omaha will be held at the Heartland of America Park and the Lewis and Clark Landing on June 6-8. Cooking demonstrations and booths from some of Omaha's finest restaurants will be available. Free live music and concerts are also available throughout the weekend.

Taste of West Omaha

July 11-13 mark the dates for Taste of West Omaha. The event will be held at 168th and Center and also feature a wide selection of area restaurants as well as a car show, arts and crafts festival, pie eating contest and concerts.

Taste of Chicago

Although it's a little out of the way, the annual Taste of Chicago will be held June 27 through July 6 and is certainly worth the trip, even with expensive gas, if you have the time. The 10 day food festival serves up more than 300 menu items from over 70 restaurants and food vendors, and offers tastes of not just Chicago cuisine, but also the global influences that are a part of the city's melting pot. There's tame fair such as giant turkey legs and rib sandwiches, but the more adventurous can get a taste of dishes such as goat biryani (goat with rice, saffron and spices) or alcapurria (pork-filled banana dumplings).

Great Taste of the Midwest

The Great Taste is, perhaps, the second longest-running craft beer festival in North America. This year, there will be 500 different beers when the event kicks off in Madison, Wisconsin (Beer Capital of the Midwest!) It will be held August 9 at Olin-Turville Park in Madison. Tickets are very limited so get yours early to take part in this beer extravaganza.

Le Voltaire

On July 14 Le Voltaire celebrates Bastille Day featuring a costume party and four course dinner for \$35 plus tax and tip. Le Voltaire will also take part in Domestic Violence Awareness Day on July 29th and will donate part of the proceeds to the charity.

The French Café

The French Café will no longer be open for lunch although Sunday Brunch will still be available.

Lucky's 1001

Paul Urban, formerly of the now defunct Darwin's Bistro, is the new chef at Lucky's 1001. Paul has brought his own culinary flair with him and has updated and revised the menu at Lucky's. For a sure bet, try Paul's signature and award-winning macaroni and cheese.

Soaring Wings Vineyard

Soaring Wings Vineyard begins their Friday Night Music Series on May 16th and will also be continuing Acoustic Sundays for the remainder of the season. For ticket information call 253-2479.

Schillingbridge Winery

The 3rd Annual "Laughter & Libations" Festival will be held Saturday June 28th from 4 - 10 p.m. Nationally touring comedian Eddy Gossling will be on hand and live music will be provided by Patrick Keelan as well as "The Paul Phillips Show". Caricature artist Paul Fell will be on hand to sketch your caricature and cartoonist Sean Hoy from Arizona will be MC for the event. BBQ will be available from Skeeter Barnes. Call 402-852-2400 for ticket information.

The Boiler Room

The much anticipated new culinary braintrust between Chef Paul Kulik and Mercer Management are shooting for a summer opening. The chalkboard menu will be driven by local ingredients and change daily. Look for developments at 1110 Jones.

Nebraska Brewing Company

Your Sounds of the Summer concert itinerary should include an early stop at NBC for a pint, the Beer Garden at the break, and a post-concert gathering in the NBC Outdoor Dining/Beer Garden area.

Concerts are on Friday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 and the entire Sounds of Summer Concert Series kicks off on May 23rd and these are the performances at NBC;
5/30 Mad Libby
6/13 Monica Eby
6/27 Soul Dawg
7/18 Pink Cadillac
8/1 High Heel
8/15 R-Style
8/29 Blue House - final concert

Omaha Recycling

The City of Omaha is changing its recycling program to accept more kinds of plastic containers. Crews now will pick-up plastic bottles marked with the numbers '3' and '5'. Many butter, and cottage cheese containers come in plastics marked with the number five.

Lincoln Native Awarded Master Sommelier

The Court of Master Sommeliers has awarded nine wine professionals the internationally recognized title of Master Sommelier following the Master Sommelier Diploma Examination. One of the new Masters include Jesse Becker from Lincoln. Jesse worked in Omaha

for a short time and currently resides in Boulder, Colorado where he is a sommelier with Frasca Food and Wine.

Summer Arts Festival

On June 27-29 the Summer Arts Festival will be held in Omaha featuring an artists' market, eclectic entertainment, children's fair and ethnic foods. Enjoy music and food from around the world and shop for fine art and unique handmade creations at the Gene Leahy Mall on Farnam St, 10th-14th streets.

Barbecue Contests

Given that there is really no better time for barbecue than during the summer, there are a number of area barbeque contests coming up. Here's a few of them;

Springfield - June 6 & 7, Papillion - June 13 & 14, Eagle - July 11 & 12, Bellevue - July 18 & 19, and LaPlatte - Aug 22 & 23.

Omaha Restaurant Association

The ORA presented their annual awards recently; Katie O'Connor (O'Connor's Irish Pub) was Restaurateur of the Year, ConAgra Foods was the Purveyor of the Year and Nicole Jessie (La Casa Pizzeria) was named the association's president.

Comings

Mia Latte Café, Ellis' Fish and Chips, Twisted Cork Bistro, Ming's Star Chinese Restaurant, Jumbo Buffet, Burger Star, Chatty Squirrel Café and Bakery, Sweet Georgine's, Parliament Pub, OMai Vietnamese Restaurant, Jimi D's Food and Spirits, Baby Blue Sushi, Twisted Fork Grill & Bar, Hollywood Diner (at 90th and Maple), Twisted Fork Grill & Bar, Clasico's Cakery, Jimmy Primas, Fatburger

Goings

Chili's, Romano's Macaroni Grill, Frankie & Phyl's Italian Café, Vino 100, Butsy Le Doux's, Taco Bueno, Broadmore Market, Austin's Steakhouse

To have your listings, events or activities in Food & Spirits Comings & Goings section contact

eriktotten@foodandspiritsmagazine.com
or

Call 402-660-9867



The Food Bank's 1st Annual

"O! What a Duck Race!"

What a **ducklicious** way to have summertime fun while helping a good cause!

♦ **Win a Nissan Versa!** ♦



What's Happening?

- ♦ 20,000 Ducks in the Water!
- ♦ Family Fun Festival
- ♦ Games for All Ages
- ♦ Live Music
- ♦ \$5 Single Duck Adoption
- ♦ Win Duckdastic (Fantastic) Prizes!
- ♦ Duck Adoption Papers coming soon!

Ducks In Training!



How Can I Participate?

- ♦ Adopt Ducks & Encourage Others to Do the Same
- ♦ Volunteer at the Tagging Party
- ♦ Recruit a Relay Team for the **Duck Olympics**
(Finals take place on Race Day 7/26)
- ♦ Volunteer the Day of the Race - on Land or in a Boat
- ♦ Do "**Quacky**" things like "dress in yellow"
- ♦ Be creative – do something that's "**just ducky!**"



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SPRING BBQ REVIEW

Considering that the summer is nearly upon us and nothing speaks to the summer like the smell and taste of kick ass barbecue, we thought the next food review for Food & Spirits Magazine should have at least something to do with barbecue and the awsomeastic food that goes with it. So we changed up our format a little bit, invited as many barbecue restaurants that we could think of from around town to participate, bought a load of paper and plastic utensils and got down to work.

And things got out of hand.

Looking back, I probably should have planned a little better and taken into consideration the enormous amount of food we were going to receive and invited all my friends and half of China to participate in the review. The initial thought was to have about ten people on hand and get ribs, brisket, pork and sides from any restaurant that wanted to be a part of the review. We hoped for the most comprehensive barbecue review that Omaha had ever experienced – each and every item, from each and every location reviewed and rated for the pleasure of our readers. What we got was one worn out publisher, a bunch reviewers stuffed to the gills, a lot of left over food and some items that didn't even get tasted by everyone (because they would have exploded if they tried).

And a very, very messy kitchen.



Realizing that there was no way the reviewers would be able to eat all the food that was available, we had each participant at least try a rib from every location. Beyond that, it was a free for all with waistlines expanding everywhere you looked and food being consumed in mass quantities – just like a real barbecue.

The offer was made to nearly every barbecue place in town to be included in the review – some elected not to participate and some we couldn't get a hold of. The restaurants that were included were Bones, Brew and BBQ, Big Horn Mountain Barbecue, Doc and Eddie's BBQ, Famous Dave's, Hartland Bar-b-que, Harkert's BBQ, Jim's Rib Haven, McKenna's Blues, Booze & BBQ, Red Zone BBQ, and Skeets Ribs and Chicken.

As in past reviews, we invited a wide spectrum of eaters representing different levels of the culinary food chain, to give us their take in a round-table sort of discussion. We did this because, while we also wanted the high-end and very-knowledgeable food consumer to be represented, we wanted the more average or general eater to have a place at the table and in an atmosphere that was close to the same way we all eat with friends and family. Our hope is that the different perspectives provide a more-rounded review of the experience while also giving you, the reader, a chance to see what someone who might be similar in their tastes said about their meal. With that in mind here are some of your reviewers.

Bill MacKenzie: Bill is better known to many in Omaha BBQ circles as "BBQ Bill." For the past 15 years he has been a member of the Greater Omaha Barbeque Society (GOBS), including serving a recent stint as president. BBQ has been one of Bill's food passions since his college days in the 1980s. As a certified BBQ Judge under rules of the Kansas City BBQ Society, Bill has judged sanctioned barbecue contests in 5 states.

Brian O'Malley: Brian is a chef-instructor at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College. As President of the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary Federation, Coach of the Junior Culinary Competition Team, Board Member of the Nebraska Food Cooperative and the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Father of two, and Muse Extraordinaire for Sage

student bistro, O'Malley spreads his passion for local and sustainable cuisine liberally throughout the community.

David Ahlquist: David Ahlquist has lived in the East, South and West in between stints in his native Omaha. He imagines himself a man of many talents and interests, but currently spends his time working as a computer programmer and watching television. Dining out, he tends towards the familiar – a filet, shrimp or the unadorned sandwich (meat, cheese and bread please.) His favorite food is the Philly cheesesteak from Doc's in Atlanta. David's brief vegetarian experiment ended when he realized there wasn't a very exciting menu for someone who dislikes tomatoes, mushrooms and squashes. Soups, frozen entrees, Almond butter and fruit spread on toast make up the bulk of his diet. He occasionally envisions a lifestyle change involving healthier eating with fresh foods prepared in interesting fashions. These daydreams inevitably end with the spoiled food from his impulsive grocery shopping spree in the garbage and an ever increasing collection of exotic, unopened condiments and spices in the cupboard.

Derek (aka Snekse@GastronomicFightClub.com): Derek was a picky eater as a kid. Oddly, he always liked to cook and fancied himself a chef, but his list of acceptable ingredients was fairly short. Meeting the woman he would marry, and moving to California changed all of that. His wife was a budding foodie when he met her and they explored the nooks and crannies of the food world together. Doing so forced him to learn to appreciate all tastes and textures regardless of his initial impression. He's gone from a person who dislikes fish so much he wouldn't even eat a fish stick to a person who thinks there is no better way to eat fish than a gleaming plate of sashimi. Because food for Derek is about experiencing new things, he's been drawn primarily to fine dining and regional cuisines. Both have great potential for challenging him with dishes he never would have conceived on his own. As for that kid who aspired to be a chef, he's contentedly abandoned that dream. He still cooks occasionally, though not nearly as often as he'd like - but when he does cook, he cooks with reckless abandon.

Ribs, brisket, sausage and turkey from Doc & Eddie's BBQ.
Photo by David Ahlquist



1 Top Ribs

Ribs were the only item that everyone was able to try. We asked the reviewers to rank the ribs on a scale on 1-10 (with 10 being the highest). Hartland was the only restaurant to receive perfect '10' scores (from three separate people) while Jim's, McKenna's and Harkert's all received scores in the nines from different reviewers.

Here are our top finishers and their scores for ribs.

1. Hartland - 9.3
2. Jim's Rib Haven - 7.4
3. Skeets - 6.4
3. McKenna's - 6.4
4. Harkert's - 6
4. Famous Dave's - 6

2 Top Finishers for Brisket and Pork

Although all the reviewers weren't able to try brisket and pork from every restaurant, there were some favorites that stood out (in no particular order)

Brisket

Bones, Brew and BBQ
Doc and Eddies
Famous Dave's
Harkert's
Hartland

Pork

Big Horn Mountain
Hartland
Harkert's
McKenna's
Red Zone

The reviewers get down to business.
Photo by David Ahlquist



4 Favorite Side Dishes

What's barbecue without some great sides or fixins? We had a ton of them and the reviewers picked these as their favorites (in no particular order)

Big Horn Mountain BBQ – Coleslaw, Baked Beans

Bones, Brew and BBQ – Baked Beans, BBQ Spaghetti, Cornbread

Doc and Eddies – Coleslaw, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Cornbread

Famous Dave's – Corn Bread, Baked Beans

Harkert's – Coleslaw, Cornbread, Macaroni Salad, Potato Salad

Hartland – Cucumbers, Green Beans

Jim's Rib Haven – Potato Salad, Baked Beans

McKenna's – Red Cabbage Slaw, Jalapeno Cornbread, Baby Red Potato Salad

Red Zone – Cheesy Potatoes, Coleslaw

Skeets – Macaroni Salad, Potato Salad

3 Favorite Unique Items

We also told places that, if they felt they had an item that was fairly unique to their restaurant, they were welcome to send it along. We got some great entries and these were our favorites (in no particular order)

Bones, Brew and BBQ - BBQ Spaghetti

Doc and Eddies - Sausage Link

Harkert's - Carolina Pork Sandwich

Harkert's - BBQ Burrito

Red Zone - Turkey Drum Stick

5 Favorite Desserts

While their weren't a ton of desserts available these two were the ones people made room for after a huge meal (in no particular order)

Red Zone – Apple Crisp

Jim's Rib Haven – Peach Cobbler

So there you have it. While not as comprehensive as we would have liked, it's still a fairly robust review of a lot of the barbecue places in town. Next year we'll do this again and try to open it up to more people and more restaurants. This should get you through your summer barbecue fix though.



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THE PUBLISHER'S PICK

Market Basket

Every day, in the course of putting the magazine together, I get the opportunity to go in and out of so many of the wonderful restaurants Omaha has to offer. Along the way I see many things I wish I had time to try, and restaurants I wish I could make it into. I try things when I can but, given that I keep pretty busy with my work and my family, I don't have a chance to try nearly all of them. I'm working on it but, with so many places and only this one stomach, it will take years.

by Erik Totten



Truffles, truffles and more truffles by Norman Love.
Photo by Erik Totten

I frequent my favorite places but often, when I do get a chance to actually sit down and enjoy a meal, I try to pick a place that has come across my radar in some way or another and that I haven't tried yet. It could be that I've been recommended to go, an interesting looking menu or just a great feel and atmosphere that makes me want to walk in. Whatever the reason, I often try to go places I haven't been based on just the general buzz that makes its way to me.

And that's the purpose of this column – every issue I'll pick my latest, most favorite, fantastic discovery and share what I've found. I consider myself an average eater and, to me, that means my tastes run all over the map and like most eaters, I know what I like and I know I don't feel comfortable dropping a bunch of cash on a meal that was less than good. So these will be the great meals, the ones that were standout, to me, in the midst of days and nights spent in and out of restaurants.

Although Market Basket (911 S 87th Ave) has been an Omaha mainstay for over 20 years, it was one I wasn't at all familiar with until I happened to meet the chef, Justin Beller, at my local watering hole (Jake's) in Benson. Right

I have a bit of OCD when it comes to how my steak is cooked and this one was spot on... The vegetables were also expertly cooked...



Leek, port and Stilton cheese soup.
Photo by Erik Totten

away I thought Justin seemed like the type of person that would be great at whatever he did and I put it on my list of places to go check out when I had a chance. However, how my life works is that my list of places to go easily numbers in the 100s and I get to go to about two or so throughout the course of a month. So, I didn't really start treating Market Basket like a 'must go' until I heard the buzz.

It seems Justin makes these fantastic soups that everyone, but me, in my neighborhood was well aware of and raved about. Episodes of Seinfeld and the Soup Nazi flashed through my head with all the crazy talk about how good they were, how delicious, how mouth watering, how they could make your gastronomic life complete (in a soup sort of way). I made the decision that I would go at the next opportunity and so, on a gorgeous Saturday night, my wife (who was also gorgeous) and I went to see what the hype was all about.

I had heard that Market Basket was a neighborhood favorite so, since it was 'date night', I welcomed the intimate atmosphere and low noise level that we noticed right away upon walking in (we also noticed the truffles but we'll get to that later). As well, the other tables around us, seated with young and old patrons alike, were very

conversational and seemed to be settled into their regular seats.

Our server, Laurie, started us out with some fresh French bread, subtly flavored with Asaigo, and cheeses crisps which come from Market Basket's bakery. They were wonderful and an effort had to be made, by both my wife and I, to hold off on them so we could make it through dinner. As good as they both were, it was worth the effort to save room.

Of course, after all we'd heard, we had to try the soups. The two soups available were a white cucumber gazpacho along with a leek, port and Stilton cheese mixture that was incredibly savory

and delightful. I expected to like the port and Stilton cheese soup (which was my wife's favorite), but for me, the surprise was the white gazpacho. I'm not a huge fan of cold soups in general so the fresh, summer-like, delicious cucumery combination, with just the right amount of texture, of the white gazpacho made me reconsider things I thought, after 34 years, that I knew about myself. It was sooooo good – I'm back on the cold soup band wagon.

For an appetizer we ordered the Asian noodle seared scallop salad with a honey and soy hoisen vinaigrette, in addition to



Tenderloin crust with peppercorns and sesame finished with a veal demi glace and smoked tomato Gorgonzola butter. Served with freshly mashed potatoes, honey and soy grilled asparagus, and grilled zucchini.

Photo by Erik Totten

some pommes frites with three sauces. Although I wouldn't know, not being big on the scallops, my wife assured me they were wonderfully cooked and the best she had ever had. Although my experience with scallops is limited, I also agree that they were easily the best I have had, anywhere. As well, the Asian noodle salad with snap peas, cucumbers, carrots and red pepper was a delightful spring and summer accompaniment.

Fries, on the other hand, are my deal and so I was looking forward to the pommes frites. They were as good as they looked and some of the best in town. As well, the freshly made sauces (pesto aioli, garlic aioli, and hot sweet mustard) were an ideal accompaniment.

At this point, in the beginning stages of feeling full, we debated just ordering one main entrée but instead opted for indulgence and ordered two. I had the beef fillet special which was a tenderloin crusted with peppercorns and sesame finished with a veal demi glace and smoked tomato Gorgonzola butter. It came with freshly mashed potatoes, honey and soy grilled asparagus, and grilled zucchini. I have a bit of OCD when it comes to how my steak is cooked and this one was spot on. The pepper crust went wonderfully with the demi glace and it was an excellent cut of meat. The vegetables were also expertly cooked (and cooking grilled asparagus that doesn't come out tough as hell can be difficult). Steph ordered the mussel pot which was a full kilo of

Below - Asian noodle seared scallop salad with a honey and soy hoisen vinaigrette. Photo by Erik Totten.



Mussel pot steamed with Mediterranean white wine sauce.



mussels steamed with a Mediterranean white wine sauce. The mussels tasted like they were straight from the sea and the wine sauce was fantastic enough to eat on it's own as a soup.

Although it was the last thing we needed, after seeing the truffles as we walked in the door earlier, we knew we had to get some dessert. Of course, we got the truffles but tried only five flavors out of the nearly 30 or so available. We tried the banana, pistachio cherry, raspberry, peanut butter and jelly and strawberry. The truffles are done by Norman Love Confections, based in Florida and they were the perfect end to a great meal.

In total and it's not something I say very often, this was a meal that there truly was hard to find anything wrong with. The service was great, the food wonderful, the portions ample enough to send us out with three take-out boxes, the atmosphere intimate and congenial at the same time. Having not known a lot about it before I went, Market Basket and especially Chef Justin are apparently somewhat of a secret to the great Omaha culinary scene. They both are great and yet you certainly don't hear nearly enough about either of them. However, I'll be talking them up and adding them to my list of favorites.

Price

One appetizer, two entrees, dessert and wine - \$80 (with tip)

Rating

4.5 out of 5 Forks

Chef Justin Beller

Justin Beller, evening chef at the Market Basket and Omaha native, has always had a passion for "sexy" food. He started his culinary journey at Jams Bar and Grill working under owner and head chef Mark Hoch. Eager to learn more, Justin decided to move to the Pacific Northwest to work under Chef Kathleen Longrin at Seattle's trendy Coastal Kitchen. Here they changed the menu every three months to compliment a different coastal cuisine, which allowed him to open his eyes to seafood inspired dishes from the Yucatan Peninsula to the Mediterranean.

To become even more well rounded, Justin decided to venture to the Big Apple where he assisted with the opening at the hot spot Fressen, located in the fashionable Meat Packing District. Here he was able to gain the knowledge and speed of an upscale New York French Bistro, preparing a lot of freshly made French delicacies. Now ready for his own endeavors, Beller became a private chef to many New York elites, complementing special diets including a raw food only diet.

Wanting to get back to his roots, he decided to head back to the Midwest where he became the sous chef at Blue Sushi, and added Asian Infusion to his list of global cuisines. After two years, Beller couldn't pass up the opportunity to be a chef traveling all over the South Pacific on a private yacht. He took fresh ingredients from local islands to create what he called, "the freshest and most mouth-watering meals".

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5 Places Your Grandparents Ate and you should too!

by Erik Totten

Although a lot gets said about the great restaurants that Omaha has to offer, what often gets lost are the original establishments that paved the way for the fantastic culinary scene our city has today. With that in mind, here are our top old-school family run restaurants and some of the things that make them so great.

Petrow's

Although the Petrow family was involved with food well beforehand, Petrow's originally opened as a drive-in in 1950 and seven years later became a diner. In 1968 the restaurant was added, but they've been cranking out great food from the beginning. Currently run by Nick Petrow, Petrow's Restaurant serves great burgers, onion rings and hot beef dinners. For a special treat try the pepper rings (just like an onion ring but with a green pepper) and homemade seasonal pies.

Johnny's Café

Opened over 80 years ago by Frank J. Kawa this Omaha stockyards original continues to put out great steaks, seafood and other Midwest traditional fare. They can also make you an Old Fashion or a Manhattan cocktail that is straight out of 1954. For some interesting takes on the food and spirits scene from back in that day, browse the collection of menus, spanning their history, hung in the lobby area. In the 1990's, Kari & Sally Kawa joined the restaurant as the third generation of Kawa's continues to run Johnny's Café as it was from the beginning.

Gorat's Steakhouse

Started in 1944 by Louis and Nettie Gorat, Gorat's Steakhouse has become a favorite of Warren Buffet and Omaha regulars for over five decades. The steaks are, of course, great, but Gorat's also serves up some good Italian and chicken as well. The escargot and chicken livers deserve special note but don't get distracted from the steak as it reigns here.

Cascio's Steakhouse

Serving a wide variety of steaks, seafood and Italian specialties, Cascio's has been around Omaha for over 60 years. Relaxed and

open, the family-style dining room and atmosphere make this an ideal location for everyone in the family. Make sure to try barbecue ribs on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and don't overlook the homemade hot bread sticks.

Orsi's Italian Bakery

Truly one of Omaha's best, and oldest, secrets, Orsi's makes some of the best (seriously) pizza in town. They're probably better known for the fresh loaves of bread that have come pouring out of the oven since 1919, and the made to order garlic bread but, mark my words, the pizza is incredibly good. They will also be making their own homemade sausage soon and adding deli meats and Italian olives.

La Casa

Opened in 1953 by Joe Patane, La Casa is known for their unique, and tasty, pizza – they even had a question on Jeopardy about it. Still family owned and operated, La Casa continues to turn out the same quality food that has made them practically an Omaha landmark. Remember to leave room for a Cannoli.

Bohemian Café

Serving mouth watering authentic European dishes since 1924, the Bohemian Café is a cornerstone in Omaha's culinary tradition. Operated by the Kapoun family and still serving up Czech favorites like liver dumplings, Jaeger schnitzel, breaded sweetbreads and fresh sauerkraut. Great for all audiences and some of the best traditional food in town.



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Slower Food Less Work

by Ann Summers

“Three hours is good, but four is better.” That’s the rule my mother taught me for pot roast. Now, think about the last time you planned a meal far enough ahead to cook something like that, and you’ll see we can all fall into a modern food convenience trap. People tell us to make meals in 30 seconds, and all we have to do is stir fry this stuff and flip it onto the plate, and Wahoo! Whatta time saver! Except that it isn’t. Most TV people who do insta-meals already have their veggies cut up for them. And have you ever tried to do a quick stir fry from scratch? I love veggies, but prepping them and cubing meat, and arranging your seasonings and aromatics takes lots of time. But even if you spend time prepping, most of the quick meals we know require your attention up to the very end. How can you spend time with your family or guests when you’re standing over the stove? And let’s not even talk about clean up.

So let’s get back to slow food like pot roast. You prep, the food cooks by itself, and you go do other stuff. I bet you don’t need any suggestions of what you can do with that time, so maybe a little planning is worthwhile. Get some quality local ingredients to start: local chicken or rabbit, local grass-fed beef. Just remember, the better your ingredients, the less you have to do to make them taste great.

I’m sorry, but I don’t own a slow cooker. I have tested the timed bake feature on my oven while I was at home, and I’m now comfortable setting the oven up and leaving for the day while my dinner cooks. But slow cookers can be useful if your oven doesn’t time bake or is too scary to leave on its own. However, if you can start with one pot and stay with it, do so. To really get flavor you need to brown meat first, otherwise it just tastes boiled. You can brown in a skillet or on a tray under a broiler (I do ribs under the broiler) but then you’ve used another pan.... With a dutch oven (a big pot with a lid), you can brown first and then braise in wine or stock with a heavy, well-fitting lid. Don’t have that? Cover tightly with heavy duty aluminum foil.



What to braise? Rabbit, chicken, lamb shanks: all like slow cooking because you use the whole thing, bone-in, skin off. Everything cooks down until it falls apart. A bone-in pot roast or brisket is a perfect choice because for beef, you need a tougher cut of meat. What happens at low heat is that the connective tissue cooks down and provides a rich, moist flavor that doesn’t come from fat. People say we like foods with fat (marbled steak, fried foods) because they taste good. But I disagree. I think we are always trying to recapture the complex taste and texture of foods with true flavor that

comes from using tougher, more flavorful cuts of meat, or from the growing conditions of the vegetables. Fat is just a cheap mimic. If you’ve trained your palate to crave a coating of fat, retrain it to crave the real deal—flavor. For the braising liquid, use stock, wine, beer, or lemon.

Veggie prep is easy since whatever you put in will cook down. You don’t have to be slicing and cubing things perfectly. Seasoning is important, but the most crucial is salt and pepper, especially with flavorful meats. Got a favorite spice rub? Go for it. Barbeque champs cook long and slow and

they usually use powdered garlic and onion, and dried spices and herbs. Or go for the fresh stuff if you like. Beef needs more acid, and dry wine is a good start. Good canned tomatoes are great, and a little cider vinegar doesn't hurt. My sister-in-law uses a half-gallon of vegetable/tomato juice on her beef and it is spectacular. Toward the end, with, say one hour to go, toss in some peeled potato. Or never mind that, anything with gravy in it is great with fresh bread.

The main thing about slow cooking is planning. Make sure you've got your meat, your veggies, your braising liquid. If you have garlic, onion, wine, and meat, you can braise. But if you want, cut up the veggies the night before, and if your meat is frozen, thaw it out. If you're cooking for guests, start in the morning. Or even the day before. Braised meals are one of the few things that will actually taste better when you heat it a second time. By the time everyone arrives, all you have to do is serve. Set up your dinner to cook, and go away. No peeking! If you leave the house, prepare to be hit with intense and fabulous smells upon returning. Now all you really need is some crusty bread and time to savor the food.

And while we are on the subject, let's do bread. Yes, you can, and no it isn't scary. The trick is the same: use fresh simple ingredients. I use local organic whole wheat

flour ground at the market. It is much finer in texture than pre-bagged whole wheat, and white flour is just yucky (sorry) and unless you're making a wedding cake, you don't need it. Bread is alchemy, but it is also basic. Like all great slow foods, it shouldn't be complicated. If your bread recipe is a page long and takes 14 steps, don't use it. That one is for people with no hobbies. Find a basic recipe and learn to make it. And use a kitchen thermometer. Get a metal probe type at the grocery store for a buck-fifty. It is the best insurance you can take out against failing bread. Bread yeast likes to proof at around 110 to 112° F, and all you have to do is fill your measuring cup with hot tap water, and stick your thermo in. Adjust with a little cold or hot until it is in the zone. That's it, no guesswork. Get it right and you can stir in your yeast and in a few seconds, it'll start to move on its own.

Most serious bakers use cake yeast, and maybe I should. But I try not to be too serious. If you feel anxious about the welfare of your powdered yeast (you don't need instant), get your water temp right, stir it in and wait a sec while it hydrates. Then, blop in a little honey. Yeast eats sugar, and burps carbon dioxide, which makes bubbles that makes your bread puffy. By the time you mix your flour and salt in a big bowl, your cup of yeast will be burping its head off. Or just

put the honey into the flour and mix it all together. Knead it in the bowl until it looks like bread dough (my kids love this part, and it is only dough, you can't hurt it). Cover it and leave. When you come back, plop it into a greased pan, on a sheet pan, in a dutch oven or whatever you have. If you are the busiest person alive, or just fairly forgetful, do this the night before and put the bread dough in the fridge. When you come home, take it out and it will finish rising on the counter. Plan ahead a little, work less, but be ready for awesome sights, smells and tastes when you're done.

You can find local meats and other wonderful ingredients at the Nebraska Food Co-op. See them online at www.nebraskafood.org or call (800) 993-2379.



Ann Summers is a writer, amateur naturalist, mother, and cook. She is the author of two children's nature books and a new book on healthy lunch tips and nutrition called Healthy Lunch, Healthy Mind. She believes that fresh local food is the best present we can give ourselves and our children.

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START TO FINISH ONE BIRD

BY BRIAN
O'MALLEY

Chicken may be the most democratic of all foods. It transcends ethnicity, enjoys a rare liberty from most religious taboos, is inoffensively mild flavored, is available year-round in almost every corner of the world and, quite frankly, can be downright delicious when prepared properly. Why then, do many cooks tremble at the site of a whole bird? We tremble, because we are programmed to. It is far better for a chicken producer to sell us boneless skinless breasts at \$5.99 per pound than for us to buy the whole bird for that price and fabricate it ourselves.

The money in the game of conventional poultry production is powerful. It drives us to forget that chickens are whole animals who give their lives for our sustenance and deserve our total respect - especially in the kitchen and dining room. The last time I had a fast food chicken product, I looked at myself in the rearview mirror and wept. I immediately called my doctor and asked for a prescription of Rogaine, wiped the tears from my face, and began to pity the poor bird that gave its life for this. An animal fought its way into the world, scratched out an existence, and died swiftly, only to ultimately wind up as a thoughtless, or perhaps over-thought, puree. Breaded and bound in a factory somewhere half a nation away, and served to me at the speed of light at 1:15 in the morning as I trudged home from another night paying attention to the foods that other people eat. I started crying again. Poor birds.

They give so much to us and all I could offer was the \$1.07 in change from the floor of my car. I decided to do more for my birds.

5 STRATEGIES FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF A BIRD :

Buy Fresh and Local
Buy Whole
Handle Properly
Cook Well
Share

BUY FRESH AND LOCAL

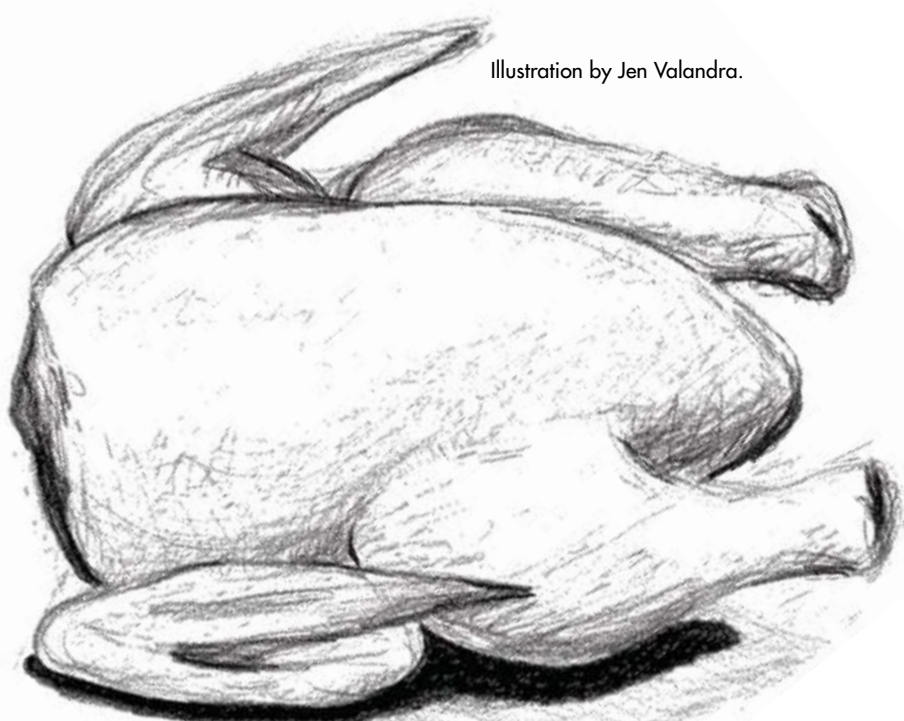
Find a producer through the Nebraska Food Cooperative at www.nebraskafood.org or in the annual guide published by Buy Fresh Buy Local Nebraska. You can also just shake hands with someone at the farmer's market and presto, you have a source. It is a bit more complicated if you are trying to find a supplier in the restaurant sense of the word, but not too much more. The benefits of buying from a local producer are plenty, most of which center around quality and some of which are economic or ecological in nature.

In relation to quality, most local guys are small time. This means that they manage their own operations start to finish. They can't water chill - and therefore waterlog - their birds after slaughter as the equipment is costly and cumbersome. They can't afford the mechanical separation machines that large operations have, they can't feed an uber-controlled diet to their animals because they aren't

confined. There are so many positives to smaller-time chicken production that if explored, I would be mistaken for lobbyist for the Independent Chicken Producers of America Coalition - an organization that despite its profound-yet-oxymoronic name quite possibly doesn't exist at all.

In the end, the decision to go local based on quality is pretty simple. Buy a conventional whole bird from the mega-supermercado, and pick one up from Wohlner's on Leavenworth. At both stores, ask when your bird was last alive. At Wohlner's, they may not know the answer off the top of their head, but they are one conversation away from knowing. Their producer is their delivery man. And it is feasible, if not likely, that he will be standing behind the counter when you arrive for this fun little exam. Then, at the thirty-foot ceiling "super" store the response will be a little different. My guess is the young clerk will run away from you as fast as possible, find himself in a break room somewhere laughing with his pimply

Illustration by Jen Valandra.



friends that there is this bald guy out there that thinks the chicken used to be alive! The next critical step in this journey is to put these two newly acquired birds on the counter next to each other. First smell the packages as you open them. Notice the water content of each bag. I'll show you a picture.



If I have to go on I will. No? O.K. good. Buy Local. The guy's name delivering the birds at Wohlner's, and to Sage Student Bistro, where I work my day/night job, is Dean Dvorak. With his wife, Dean owns and runs Plum Creek Farms in Burchard, Nebraska. He is the most pleasantest chicken producer I know. (My apologies to the other five chicken producers that I know. You are all very pleasant, just slightly less pleasant than Dean.)

BUY WHOLE

The whole bird has been handled less than its subsequent parts and has therefore spent less of its life in the temperature danger zone where bacteria thrive. I guess I meant to say it has spent less of its death but that sounds morbid. In addition to some potential safety benefit, you get all of the parts! And all of the parts mean that there is more to cook and therefore more to eat! Without the neck and back, your stock would not be as rich. Without the rib cage under the breast meat, roasting is a worthless endeavor. Without the liver, you can't make pâté. Without the leg and thigh still attached, you can't get the oyster. Without the skin, you don't have the skin, and then you may as well be a vegetarian. (If there are any vegetarians that have stayed with us this far through an article about eating dead animals, congratulations and I'm sorry for that last comment. Buying whole however means that you need to know where you are going.)

HANDLE PROPERLY

Keeping the home fridge as safe as a commercial fridge is a bit difficult. There is way more stuff per cubic inch, and way less oversight. There are, thankfully, less hands normally going in and out of the fridge at home. (My mother doesn't believe this as she watched my brother and I as we "fanned" the door 30-40 times in the hour preceding our childhood dinners but I am a grown-up now and I have read a study. I also watch my 2 ½ year-old open and close the freezer door 15 times a minute to check and see if the popsicles have magically appeared, so I can sympathize with my mother's sentiment.) Ultimately though, maintaining the temperature in the fridge is of critical importance to the safety and palatability of the foods contained therein. So keep on nagging your kids to keep the door closed. Also, in the fridge, chicken must be stored in its proper place, under or at least out of contact with ready-to-eat foods. Store in a container with a tight fitting lid or wrapped tightly in plastic rather than just wrapped in plastic or in its as-purchased container. Storing chicken and other protein items in the back of the fridge is also a good practice as the temperature there does not fluctuate as easily as it does in closer proximity to the door, especially the non-hinged side of the door.

10 SIMPLE RULES FOR SAFETY :

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 DO ONE THING AT A TIME | 5 REHEAT THOROUGHLY |
| 2 CHILL QUICKLY | 6 STORE SEPARATELY |
| 3 THAW SLOWLY | 7 USE QUICKLY |
| 4 SPEND AS LITTLE TIME IN THE TDZ¹ AS POSSIBLE | 8 SHARP KNIFE AND SECURE BOARD |
| 10 IF IT SMELLS BAD IT IS BAD | 9 CLEAN BETWEEN TASKS |

¹ TDZ kitchen speak for the "temperature danger zone". That stretch of the thermometer between 41°F and 135°F where the bacteria naturally present in food are given a little too much freedom to multiply, create toxins, and otherwise generally make stuff mucky.

CHICKEN STOCK TIPS

- Blanch the bones starting in cold water then pour off the water
- Simmer blanched bones in rewash
- Any time there is a scum on the top of the water, skim it off
- Never stir, but you can press down
- Roasted bones and mire poix = deeper flavor and color
- Not roasted = cleaner more subtle flavor
- Cut the carcass into smaller pieces
- Always start in cold water
- Salt the stock toward the end of simmering
- Always use a non-reactive pan
- Set the pot askew to the burner to create a more focused current
- Charred onion creates clarity and deepens the color
- Parsley stems and other aromatics are frequently added
- Use a chill stick (or a poly bag with ice cubes) to help cool rapidly
- Save the fat from the top of the chilled stock to sauté
- Ladle the simmered stock out of the pot, do not "dump"
- Strain at least 2x-at ladling through a chinois and after reheating through cheesecloth
- Boiling the stock will create cloudiness-keep under 200°F
- Better ingredients make better stock
- Don't include the gizzards or other organ meats
- Keep mire poix large and add it later in the simmering process
- Make stock from never-frozen bones
- Use within 3-4 days or freeze quickly in small batches
- Make a rewash from the "spent" bones and freeze to use when making the next batch of stock

FABRICATION

One chicken can supply you up to 12 individual pieces of chicken. A good size bird can easily feed a family of four for two meals, one where the protein takes center stage and one where it is in a significant supporting role. Perhaps so significant it may be better referred to as a co-star or a member of an ensemble cast rather than best supporting. (Think Kramer in Seinfeld rather than Newman.) You can roast the whole bird one night for dinner with mashed potatoes and peas, and easily turn the carcass and leftovers into killer chicken soup the next day.

[See the accompanying demonstration below on Chicken Fabrication.]

Don't feel bad when your first one looks a little like you did it blindfolded. It takes a couple to times to get good. And after about 12 you'll be excited about buying the whole bird and saving a little green. And perhaps toying with the blindfold idea. (Which Metro's and Food & Spirits Magazine's lawyers assure me I am NOT recommending.)

PREPARATION

In Escoffier's Complete Guide to the Art of Modern Cookery, published many moons ago, there are over 60 pages and about 600 different preparations of chicken described. It is because of chicken's sturdy yet mild flavor profile that such a cacophony is possible. One whole bird gives you a Bubba Gump like list of possibilities. Off the top of my head:

Buffalo Wings
BBQ Wings
Braised Wings
Chicken and Dumplings
Chicken Noodle Soup
Chicken Enchiladas
Rotisserie Chicken
Chicken Parmesan
Roasted Chicken
Marinated Carcasses
Chicken Sandwich
Fried Chicken
Chicken Fried Chicken
Chicken Marsala
Chicken Picatta
Chicken Kiev
Arroz Con Pollo
Chicken Mole
Chicken Gumbo
Chicken Kebab...

SHARE

One of the great joys of endeavor is the sharing and subsequent rehash that accompanies the event. Don't travel down this path alone! Talk a friend or your spouse into the kitchen with you to try their hand at cutting one up. Invite family over and let them laugh and enjoy your mangled mess. Then send them home with a bird to try it themselves. The table, and the food we eat from it, has more power to re-center our lives around each other and the earth than any other thing. Certainly more than any other piece of furniture.



Brian O'Malley is a chef-instructor at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College. As President of the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary

Federation, Coach of the Junior Culinary Competition Team, Board Member of the Nebraska Food Cooperative and the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Father of two, and Muse Extraordinaire for Sage student bistro O'Malley spreads his passion for local and sustainable cuisine liberally throughout the community.

CHICKEN FABRICATION



(Highlighted Steps shown on left)

- 1** MEP (get your supplies)
- 2** Place a damp towel under cutting board
- 3** Remove the wishbone
- 4** Remove the wing starting at the blade meat
- 5** Avoid the breast as you come through the joint
- 6** Separate the wings
- 7** Cut between the leg and breast
- 8** Pop the thigh bone out of the hip socket
- 9** Start your cut under the thigh bone
- 10** Cut towards the tail bone
- 11** Peel out the oyster*
- 12** Separate the leg and thigh
- 13** Stand up the breast
- 14** Cut out back bone
- 15** Remove keel bone
- 16** Filet rib bones from breast meat
- 17** Remove the tender
- 18** Remove tendon from tender
- 19** 12 pieces of chicken
- 20** Save carcass, bones and trim for stock

**Saving the Oyster (a chicken's love handles)*

There is constant haranguing about the quality of the meat found in the chicken's "oyster" which makes keeping it attached to the thigh meat during fabrication critical. To do so, make gentle cuts perpendicular to the back bone just on the body side of the hip socket, this will cut the tendons that keep it attached. Then pull gently on the leg and thigh to "peel" out the meat.

Off the Eaten Path

by Eric Franz

Food is a divine pleasure in life, to be hedonistically consumed without regard to its previous state of existence, allowing one to fully enjoy the wide range of texture and flavor available. To deny oneself the joys of eating something simply based on cultural ideas of normalcy is to deny oneself of the joys of life experience. If it is edible, it should be eaten, just as music should be heard or art should be seen. Every culture has its gastronomic norms, but these are simply binders in which they limit themselves from truly enjoying all that life can offer.

That's where I come in.

There are a lot of things your average American won't eat. There are even more things that your average Omahan won't eat. Despite being nestled quietly in the hearth of beef and pork production country, your average person has only ever sampled a small portion of the animals slaughtered and processed by our many meat packing plants. As much as I'd like to see everyone heading to their nearest taqueria and ordering some tacos sesos, it's not the most comfortable cuisine for the average palate. People need to be made comfortable with the food they're eating, and in order to do that we have to take baby steps. Where do we start? Let's see...

On a recent expedition in search of 'snout to trout' eating, or something similar, I stumbled across these dishes.

Tongue (El Rey Taco)

Beef tongue is one of the most common meats found at your average Mexican taco truck, the lengua having been slow cooked for extended amounts of time, leaving only an incredibly lean yet surprisingly juicy piece of meat that doesn't overwhelm the palate with gaminess but still manages to separate itself from any other part of the cow. Pair with a little lime juice and some salsa verde and you've found yourself a delicacy sure to impress the taste buds of anyone willing to give it a shot. Eastern and Northern European cuisine is as well riddled with boiled tongue dishes, typically boiled and sliced thin after having removed the outer skin and veins, creating a perfect deli meat for those who enjoy a little more flavor than your average roast.

Cheeks (Le Voltaire)

The cheek of most animals, which is prized in most every country, is in American culture often the most overlooked cut. Often one of the most worked areas of an animal's body, especially so with any animal that chews cud, it is one area that begins the toughest but becomes most tender while retaining all of the flavor imparted by its surrounding tissues. Veal and pork cheeks are especially held dear by most of the world, being the most tender and containing the highest fat content, giving them a stronger flavor once cooked. Braising is common in French cuisine, simply and slowly cooked in a sauce of red wine, tomatoes, and herbs. The result leaves a piece of meat that can be enjoyed by even the wariest of gastronomic adventuring, nearly not requiring even chewing to break down in your mouth, simply melting with the tongue's press into savory bits of meat. Among connoisseurs of whole roast hogs, there is no greater honor



than being allowed the cheek after having been slow cooked for hours and turned into a meat that sits somewhere between a filet and a jelly.

Blood Sausage (Le Voltaire)

The French call it boudin noir. The Germans call it Blutwurst. The English call it black pudding. The Spanish call it morcilla. Blood sausage is in most countries considered standard cuisine, as it has many centuries of being a food of necessity. It's one of the first foods produced from the slaughter of a cow or pig, being made up of a combination of the meat, the blood, and a filler consisting of some combination of potatoes, bread, onions, or herbs, occurring before the freshly drained blood is given a chance to coagulate. It's only after the sausage is made and there has been a proper mix created from these ingredients that the blood is allowed to coagulate, giving the sausage a very slightly spongy texture that complements well the ground meat and filler bits. The taste, if prepared properly, gives only hints of iron making way for a savory experience that even the Japanese term umami can't describe. It's incredibly palatable to anyone from any walk of life, and would certainly be a favorite given a simpler name much as the English have, such as black pudding or black sausage. It's the very example of nose to tail eating, making full use of any animal killed for consumption, not letting any part go to waste.

This is just a beginning- exploring the world beyond the bounds of culinary norms takes many years and a lot of guts- literally- in order to remove the conception that any part of an animal is less fit for consumption than another. By beginning with the aforementioned dishes as well as other common yet "different" dishes, easing the way into experimenting with foods not generally considered common becomes much easier, and hopefully, much tastier.

5 of Our Favorite Salads

by Christen Goetz



Summer is here and the time for light lunches has arrived. Whether you are a year-round salad enthusiast or one who sways with the seasons you know that a tasty and satisfying salad can make the perfect meal in warm weather. Here are the five top picks in Omaha.

Koko's Harvest Salad

Stoke's Grill & Bar (114th & Dodge and 12th & Howard)
Wood grilled chicken, jack cheese, bacon, tomato, avocado, red onion and croutons top this bed of greens with a splash of two separate dressings. The jalapeno ranch dressing has a kick, but is light enough that it's not overpowering, and the sweet pepper dressing is reminiscent of my favorite combination of salsa and sour cream. This Southwestern creation by executive chef and partner John Ursick was the clear winner with its complex toppings quarantined in separate sections for picky eaters. It's a salad light enough for salad enthusiasts, but heavy enough that the entrée ordering crowd will feel satisfied too.

Still hungry? Order the Guacamole, Chips & House Salsas appetizer to try one of Stoke's original recipe salsas.

Sesame-Seared Salmon Salad

Taste (110th & Elm)
The mixture of honey mustard balsamic vinaigrette, feta and almonds makes all Taste salads mouth-watering, but the hoisin sauce and hot mustard topping the sesame seared salmon on this salad pushes it over the edge as the best. As a bonus, the moist, tender salmon packs a healthy dose of Omega 3s.

Still hungry? Try the hummus with flour chips. You won't find this sweet tasting appetizer, created by executive chef and owner Don Doty, made with honey and peanut butter anywhere else.

Pear Salad

Mia's Bongo Room (61st & Maple)
South American style cuisine is the main attraction in Benson's newest hit restaurant, and this salad is one of the best things on the menu. Seasonal apple and pear spears jut out in angles on a red triangular plate with a honey vinaigrette dressing served on the side in a classic cruet. The blue cheese crumbles, juicy mandarin oranges

and fresh European greens enjoy a perfect marriage alongside feta wedges and the perfectly colored and firm apples and pears.

Still hungry? Try your luck with the Bongo Room's Soup of the Day option, which is guaranteed to be both nutritional and flavorful.

Honolulu Cobb

Twisted Cork Bistro (107th Ave. & Pacific)
The Twisted Cork Bistro opened its doors in January, but owners Darrell and Laura Auld have this salad perfected, and with their promise to serve meals made with all natural and handmade products you can't help but feel good about eating here. The pretty display of crisp romaine is topped with prawns, mango and crunchy cooked prosciutto. Tillamook aged white cheddar mutes the lime-jalapeno dressing while avocado and tomatoes rest along the outside of the plate for easy tossing, if preferred.

Still hungry? Come back for "Twisted Social Time" to enjoy wine and pizza until 6 p.m.

Fried Coconut Chicken Salad

Jams (78th & Dodge)
Although the wait is usually long for lunch at Jams, it is well worth it. Crispy-fried, coconut-covered chicken tops this masterpiece along with cherry tomatoes, artichoke hearts, avocado, Swiss cheese, red onions, croutons and almonds. There is a perfect amount of creamy herb mustard dressing that doesn't wilt the lettuce and compliments the chicken.

Still hungry? Order the delectable crab cakes with Cajun red pepper sauce.

Runners-up
Coconut Chicken Salad – Taste
Saigon Salad – Jams

Food Service Warrior

Perspectives from the host stand. by Jeremy Hunter



In the first article I talked about what people liked and disliked about being in the food service industry. Over the next few articles I will break it down into segments to help you understand a little bit more about our jobs, from the host stand to the dish room.

In most full service places there is a greeter at the front door. These are the people you see when you first walk in. Since you have to be 19 years old to serve alcohol, the door is usually someone under the age of 19 waiting to become a server or bartender. Their main objective is to put people in chairs. But that's not their only goal. There are many other things they have to do to make sure the restaurant runs smoothly. Like not seating the same server with too many tables at once, or not seating the tables fast enough causing people to walk out. They are also in charge of

taking reservations.

When you first walk in there are a few questions you should be ready to answer. "How many people in your party, do you have reservations, and smoking or non smoking." The more the greeter knows about your expectations the easier it is going to be to help you have a good dining experience. Let them know if you are on a tight schedule or going to a show at a certain time. All places are different when it comes to dining times. This also helps us determine when we will be able to set the next party at your

table. When going out, check to see if the restaurant takes reservations or if they have a call ahead list. This will help you to keep your schedule. If they don't accept them, allow yourself a little extra time to wait if they are busy. When you go into a place that has a lot of people in the doorway, relax. You don't have to shout over people to be recognized. Even if you have reservations, chances are you will be acknowledged within a few minutes at most.

When the greeter is seating tables they try to go in a rotation. This eliminates your server from being overwhelmed with too many tables at once. Table size and party size is important too. Tables are meant to fit a certain amount of people. Say you have a party of four and the place is not busy. Sitting at a table for six people is probably not going to be an issue, but what if they are busy and the party behind you has five people? We can't set them at tables made for four leaving us to explain why we are not utilizing our space properly. This also results in sales that are not up to par. Don't get me wrong though, if you need a bigger table we will be happy to give it to you.

In conclusion, the greeter is there to help you and the more they know the easier it will be to accommodate you and your guests.

So what's it really like to put out a national caliber magazine?

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FOOD & Spirits
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Jeremy Hunter has lived off and on in Nebraska for 18 years. He has been in the industry for nearly 20 years. His experience as a food service warrior spans from starting

out as a dishwasher to owning his own pizza restaurant. He has been a part of every aspect of the industry, but loves being a server and bartender above all. When he is not behind the bar or helping customers, he can be found with a nice microbrew and a glass of Grand Marnier.

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15615 Pacific Street
933-5090
mamaspizzawest.com



After being a Midtown Omaha staple for over 30 years, Mama's Pizza opened their 2nd location 1 1/2 years ago at 156th and Pacific St. Mama's Pizza is known for baking Omaha's heartiest pizza and the best hand breaded onion rings in town. Mama's also serves plenty of homemade sandwiches (try the meatball and cheese), pastas as well as dinners, for those not in the mood for pizza.

LANSKY'S

4601 S 50th St
731-1919
lanskys.biz



Lansky's famous phillies are delicious and made fresh to order. The roast beef sandwich is a new edition - made with slow cooked Angus beef it will melt in your mouth! Along with Lansky's famous pizza the restaurant also offers fresh baked calzones. Visit any of their three locations for your dining pleasure.



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ate about food as you are



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Varsity Sports Cafe and Roman Coin Pizza continue to serve up their famous pizza along with other menu items in this unique non-smoking "sports bar - restaurant" atmosphere. With over 35 HD TV's, viewing options are endless for the sports fanatic or casual viewer. The patio, one of Omaha's largest, offers a comfortable environment overlooking a lake.

U.S Foodservice™ Omaha is offering a ServSafe® workshop Monday, June 16th at our Omaha Sales Office located at 9427 F St. from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

This training, provided for our foodservice employees, incorporates education on food safety and handling and provides them with valuable skills and knowledge.

The cost of the class is \$55 which is the cost of the workbook. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Registration deadline is May 23rd and the class size is limited. If you would like to attend or have questions contact Dan Mooney at 402-457-5001 ext. 203 dan.mooney@usfood.com.

The Regulation **FIXATION**

By Ron Samuelson

Rugged individualists.

**Mavericks. Working
class capitalists.**

**These are some of the
phrases that describe
one of America's last
great hopes, the small
business person.**

These are people with a variety of backgrounds from their race, education and national origins to their vision of the future and political beliefs. Yet they all have one thing in common - an unwavering belief in their ideas. Big ideas. Small ideas. Different ideas. Faith in their ability to manifest a dream, a vision. That's what sets them apart. But that is also what makes them vulnerable.

Small business in America is at risk. At risk of becoming taxed and regulated into obsolescence. The irony is that the biggest enemy a small business faces today isn't competition from other businesses or lack of qualified workers. Nor is it from inflation or the lack of quality products to sell or services to provide. Instead, it comes from bureaucrats who have never had to meet a payroll deadline. Or file unemployment paper work. Or fill in for the dishwasher who just walked out with some sort of beef with the boss.

Yet it is these very regulators both local and federal who have the power to subvert the very core of our economy by taxing and regulating small business owners into oblivion. And as it affects these owners, so does it affect their clientele. The same regulators who have the best interest of the consuming public at heart may be so overstating the obvious that we have created

a sort of "nanny state" where a single person's right to litigate is placed above the general public's right to exercise common sense.

Certainly there is a need for controls. A free society is only as free as its least honest or enlightened citizens. There will always be a segment of any given population that will look for angles to achieve without effort, to profit without risk and to take advantage of unregulated opportunities that inherently lie in a free market place. It needs to be said that the food and beverage community is especially challenged to balance the need for

control versus the freedom to create and, as such, pushes the envelope of convention. It is at the core of what makes our industry great. It is also what draws many of the unscrupulous to the industry, who challenges the constructs of our laws and the limits of acceptability.

The problem lies in the "balance". The proper balance should allow controls to keep the population safe from charlatans and unsafe products while allowing the free market to work its unexplainable magic. The latest brouhaha regarding smoking in public



places should go a long way toward illustrating my point. Whose interest was truly at the awareness of those legislators who were trying to protect the citizenry? A rhetorical question, perhaps. But to the point, should the government be regulating such matters, or do the citizens of any area deserve the opportunity to exercise their free will and allow their freedom of choice and movement to be the arbiter of this and many other debates?

There are too many examples of regulatory malpractice to vent in this writing. But the list of taxation and fees a business person is beholden to is formidable. Payroll tax, unemployment tax, workman's comp "contributions", insurance matching, Federal withholding money...the list goes on. Whether you crave more government intervention or less concerns me not. What I yearn for is more realistic government - government with checks and balances. (There's that pesky little word again!). A body where grievances can be aired and articulated, where those who enforce the laws were once required to abide by them, and where fairness is not just an idea but the ideal.

This is not meant to be a treatise about taxes and/or regulation. Both are necessary components of a free society. However, our Declaration of Independence was written by people who are just like those of us in small business - rebels who ventured into uncharted territory with nothing more than fresh, new ideas and a strong work ethic to nurse the energy of their ideas into a thriving enterprise. For that matter, our entire society is built on the principles contained in the free market system. These were people who felt over-regulated and over-taxed. Remember the Boston Tea Party? They were people who felt they had no representation in the bodies that governed them. The only difference being that an ocean of water separated them from their regulators. Now there is something even more daunting to get to the gist of the problem - an ocean of ideology.

An anonymous writer once said, "A fine is a tax for doing some thing wrong, and a tax is a fine

"A fine is a tax for doing some thing wrong, and a tax is a fine for doing something right".

for doing something right". In our industry, both fines and taxes are too high. As consumers, we all hope that some regulation will keep us healthier and safer. But the line gets crossed quickly, and it begins to cost us all more than it should for the goods and services that we purchase. So, it is in the best interest of everyone to make sure that the government, both local and central, be responsive to its constituents' concerns, but to use sober judgment when concocting new laws and regulations on their behalf.

Small business is the single largest employer in America, and as such is seen by some as a liquid source of income. But if that source were to dry up due to malfeasance and over confiscation we would be losing more than a sustainable revenue stream - we'd be losing the entire back bone of the free market system that we cherish. We would also lose the cornerstone of our communities. And in the end we would lose the one of the most important things this country has to offer, and which makes this country great...entrepreneurship



Ron Samuelson has co-owned M's Pub for over twenty years with business partner Ann Mellen. They also own Vivace, which will soon celebrate fifteen years of operation in the Old Market. Ron's thirty three year restaurant career has spanned from Dallas and Denver to Omaha, with stints in the kitchen as well as front of house management for both corporate and locally owned concepts. He has served as President of the Omaha Restaurant Association, is a recent inductee to the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame, and is currently serving a five year term on the board of the Downtown Business Improvement District.





UNDER THE RADAR

Culinary Kudos

by Paul Urban and Jessica Joyce

Following our weekly routine, we delve straight to the section of the newspaper and magazine to read that day's Culinary Review. The article is filled with great accolades for the work produced by the executive chef which can lead the reader to believe that restaurants seem to run strictly on the talents of the executive chef. The executive chef, a cook who has no doubt put in his/her time, physically and mentally, deserves serious praise and glory.

However, there are others who fill up the back of the house on a sunny Saturday afternoon, heads down and knives to the cutting board, who make your experience as the diner, unforgettable. For instance, when the reviewer can't get enough of "the chilled pea soup, poured tableside over snow-white sorbet, like a blast of winter, freshened with a flush of spring," we automatically think to ourselves, "wow, that chef is incredible, how did she think of that?"

The truth of the matter is the culinary team likely had as much to do with that dish and concept as the person who leads the team. For example, two nights earlier during a lull in the evening rush, the executive chef, the sous chef and a line cook tossed around concepts for a cold soup. Within minutes and the input of many, the pea soup concept

came to life.

You'd never know the 18 year old prep cook started at 2:00 p.m. the next afternoon, blanching, shocking and pureeing peas, carefully seasoning the delicate liquid, gently passing the soup through a chinoise for the desired silky-mouth feel. Later that evening, during the dinner rush, it is the 23 year old line cook who artfully finishes the dish to order.

Next it's off to the 26 year old cook

responsible for expo [expediting] to give the dish its last minute seasoning and garnish placement. This team, assembled and orchestrated, by the Executive Chef, is just as deserving of accolades for the taste, texture, and arrival of your meal. Unfortunately, it is rare that you will see or hear the names of the many talented sous chefs, line cooks and prep cooks that makeup the back-bone of most professional kitchens.

In writing this article today, the goal is not to downplay the importance and creditable talents of the executing chef, but to pay homage to the hard-working, unsung heroes of today's kitchens, the team of tremendously driven men and women whose main goal is not only to impress the guest and executive chef, but also to strive for and achieve their own culinary expectations.



Paul Urban is the executive chef at Lucky's 1001. At 27, Paul has been in the restaurant industry for 13 years, working at approximately 25 restaurants, both locally

and abroad. In 2006 Paul graduated from The Institute of the Culinary Arts, Omaha NE, with a degree in Culinary Arts and Management. Paul recently received the 2007 State of Nebraska ProStart mentor of the year award. As a member of the Slowfood movement, Urban and the staff work with local farms in an attempt to stay local, fresh and sustainable.



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• Best Center of Plate Award

\$1000 to school

• Plattsmouth Blue Devils:

“Prosciutto Wrapped
Pork Tenderloin with Granny
Smith Apple Gastrique”

• Most Creative Use of Pork Award

\$500 to school

• **Bellevue Purple Cobras:** “Pan
Roasted Stuffed Pork Belly with
Apple Shallot Sauce”

• Beef Council

• “Best of Beef” Award

\$100 gift cards

• **Milford:** Two Men and the Spice:
“Grilled Tenderloin with Red
Pepper and Onion Marmalade”

• Best Team Spirit

• Sponsored by MUD

\$500 scholarships to the school

• **Milford:** Two Men and the Spice

• Most Professional Behavior

• Sponsored by the Ron Sailors
Scholarship Fund

\$500 scholarships to the school

• **Gross Catholic:** Tomato Ole

• **Bellevue University:** 3 Credit
Hours

• **Gross Catholic:** Tomato Ole

• Best Starter Plate

• Sponsored by Sgt Pepper

\$250 scholarship to the school

• **Bellevue East:** Nouvelle Chefs
“Pan Roasted Tomato Soup”

• Best Entrée Plate

• Sponsored by Sgt Pepper

\$250 scholarship to the school

• Plattsmouth: Blue Devils

“Prosciutto Wrapped Pork
Tenderloin with Granny Smith
Apple Gastrique”

• Best Dessert Plate

• Sponsored by Sarcam/Passport
Restaurant

\$250 scholarship to the school

• **Omaha Career Center:** Team
Galusha “Moro Orange Mousse”

• 2nd place team for Knowledge Bowl

• MCC awards a scholarship for 9 credit
hours – per student

• **Milford:** Two Men and the Spice

• 1st place team for Knowledge Bowl

• MCC awards a scholarship for 15 credit
hours – per student

• **Benson:** Rustic Charm

• 2nd place team for Management Case Study

• MCC awards a scholarship for 9 credit
hours – per student

• **Benson:** Rustic Charm

• 1st place teams for Management Case Study

• MCC awards a scholarship for 15 credit
hours – per student

• **Omaha Career Center:** 3 Guys
and a Girl

2nd Place Culinary Competition

• MCC awards a scholarship for 9 credit
hours – per student

• **Papillion La Vista,** PL Infusion

1st Place Culinary Competition

• MCC awards a scholarship for 9 credit
hours – per student

• **Omaha Career Center,** La
Moderne

Bronze Medals

• **Omaha South** – The Packers Chefs (3)

• **Omaha Bryan** –
Bryan Baking Bears (4)

• **Millard South** – Patriots (4)

• **Benson** - Rustic Charm (4)

• **Gross Catholic** - Tomato Ole (5)

• **Omaha North** - Viking Ship (4)

• **Ralston** – The Gourmands (3)

Silver Medals

• **Bellevue East** - Purple Cobra's (4)

• **Omaha Burke** – Gourmet Girls (4)

• **Milford** – The Hot Tamales (3)

• **Omaha North** – The Real Deal (4)

• **Papillion La Vista South** –
Team Mc Lovin' (4)

• **Plattsmouth** – Blue Devils (4)

• **Benson** – Southern Chefs (4)

• **Bellevue East** – Nouvelle Chefs (4)

• **Omaha Career Center** -
OCC Legends (4)

• **Fremont** – Team Fremont (4)

• **Papillion La Vista** – PL Infusion (4)

• **Milford** – Two Men and the Spice (3)

• **Omaha Career Center** –
Team Galusha (4)

• **Bellevue East** – En Fuego (4)

• **Papillion La Vista South** –
Savage Chefs (4)

• **Omaha Northwest** – Iron Huskies (4)

Gold Medal

• **Omaha Career Center** –
La Moderne (3)



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NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEFS AND CULINARIANS
OF THE HEARTLAND CHAPTER OF THE
AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION

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Omaha Standard : Bronco's Fries

By Brian O'Malley

My wife sometimes calls me a food whore. She means it in the nicest possible way. I hope. I hope she means that I am a fast friend of something that is agreeable to me upon first blush, no matter what it may do to me down the road. I hope she means that food holds some special power to make me do things that are shady, ill reputable and often down right naughty. Guilty, guilty, aaaand guilty. Bronco's Fries fit

both definitions. They were quite likely the first French fries I ever consumed. I have a very specific memory of myself in sixth grade. Dan Lawler and I were walking home from school and we detoured to Broncos, split a chocolate milkshake and devoured a family French fries. I used to recall this memory because of Dan and I's conversation that day: he was considering asking the supermodel Cindy Crawford to his slumber party and I was looking her up in the Omaha phonebook. We were cool, not smart. Anyway, our coolness has worn. We got smarter, Dan especially. But there is still an indelible connection to that day that lubricates my palate each time I pop one of their pommes frites-quality. Those are my halcyon days. And Broncos was there with me. Since then, I have taken many a short cut in my life. I have been busted for most of them. Broncos too has taken some ill-advised shortcuts that has cost them many stores in their once-powerful empire. Yet, two remain.



And with pride, they still cut fries fresh every day from actual potatoes. I say "actual potatoes" not so much because other establishment's fries don't come from potatoes, but because their employees never know it. I have had a student in class that worked the fryer at a fast food restaurant for two years, and his eyes almost popped out when I told him that French fries were made from potatoes. I assume he thought they were made from French.

Bronco's has held tough. There are some pretty high quality frozen fries available to restaurants these days, and I am sure that some of them are enticing to Broncos management: less labor, more consistency, etc. None of them can touch the product they have. Real fries. Some long, some short. Some with skin on them, some without. Some soft and velvety, some crisp and fluffy. Some really crisp-the ones that swim over the top of the basket then miss the extraction only to swim back in to the next bath for extraction. Then, they salt them. Well. IMMEDIATELY after they come out of the grease. Then they overfill the tiny little bags that they must have ordered several million of in 1959 when they opened. Then they do the unthinkable, they throw away the ones that sit there too long!!! I am proud to call myself a fan of Bronco's fries. They take no short cuts. They are an Omaha Standard and worthy of their own slogan "where quality rides".



Upcoming Tri Omega and ACF Events

May

19th Local Food Symposium at Mahoney State Park

22nd ICA Groundbreaking Ceremony

25th – 6/2 Great Plains Theatre Conference

June

6th- 8th Iron Chef Metro at Taste of Omaha

10th ACF Membership Meeting

23rd-27th SkillsUSA Nationals-Kansas City

28th Cooking from the Market at Village Point Farmer's Market

29th – 7/6 Olympic Swim Trials at Qwest Center Omaha

July

8th ACF Membership Meeting
12-17 ACF National Convention

18th-21st OOO Annual Trip (Las Vegas)

26th Cooking from the Market at Village Point Farmers Market

August

18-22 Competition Training Camp

30th Cooking from the Market at Village Point Farmers Market

September

Iron Chef BBQ at the Harvest Moon Festival

October

5th tentative student hot food competition in Schaumburg, IL

5th Comfort Food Classic at Happy Hollow

19th Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame

ACF Western Regional Report

By Michael Roddey CCC CCE CDM FMP

I attended the western regional in Salt Lake City on April 18-22. This trip allowed me to realize that the various regional conferences all have a different feel about them. Our central regional conference hosted a BBQ exhibition. The western regional hosted the first U.S Military Freedom Chefs Challenge.

The challenge pitted two man teams from the five services on a head to head "Pentagon" style hot food competition. The event happened in conjunction with the food show in the afternoon with the purveyors around the perimeter and the competition on center floor. The display of craftsmanship and competitive nature by the military teams should make any of us



happy to employ a service person who is ending their enlistment. These chefs are put through training much like that of any rigorous culinary program. The military is also high on certifications for their personnel, especially the ones who are chefs for higher ranking officers. The chefs were on the clock for one hour, wherein they finished their items and plated for service. There were no limits to the number of courses; however they

needed to present four plates of each course. All services did a respectful job and came together in camaraderie and a positive display of professionalism. As we know there can only be one winner, and the winner was the U.S. Army Team.

Get Involved

By Garrett Hendrickson Secretary Tri-Omega

"Really!?, You're kidding?" was my response to being nominated for the position of Secretary Tri-Omega. Why would I do this in addition to all the full-time classes and part-time work that I'm already involved in? "Ok.....Sure.... Let's do it", thus began my journey in a student centered organization at Metro Community College's Institute for the Culinary Arts. Being an officer in a "club" was all new to me and it has had many added benefits in my educational career. These benefits transcend any fraternal social organization whether its educational focus is the culinary arts or welding. [Disclaimer: No welding students were interviewed for this article] The first benefit I noticed in my new officer position was getting to know my fellow classmates better through teamwork. Every officer in the group works hard which makes the organization flow smoothly. We also have a great mentor in Chef Brian O'Malley. His presence has allowed us to focus on the events we want to take on as fundraising for Tri-Omega or to organize volunteers for food events. Currently

we are working on Earth Day and Taste of the Nation events occurring this April. Even if you are not an officer in Tri-Omega, membership can allow you to form lasting relationships with like minded individuals. If you like watching the food competitions on television, there are opportunities through club involvement to display and refine your skills in culinary competitions. Another added benefit to belonging is exposure to professional culinary organizations like the American Culinary Federation. Tri-Omega operates within parliamentary procedures that have been used to manage business and organizations for centuries which is valuable experience when entering the job market. Everyone in culinary is welcome to be a part of Tri-Omega. Chef apprentices, retail bakers, pastry chefs, research culinologists, and hospitality management majors can all join in and have FUN!

Back to my original question; why would I do this on top of all my homework and work? The answer is to ENRICH my experience at the Institute for Culinary Arts, that's why! So join if you can.

Member Biography : Chef Fortino Gallardo

By Krista O'Malley



Born in Mexico City, Chef Fortino Gallardo found his way to New York City where his culinary world took shape. At 14, his first culinary job was in the dish pit at a 250-seat restaurant called the Century Café which was located in the Theatre District at 43rd and Times Square. It was here where "Tino", as he was referred, found his passion and inspiration for cooking. By age 21, "Tino" was the Head Chef. He worked under Corporate Chef Steve Meyers who even today remains a mentor and inspiration to Chef Fortino. The Century Café was a true New York Hot Spot with the likes of famous clientele; David Letterman and many Broadway stars. As a result of Chef Fortino's hard work, the Century Café was given 2 out of 3 stars in the New York City Zagat. Then after 15 years and a Midwestern romance, Chef Fortino packed his knives and moved to the big "O". Chef Fortino has been in Omaha ever since. He started at V.Mertz and then was hired by the Field Club of Omaha, where he currently reigns as Executive Chef. The Field Club poses some unique challenges for a chef with the many outlets and member based menus. Chef Fortino says, "The members have their favorites but are still willing to try new stuff." In the heat of the summer, Chef Fortino and his staff are serving poolside, golf side and inside the clubhouse as well. The Field Club menu, he describes as American Continental. Some of his favorites are the Mustard Seed Encrusted Salmon with Shallot Marmalade and Grilled Lamb Chops with Cilantro Mint Vinaigrette. He then comments, "They are all my favorites which is why they are on the menu." The members at the Field Club take much pride in Chef Fortino and his culinary talents. Some of the members' favorites are the Artichoke Dip and the Monte Cristo Sandwich, staples to the Field Club menu. When asked where he sees himself in 5-10 years, he quickly responds, "I hope to still be at the Field Club". Chef Fortino calls the Field Club of Omaha home and also enjoys being a part of the ACF so that he can collaborate with other chefs in the area. "Being in Art and Soup and Taste of Nation are ways for me to show the public some of my food." Chef Fortino lives in Omaha with his wife, Mary, and two sons, Joey and Tony.

Summer Awards

Team Nebraska

Bronze Medal-Regional Competition
Student Culinary Competition
February 8th, 2008

Audrey Lassek
Alex Swanda
Julie Loke
Amy Ewing
Sherry McLochlin

Student Culinarian of the Year

Recognizes a current graduate for outstanding performance throughout their tenure at Institute for the Culinary Arts. All faculty, students and staff participate in the nomination process. Finalists compete in a culinary demonstration.

Finalists: AJ Swanda, Telia Owens, Nino Incontro, Garrett Hendrickson

Recipient: AJ Swanda

National Restaurant Association Salute to Excellence

Faculty from the Institute for the Culinary Arts select two representatives from amongst the entire student population to attend the Annual Restaurant Show in Chicago. Based on Academic and Extracurricular Performance.

Recipients: Sherry McLochlin and James Ostrander

Skills USA

Participants compete at state level to determine who will represent Nebraska at the National Championship in Kansas City this June. The recipients owe a significant debt of gratitude to their coaches, Chef Janet Mar and Chef Michael Roddey, for marshalling them through the rigorous training and competition process.

Recipients:

Mario Ochoa
Culinary Arts — gold state, champion

Brian Sullivan
Culinary Arts — silver

Jonathon Ahrens

Culinary Arts — bronze

Lauren Melhus

Commercial Baking — gold, state champion

Erin Polinko

Commercial Baking — silver

Jeremiah Omoto

Commercial Baking — bronze

Dina Miller

Table Service — gold, state champion

Margaret Mary Boever

Table Service — silver medal

Garrett Hendrickson

Table Service — bronze medal

Margaret Wilch

Customer Service — gold, state champion

2007 Heartland Chapter President's Medallions

Chef Mark Hoch

Entrepreneurship

Erika Mitchell

Rising Star Student – Baking and Pastry

Mario Ochoa

Rising Star Student – Culinary Arts

Whole Foods Market

Local Food Champions

Lori Tatreau, local liaison

Bahia Mar, concierge

Maria Watts, marketing

Food and Spirits Magazine

Culinary Publishing

Erik Totten, Publisher

ΩΩΩ President's Medallions

Awarded for outstanding support of the junior chapter, continual leadership, and dedicated service

Kevin Newlin CEC

Lance Ritzman

Tania Betts

Tips From the Stylist

By Telia Owens

Food Stylist: (noun) “One who arranges food to be professionally photographed or recorded, as for a magazine or production company”.

My part time job is being a food stylist and food stylist support. This career, which no one really thinks about as being a job, is necessary for everything that you see visually as food. This includes advertising, photographs, cooking demos, shows, and food displays. This column is for everyone wanting to better the visual appeal of everything they prepare. As a chef, and in visual terms alone, that is the first obstacle to overcome in order for the world to embrace the flavors you so thoughtfully crafted. If you are seeking a professional in food styling this column is most definitely for you as well.



This month we will go over the basics; plating. In order to understand everything else, you should be well practiced in balance, garnishing, and placement of food on the plate, pedestal or even in ramekins and portion cups for display. Finesse is everything.

Both of these pictures have the same components; the plating techniques are obviously different. Other differences between the pictures are all arranging and photographing differences that affect the over all appeal as well. Everything down to lighting must be considered for a successful food shot.

Exposing Yourself to Wine Country

By Brian Young

[Stage] n. French lit. “training course”. To work briefly, for free, in another chef’s kitchen to either learn and be exposed to new techniques and cuisines or to show their own skill level in order to be considered for employment.]

Every once in a while that perfect opportunity comes along. After you have sought out the opening, and submitted your resume—that you’ve read over 10 times and had a coworker read once or twice—then you wait in anticipation to hear back from the restaurant. Finally after two days, you get an email. They want you to come in and do a stage. A trial. A chance to go in for a day or two and prove the skills you’ve well noted in your resume and all for free. That’s right, no cost to the possible future employer, you just have to pay for everything else.

Recently I got the chance to go out to the Napa Valley and do that exact thing, stages at Thomas Keller’s Bouchon Bistro and at the acclaimed Auberge du Soleil, two Michelin star rated restaurants.

After the stress of finding airfare at a reasonable price, transportation and a place to stay for a few nights, I hopped on a

plane and got out there, this wasn’t my first time doing a stage so I had a clue what was coming.

Bouchon is currently undergoing a remodel of their kitchen, so as I walked in, the entire kitchen was filled with dust, all the cooks were wearing dust masks, jack hammers were shaking the floor and it felt like a war zone. The first person I met was the receiving guy, and as I soon found out, he was also the former chef de cuisine. Chef Craine put me straight to work, in another room not so loud and away from the dust, picking out the perfect top leaves of chervil, cutting spring onion greens into the finest little threads, picking 2 quarts of perfectly sized and colored fines herbs, which get tossed into all salads, and with their current menu that’s a lot of salads.

As service started and the cooks started to wind down their mise en place—which never seems to stop out there—I got the job to stand in the corner and watch the food going out. I watched every plate go out.

After lunch service, 230 covers in an all electric kitchen (since there is no gas while under construction) that is about 10 feet by 10 feet, including a dish pit, it was time to prep it all up again. This was my chance. My chance to say “Yes chef” to anyone and everybody who asked something of me. My chance to make that good first impression. My chance to work as fast as possible showing hustle, lots of hustle. I took my chance.

By the end of the 13 hour day I had got the chance to work on two different stations, help prep the rest of the stations, shucked oysters at their infamous oyster bar, and watched half of dinner service. At about 11 pm that night Chef Phil told me to “have a good night” and “see you at o-six hundred.” The next day it started all over again. Needless to say, I was exhausted by the end of the second day. However, the chef poked his head around the line and asked me to join him in the soon-to-be-completed kitchen for a chat. After the resume review, the long flights, the twenty-one hours of work, and countless lessons learned about the Bouchon Way, now it was for an interview. It was a simple twenty minute chat. Chef asked about my experiences, what I was doing currently, and where I wanted to be in the future. And then, to my amazement, he offered me a job. I thought about for about four seconds before I gratefully accepted.

The next morning, I had another stage. I walked in and did the exact same thing I did at Bouchon, working faster, harder, and cleaner, then I ever have before. Again the same result: another job offer. What I’m trying to say is that stages are worth every penny. Even if neither experience resulted in a job offer, it was four of the most intensive, hands-on days of culinary education that I could have dreamed. If you can muster the freedom and a plane ticket I highly recommend it.

Le DrUNken FrOg

THE WINE
THAT
ALMOST WAS

BY CHRISTIN GOETZ

I've had many brilliant ideas in my day. Like how I always think it's a good idea to ease my tension from the week with a few too many drinks on Friday night. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem so brilliant when I wake up the next morning.

Sometimes fine ideas don't have the ending we planned.

Cedric Fichetpain, owner of Le Voltaire, recently had one of these inspirations. He decided one night to start his own label of wine. He would sell the marvelous blend he had just sampled and it would be an instant success. People all over Omaha would fall in love with wine, sipping more than just Chardonnay and Merlot (finally!). And then he would start a family of wine – a blend first, a Bordeaux next, maybe throw in a rich Burgundy one day. It was a brilliant idea; a way to bring the complex taste of Southern French wine to Omaha and raise the bar on our palates a bit. Well, it didn't quite go as he planned.

As I sit across from Cedric in the golden light of Le Voltaire's party room he says, "Patience is a virtue," with a sardonic smile on his face, "It's better to have a good product in the end. It's better

to redo a lot of things to get a product out. When a product is out it's going to take a lot more money to fix it if it's wrong."

Cedric is making his second attempt at importing and selling a wine from France, and he's living another example of an excellent idea that's not turning out

as planned. His first try at a wine label was called Le Drunken Frog. After many, many hours of work to get the label design just right, the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) turned down the name.

But instead of giving up, Cedric decided he didn't mind starting afresh with the process, "The whole process was actually the fun thing about it -- to come up with the choice, the design of the label, to go through an importer and try to negotiate pricing with the importer and distributor. To get one wine here goes a long, long way."

The BATF examines the label of every bottle of alcohol before it goes into the market. They ensure that consumers are afforded adequate information regarding the identity and quality of the product to prevent consumer deception.

"The [Le Drunken Frog] label was very cool. It's like the frog was too drunk so he fell off the label. It was very well done," but it must have been labeled consumer deception by the BATF because, "They said that 'Drunken Frog' was not acceptable. It is pushing people to drink," said Cedric.

It's funny that a name like Drunken Frog

is not acceptable when wines called Fat Bastard, Dirty Laundry and Naked Lady may presently be aging in your cellars. Well, if it's any consolation to Cedric, the Naked Lady was rejected by the BATF in 1975, but then accepted when re-submitted in 1997.

But, alas, Cedric decided to abandon Le Drunken Frog all together (for now) and start with a new wine from France, a Cabernet/Merlot Bordeaux that is more prestigious and of a higher quality than the Le Drunken Frog blend.

Cedric always considered starting a wine label, but never knew how until he tasted a French wine he liked so much that he inquired how to sell it, "It was an accident, really, that [the importer] had a product that I liked right there and was in my price range...I liked the wine I was tasting and he told me 'Well, that's a wine we can do.'"

Conveniently - or so he thought - he could purchase the wine from an importer and sell it under his own label. This process is not unlike what water distributors go through. Companies like Coke (Dasani), Evian, Fiji and Pepsi (Aquafina) purchase water and place their label on the bottle.

"They said that 'Drunken Frog' was not acceptable. It is pushing people to drink," Cedric made certain that he was not the lone person who liked Le Drunken Frog. He gathered his fellow wine lovers to

test the blend knowing that if his wine didn't generate decent word-of-mouth because of taste, it wouldn't sell.

"He left me a few different bottles of different wines and I had my personal focus groups...do a blind taste testing to see which was the most appealing," said Cedric.

He and his designers from Bozell also considered which varietals sell in the Omaha market. I regard myself as a novice wine sampler, which is what the majority of wine samplers are in Omaha. Someone from New York or San Francisco would not likely prefer all of the same wines that Midwesterners enjoy.

For Cedric's second endeavor, he sent his father to a wine convention in Paris. He chose Bordeaux from importer Frank Kakou of European Wine Imports out of Cleveland, Ohio. Cedric's father has a mature palate and knows much about the market here although he lives in Paris, and he is friends with Frank Kakou.

"Frank is a close friend and has a warehouse in Paris," said Cedric, who likes the convenience of having a warehouse in the city where his father lives so that his father can visit the warehouse any time there is an issue.

The Bordeaux is a Cabernet Merlot blend that Cedric is more excited about than his Le Drunken Frog blend, "The Bordeaux is a more prestigious region. The quality is better and worth more." It is for this reason that Cedric will be able to sell this wine at a \$15 price point rather than a \$12 price point.

I was always under the impression that the price of wine reflected the quality, but speaking with Cedric made it clear that that's not quite the situation.

"The wine may cost €1 in Europe, but when it arrives at my place it may be €7," he said.

The cost of Cedric's wine began with the cost of the bottle in France, including the conversion from the euro to the dollar. He has to pay an importer for his work, including transport of the bottles overseas, and taxes in France, Ohio and Nebraska. There are also the fees to the label designers. After that he pays distributor fees. Overall, the price increase from the first cost of the bottle is about 425%. So, the end price is really about how much Cedric wants to make and how expensive the conversion is along with the price of the importer, designer and distributor.

Cedric thinks of this process as an investment, "I'm investing in wine instead of the stock market. If I can't sell it I will be able to drink it. It will never be a loss."

And like all investors, Cedric is aware that it takes more than one investment to be successful, and you must be patient with your investment to make it grow, "You know, when you think finally you've got your product. It's like 'Ah!' it takes you two more days because you need a bold thing on it. But, you know, once again it's patience. And I'm learning about it now."

Cedric is working with distributors around the city to get his wine into local restaurants as a special. Although it's not as soon as he anticipated, Cedric's plan is to also sell the wine on overstockwineonline.com, wineinstock.com, Hy-Vee stores in La Vista and at 156th & Maple as well as Upstream Brewing Company. Look for his new wine on shelves soon.

5 Tips for Starting Your OWN Label

Do your research – research importers, distributors, the local wine market and federal label requirements.

Have a plan – know how your wine will be transported from its origin, how the labels will be affixed and how the final bottles will be distributed.

Be prepared for the investment – plan for a 425% increase in the price of the bottle and have a contingency fund ready for any unexpected expenses.

Grow your network – in order to get your wine into the market you need to have relationships with not only distributors, but also other restaurateurs and people in the industry.

Evaluate – evaluate your progress at every step along the way. Take note of what works and what doesn't to make the next experience go more smoothly.

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Pinot Noir

by John
Fischer

Pinot Noir is the celebrated grape varietal that produces the spectacular red Burgundy wines from the Côte D'Or region of France. At their best, Burgundy wines are peerless. They have great breeding, incredible finesse, and their soft, elegant and sophisticated nature makes them eminently drinkable, yet their stunning array of incredible complex and exotic savors makes one pause in order to fully take in the full extent of their hedonism. However, don't sell short the wonderful Pinot Noir wines from Oregon and California. Their quality has increased by leaps and bounds over the recent past.

Although Pinot Noir is grown in vineyards in many localities, most will agree that in good years, the best examples of Pinot Noir

come from the great Burgundy districts in France. The problem with Burgundies is that in average years, they are often outclassed by the rapidly improving Pinots from Oregon and California - excellent wines with a far more consistent quality base. Many of these wines can be virtually indistinguishable from high quality Burgundies. Pinot Noir wines from most other areas around the world are struggling and quality is often disappointing.

This medium to full bodied wine has an exoticism, *recherché*, and complexity that is unique to the varietal. At maturity, acidity is tempered and tannins are soft and plush. Look for flavors of beet root (especially in Burgundy) black cherry, raspberry, strawberries, cranberries, black currant, and mulberry that are seasoned with generous flavors of smoke, tobacco, leather, sandalwood, exotic spices and herbs. Even though there are no residual sugars, the alcohol and ripe fruity flavors in the mature wine give it a plush, soft, and slightly sweet finish.

Pinot Noir is a great match for a wide variety of dishes. They can complement

wild game and beef steak, but still have the capacity to tidily blend with pork, poultry and meaty fish such as tuna, salmon or shark. Their food-friendly flavors blend with the flavors of any number of dishes. Of all red wines, Pinot Noir is probably one of the most versatile in wine food pairings. Isn't it peculiar that they so often garner such a mediocre billing on the menus of most restaurants?



Dr. John Fischer is a member and two-time president of the Omaha Branch of the International Wine & Food Society, past director of the Nebraska chapter of LADV, and the founding member of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine & Food Society. He teaches a course on matching wine with food at the Institute for the Culinary Arts in Omaha and is the author of the books, "The Evaluation of Wine - A Comprehensive Guide to the Art of Wine Tasting" and "Wine and Food - 101."

Salmon with Roasted Beets

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees
2. Brush large baking dish with 1 T olive oil
3. Mix together dill and orange peel to make gremolata and set aside
4. Wash beets, cook until tender, peel away skin, cut into 1/2 inch slices
5. Toss together beets, 1 T gremolata, shallots, 1 T olive oil. 1 t sugar, salt and pepper
6. Season each breast with salt and pepper. Be careful with the salt as the cheese and olives are already salty.
7. Season salmon with salt and pepper and top with a squeeze of lemon juice
8. Spread beet slices in single layer on one half of the baking dish and place the salmon in single layers on the other half
9. Roast fish and beets until fish is cooked through (about 7-8 minutes)

To plate: Place fish on plate and surround with half slices of beets. Top fish with remaining gremolata and garnish with sprig of dill. Serve with wild rice.

1 T. olive oil
1/4 cup fresh chopped dill
1 T. finely grated orange peel
3 medium sized beets, trimmed and scrubbed
1/2 cup thinly sliced shallots
4 salmon filets
Salt and pepper to taste
Juice of 1/2 lemon

What makes the match?

When pairing a wine with food, we try to reflect or complement the characteristics in the wine to that of the food: features such as sweetness, tartness, flavors, weight (body), and texture.

In this dish, both wine and food hover around medium body. The flavor and mild sweetness of beets reflect to similar elements in the wine. Even if the particular wine that you choose does not have beet flavors, it still hits an environment of flavors in the wine complimentary to beets.

The dill and orange flavors of the gremolata give the dish an exotic flare that pairs agreeably with similar vibrations in the wine and also reflects to the delicate herbal flavor of dill in the dish. Tannins, a flavor suppressant in wine, are restrained in Pinot Noir, which allow the full flavor complement of the dish to be experienced by the senses.

If the pleasure resulting from the wine is equal to one unite, and the pleasure derived from food is also equal to one unite. The union of wine with food should have a pleasure score of three or four or more. The union of wine and food should always be greater than the sum of its parts. I think you will find that the above pairing will satisfy this equation.

HOW ITALIANS DRINK WINE

by John Finocchiaro

As I sat next to my father at the dinner table and stared at his glass of wine, I mustered up the courage to finally pop the question:

"Dad, can I have a sip?"

"Sure, but not too much."

The liquid barely touched my lips. Still, the taste was unique and not all that unpleasant.

"Dad, why doesn't anybody else's parents drink wine at dinner?"

"I guess you would have to ask them. But I think most people in this country are a little intimidated with wine. They don't feel that they know enough about it, so they just drink something else," my father responded. I'm not sure I understood his answer. See, the word "intimidated" is a pretty large gulp to swallow for a twelve year old. But in my quest to beat this question to death, I persisted.

"Dad, then why do we drink wine?"

"Well, your nonno and nonna (grandparents) came from Italy where wine is very common. Everyone in Italy is comfortable with wine. They drink it with their meals. But you have to be careful, it is not good to drink too much of it."

Good answer. Even I was starting to get more comfortable with this "wine" thing. So, I persisted.

"Dad?"

"What?"

"Can I have another sip?"

"No. Eat your pasta."

Now decades later, I still see the wisdom in my father's simple answer. And today wine is more popular than ever in the U.S. While our comfort level has grown considerably, there are still some distinctions in the consumption habits of Americans versus Italians - and other countries of Western Europe for that matter. Having recently returned from a trip to Italy, here are some observations.



"EVERYONE IN ITALY IS COMFORTABLE WITH WINE. THEY DRINK IT WITH THEIR MEALS. BUT YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL..."

1. Italians almost always drink wine with food. Whether it is the smallest trattoria or most upscale of restaurants, wine comes with basic cheeses, fresh breads, prosciutto and salami, olives and other veggies. Why? Perhaps food tastes better with wine. The natural acidity of wine begs for food. Perhaps in Italy it is assumed that wine's purpose was, is, and always will be to accompany and enhance foods. And likewise, food enhances the flavor of wine.

2. Wine is a very unpretentious beverage. On my recent trip, and in previous ones, there was a noticeable lack of gargling, spitting, closed-eye sniffing, genuflection, hyperventilation, levitation, or exaggerated inhalation to the almighty elixir. The full range of glassware was used, from the finest Riedel or hand-blown Italian stemware to the smallest juice glass. They all worked. And what was always present with wine was a lot of stimulated conversation and smiles, and always respect and appreciation for good vino.

3. They drink their own. Wine lists in Italy typically do not include American, French, Spanish, or any other foreign selections. Why not? With more indigenous grape types than any other country to choose

from in their own backyard, Italians feel no need to drink anyone else's wine. While in Rome and throughout the region of Tuscany wine lists were covered with Chianti Classico, Brunello, Barbera, Nero d'Avola, Aglianico, Primitivo, Cannonau, Vernaccia, Vermentino, and dozens of other native, Italian-only wines. With the exception of some tremendous Supertuscans and an occasional Merlot, ever popular American favorites such as Cabernet and Chardonnay were about as easy to find as Bin Laden.

4. Wine is an everyday, positive, stimulating, friendly beverage. The intangible cultural, soulful, artistic influence of wine is evident and undeniable throughout Italy. It would be a stretch to say that wine had anything to do with the actual physical construction of the masterpieces of Italian frescos, sculptures, churches, and monuments. But it would be unfathomable to think that the imagination of the Italians was not stimulated to create and design these unparalleled works of art in the first place. Just as food sustains the body, wine can revive and stimulate the mind.

Americans have come a long ways in our understanding and appreciation of wine. Our wines are better than ever and consumption is on the rise. Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than in the 20-somethings out there, now preferring wine as their beverage of choice more so than ever before. And they are drinking pretty good stuff too, not the sugar-sweet "pop" wines of a generation ago. Sure, there's no end in sight to the goofy-labeled "critter wines" of the modern era. But at the same time, interest and curiosity in previously unknown and obscure wines from all areas of the world are at an all-time high. We are finally getting comfortable with wine. And while countries such as Italy had a bit of a head start with this whole wine thing, we are getting there. Finally. Salute'!



John Finocchiaro is co-owner of Johnson Brothers Finocchiaro, LLC, a Nebraska wholesale wine, spirits, and beer distributor. Formerly the owner of Finocchiaro Wine Co.,

Inc., John has been in the wine distribution business for the past 25 years and the Finocchiaro family's association with the Nebraska wine industry has been continuous for the past 73 years, since 1935. John was a Certified Public Accountant before entering the family business and is a Certified Specialist of Wine.

Libation Conversation

Crafting the Perfect Cocktail

By Dan Crowell
Photo by Rodolfo Clix

Let me just start by saying that I think wine is terrific, and for that matter so is beer.

There are a nearly infinite number of wines and beers available to those inclined to pursue them but, in the end, these products are what they are. Wine presents itself to the consumer as a complete thought. All the aesthetic decisions of significance have been made by the winemaker and by nature - choice of grape varieties, location of the vineyards, soil composition, climate conditions, rainfall, oak or stainless, etc. Beer presents itself in much the same way, as a complete expression of the brewmaster's vision. And that's great!

As much as I enjoy a great beer or a sublime glass of wine though, I prefer cocktails. I find the whole cocktail category to be endlessly fascinating, mostly because with a cocktail I get to determine what goes into it and therefore what it tastes like. I'm also deeply intrigued by what is a mind-scramblingly large number of cocktail ingredient options.

To begin with, decisions must be made regarding the base spirit, or spirits, to be used. What's it going to be - vodka, flavored vodka, gin, rum, tequila, brandy, whiskey? Maybe something more exotic, like Cachaça, Soju or Pisco? Once that decision gets made, things begin to get really interesting, which begs the question; what does it take to produce a great cocktail, anyway?

Let's look at that first step again - The Base Spirit. Spirits and cocktails share the same basic relationship as silk purses and sow's ears. It's very close to impossible to create a truly great cocktail from a sub-par base spirit, and the more exposed the base (in a classic gin martini, for example), the more critical the quality. Does this mean that you must spend a fortune on your spirits in order to achieve your lofty cocktail aspirations? Not necessarily. Although obscenely priced options certainly exist, and most are well worth the price, there are some terrific spirits out there that can be had for a downright reasonable sum.

Experiment with different spirits and different brands within a single spirits category. Listen to your palate. Try several brands side by side, ideally in a blind tasting format (i.e. have someone else pour them and hide the identities of the bottles from you - a local bar, a slow night and a patient bartender would work well for this). Whatever you do, spring for the brand name stuff. With a few exceptions, it is worth the extra money, and there is some sinister stuff lurking in the bargain versions that will seal the fate of your cocktail before you've even begun. Life really is too short for that sort of thing.

Okay, so you've chosen your base. Now what are you going to do with it? Luckily this isn't a decision you have to make alone. There is a nearly inexhaustible supply of cocktail books available to lend direction to your cocktailian pursuits. Some are better than others. Dale DeGroff, one of the most respected figures in the world of cocktails, puts it this way - "With real estate, it's location, location, location. With cocktails, it's recipe, recipe, recipe."

The quality of the cocktail recipe, along with the cocktail maker's accurate execution of it, is the most important single factor in the creation of a great cocktail. So, how do you know? Well, for starters, a great cocktail almost never has a lewd or overly kitschy name. Beyond that, do your homework. Even cursory research into this aspect of cocktail preparation can yield some fascinating results, many of which have their roots in the very beginnings of the cocktail itself.



Jerry Thomas, one of the most influential figures in the history of cocktails, wrote the first-ever cocktail book, *Jerry Thomas' Bartender's Guide or How to Mix Drinks*, in 1862. Many of the recipes in this book spawned the great classic cocktails we know today, along with the ones we don't know, but should. (FYI - Speaking of Jerry Thomas, the recently published book, *Imbibe*, by cocktail guru David Wondrich, dissects Thomas's masterpiece in fascinating detail.)

So now you have your delicious bottle of hooch and your spiffy cocktail book. At this point you may notice lots of references in the book to things like simple syrup (or possibly more exotic syrups like orgeat or falernum), orange bitters or other specialty bitters, fresh juices, fresh herbs & garnishes.

You'll most likely run into some funky liqueurs & cordials like crème de noyaux, Cherry Heering, elderflower liqueur or maraschino liqueur (a delicious liquid that is definitely not to be confused with grenadine or the neon goo that maraschino cherries float in). Some of these classic cocktail ingredients are harder to find than others, so dig around.

Most can be obtained online if they are unavailable locally, but give your local retailer a chance. Many are willing to at least consider bringing in a new product if that product is requested by a customer, and

several of them have a very good selection of these kinds of 'left of center' products in stock already. When it comes to cocktail ingredients, the curious soul is richly rewarded.

You won't find many, if any, references to mixes (sour mix, etc) in a classic cocktail book, and that's a good thing. With one or two notable and very respectable exceptions, mixes tend to be made from artificial flavorings, colorings and lots of high fructose corn syrup. They are formulated for ease of use and they are certainly easy to use. But just as great soup doesn't come from a pouch, great cocktails don't come from mixes. Fresh ingredients, freshly squeezed juices, quality sodas & tonics and fresh garnishes are critical to the creation of a truly great cocktail.

There are a few tools of the trade that, with a little practice, can enhance the quality of your cocktail output as well. If possible, get a hold of a muddler, a hand citrus juicer, a Boston shaker, a Hawthorne strainer (for shaken drinks), a Julep strainer (for stirred drinks), a long bar spoon, a twist knife and a grater (for grating fresh nutmeg or citrus peels). We could talk about glassware, ice, and a hundred other cocktail-related topics while we're at it, but I'll save those for future columns. So until next time, start mixing. Practice, after all, does make perfect. Cheers!

SIDENOTE

This recurring column is dedicated to exploring the endless, fascinating possibilities that exist in spirits and in the pursuit of making great cocktails. On a related note, we'd like to take this opportunity to announce the formation of the Libation Association (www.libationassociation.blogspot.com), a place where bartenders, spirits nerds (in whose number I proudly count myself) and cocktail enthusiasts can come together, share ideas, get answers, and generally geek out about booze. Visit soon and often.



Dan Crowell, cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed 'spirits nerd', hails from Omaha where he talks incessantly (even occasionally to other people) about

the virtues of what he calls 'investigative imbibement'. An eternally fascinated student of the distillers' art, he encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.



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original states and many of them produced whiskey, but by the 1790's, problems began to develop that would have a far-reaching impact. George Washington, who was also a whiskey producer at this time, soon found himself in the midst of a dilemma. His fledgling national government had assumed the states' Revolutionary War debt and he needed a way to finance the payment of this debt. A tax was therefore levied on all whiskey production. This greatly upset the Scots-Irish, many of whom were poor rural settlers whose only real way to produce income from the predominantly rye grain they produced was to convert it into whiskey. To make matters worse, whiskey producers were not all taxed equally and large producers were shown significant favor over smaller ones. In a young country where unfair taxation was already a sore subject, protests, violence and civil unrest followed. The 'Whiskey Rebellion' culminated in armed conflict in western Pennsylvania between Scots-Irish settlers and the Continental Army.

To avoid further conflict and alleviate what was a growing political problem, Washington offered the disgruntled settlers a deal. Through his friend Thomas Jefferson, then the Governor of Virginia, settlers were offered 60 acres of land in Kentucky (a western county of Virginia until 1792) if they would build a home there and grow corn. For a pioneer family, consuming or transporting to market 60 acres of corn every year wasn't really feasible. However, turning it into whiskey was. As luck would have it, Kentucky's limestone underpinnings resembled the geology of Scotland and as such produced the perfect spring water sources from which to produce corn whiskey. This clear distillate would eventually give rise to Bourbon.

At the time, Kentucky was divided into a few very large counties, one of which was named Bourbon in recognition of the assistance the French royal family had given America in the War of Independence (Odd Historical Irony; The Bourbons were eventually beheaded by French Revolutionaries who were inspired at least in part by the American Revolution). The

THE BEGINNINGS OF BOURBON

By Dan Crowell

There are lots of reasons to be proud of America. One of my favorites is Bourbon.

Bourbon encompasses the great elements of American history in liquid form. Its history is tied to the history of America itself. It's a story of the ingenuity and tenacity of immigrants, the growing pains of a fledgling country, and a fortuitous compromise.

Let's start with the immigrants.

The ancient Scots and Irish were the true

pioneers of whiskey, or 'uisgebaugh' as it was known in Gaelic, having produced it as far back as the late 1400's. Those early American immigrants of Scots-Irish descent arriving throughout the 18th century were therefore well-versed in the production of whiskey and brought these skills with them. These settlers spread throughout the 13

corn whiskey being produced in this region was soon being sold in other areas, and was eventually shipped regularly to the port of New Orleans in barrels stamped 'Old Bourbon' designating its region of origin. Soon, the process of charring the oak barrels used for shipping the whiskey was developed, which helped to remove impurities. Over time, the region and its renowned whiskey became synonymous. Other whiskey producers noticed consumers' affinity for 'Old Bourbon' and began to stamp their barrels with the same designation regardless of where the whiskey was actually produced. The term 'bourbon' eventually came to be used to describe any corn whiskey. This practice continued until the term was finally defined by Congress in 1964.

That definition goes something like this. Bourbon must be made in the United States from a fermented mash containing at least 51% corn. Bourbon must be produced at no more than 160 proof, stored in new charred white oak barrels for a minimum of two years at a temperature of no more than 125 degrees, and bottled at no less than 80 proof.

Note: Although 99% of all Bourbon is produced in Kentucky, it is not a legal requirement.

Today, Bourbon is thriving both in the US and abroad. If you've been Bourbon shopping recently, you've probably discovered a pleasantly daunting array of options from which to choose. You may also have run into other, potentially confusing

elements in this section of your favorite bottle shop. Terms like 'straight', 'bottled in bond', or 'sour mash' and other North American whiskeys like Canadian, Tennessee, and Rye can be a bit mystifying. Allow me to attempt some clarification.

Straight: A straight whiskey must be derived from a minimum of 51% of a single grain (corn in the case of Bourbon, rye in the case of Rye whiskey, etc.) distilled to a proof of no more than 160, aged for a minimum of 2 years in new, charred white oak barrels and reduced with water to a proof of no lower than 80 at the time of bottling.

Bottled in Bond: This term has nothing to do with ensuring the quality of the whiskey. It only refers to its compliance with certain IRS excise tax regulations laid out in the Bottled in Bond Act of 1894.

Sour Mash: An element of the distillation process commonly employed in the production of Bourbon and Tennessee Whiskey. Similar to the concept behind sourdough bread, a portion of the last fermentation batch is held over and added to the next one, which helps control bacterial growth.

Tennessee Whisk(e)y: Differs from Bourbon in that it is subjected to an additional step in production called the 'Lincoln County' process. In this process,

the distillate is filtered through maple charcoal prior to barrel aging. And it's from Tennessee.

Canadian Whisky: Must be produced in Canada (obviously), aged at least 3 years and derived from cereal grains (typically corn, rye, wheat, barley), none of which can represent more than 50% of the grain formula, or 'mash bill'. Note the lack of an 'e' in the spelling of whisky, a trait common to Scotch, Japanese and Canadian whisky, as well as one of the two remaining Tennessee distilleries.

Enough talk! Time to drink some Bourbon (in moderation, of course). Cheers! ■■■



Dan Crowell, cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed 'spirits nerd', hails from Omaha where he talks incessantly (even occasionally to other people) about the virtues of what he calls 'investigative imbibement'. An eternally fascinated student of the distillers' art, he encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.

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SMOKING 101



by John Larkin

Finding that perfect cigar and getting a good smoke.

Last issue I wrote about some of the basics of cigar etiquette including cutting, lighting, ashing and extinguishing your cigar. Now that we've gotten the actual smoking component out of the way we can go back to the beginning - finding a smoke shop and choosing a cigar that you'll truly enjoy. Many a person has had a bad experience with cigars simply for the fact of smoking something not in their flavor or strength range or buying a smoke that has been improperly cared for. This article will help you make an educated decision next time you get a hankering for a nice relaxing cigar.

The first thing to consider is, of course, where to buy your smoke. You can't just roll down to the gas station and ask for a Romeo y Julieta like you would a pack of heaters. For cigars to smoke to their potential they need to be kept in a controlled environment. Just remember, ideally, cigars should be kept at 70% humidity and 70° Fahrenheit. Any less humid and your cigar will dry up, crack, and smoke hot. Any more than 70% and it will become hard to draw and go out on you while you smoke. Keep it at less than 70° for extended periods and this will also contribute to cracking, hotter than 70° and you risk the onset of tobacco beetles. All of this just means that wherever you make your purchase, it is important that they take care to provide you with a quality, well managed product. Unfortunately the only places you can usually count on to provide you with consistently well cared for cigars are an actual smoke shop. Discount cigarette stores, bars, and golf courses can all carry a token collection of cigars, but very few put much stock in keeping their small humidor's functioning properly, not to mention charging up to double the normal retail price. So, just be wary of the plastic countertop humidor - you're likely to get an inferior product sold to you by someone who's never even tried any of the cigars they sell.

So make your way to one of the fine cigar shops in town, and cruise on into the walk in humidor. The smell is fantastic; moist cedar and well aged tobacco. It's the type of experience you just can't get out of a cabinet humidor. But oh so many choices. Well, to

whittle that selection down to a manageable number you need to decide on what you're in the mood for. Is it something sweet and flavored or aromatic? Or perhaps you'd like it smooth and mild, no wait, bold and spicy. There's a broad range of flavor characteristics that a cigar can encompass. If you're new to smoking I'd recommend starting with a flavored cigar or something on the mild side then working your way up to the stronger cigars. A good metaphor would be that if the only type of beer you ever drink is an American style light lager then you might struggle making the jump to a Russian Imperial stout. The same holds true with cigars. If your palate isn't used to smoking

the wrapper on your cigar. The lighter the color, generally will be more mild and vice versa the darker the wrapper, the stronger the smoke. That being said, there are exceptions. Some very dark maduros can have a rich and full bodied smoke, but without the spicy burn. Alternatively there are cigars that fall in the middle of the pack color wise that are some of the strongest of them all. When in doubt, experience counts. So either smoke more, or ask your tobacconist.

Another generalization you can make when purchasing a cigar is the country of origin of the tobacco itself. Different countries tend to grow tobaccos with certain characteristics. Dominican, Connecticut,



a strong bold Nicaraguan or Honduran corajo, then you'll probably have a hard time enjoying it. You need to work your way up to the hefty stuff just like you might take logical steps to get from Bud Light to Guinness Extra Stout.

So, you ask, "Well John, how the hell do I know which cigars will singe my mouth with spicy goodness and which ones will taste like buttery silk?" Unfortunately there are no precise rules to live by but you can usually get a good idea by looking at the color of

and Cameroon tobaccos tend to be milder and are often used together by many of the old guard cigar manufacturers. Honduran, Nicaraguan, and Cuban growers usually harvest a leaf that will impart stronger spicier flavors. Newer companies such as CAO and Rocky Patel have made hay by putting out full bodied smokes from these countries.

Master blenders will take tobaccos from many regions or countries and combine them as part of the filler in the first of three main components of the cigar. The filler is

meat in your cigar sandwich. It is the base element and is usually comprised of 3 whole tobacco leaves rolled together that will meld together after aging to form a harmonious flavor. The binder is typically a lower grade leaf that is wrapped around the filler holding everything together. Normally the binder won't impart too much flavor on the final product. Last, but certainly not least, is the decorative and flavorful outer leaf which is called the wrapper. This leaf will give the cigar its color as well as lending itself greatly to the overall taste of the smoke. So pay attention to where certain cigars are manufactured as well as where the individual tobaccos are from to get a better idea on strength and flavor.

Having worked in the cigar business for almost a decade I've seen all sorts of rookie mistakes made in the humidor. The one that probably bugs me the most involves the aroma of the cigar. People always want to get a good whiff of the cigar they're holding and I can't blame them; I love the smell of a fresh cigar as much as anyone. The problem is that most of them come wrapped in cellophane. So unless you have enhanced super senses you won't be able to smell jack through that protective plastic wrapper. Please do not try to unwrap the cellophane to smell the cigar

then attempt to put it back. It doesn't work and it's bad form. So how do you know if you like the smell of the cigar you're about to spend \$8 on? Unfortunately you won't until you buy it. Fact of the matter is that, in my experience, the smell of a fresh unlit cigar correlates little to the flavor and aroma of said cigar once it's burning. Once you've paid for your cigar you can rub it up, down, or in your nose for all I care, but for you to caress your beak with that smoke then put it back in the box is being quite inconsiderate to the guy who's actually going to put it in his mouth.

Finally a good visual inspection is paramount to making sure you get a quality product and not a lemon. First make sure there aren't any visible cracks in the wrapper. Cracks are a sign of dry humidior conditions and will make the whole cigar unravel soon after lighting. Look for oils on the wrapper. Good tobacco leaves should have an oily sheen to them and usually the shinier the better no matter the color or type of leaf. Examine to see that the wrapper doesn't have large veins protruding from the surface. Discoloration is another problem that is to be avoided as well.

The best way to figure out what you do or don't like in a cigar is to get out there

and smoke them. Ask your tobacconist for suggestions and try something new each time you go to the smoke shop for a while. Explore the range of tastes, aromas, and flavors offered by today's cigar manufacturers. You'll soon find that you're apt to like more than one country, one brand, or one style. Like they say, variety is the spice of life.



John Larkin is co-owner of Jake's Cigars & Spirits in both Omaha and Lincoln. He's been smoking and selling cigars for close to 10 years having begun his career as a tobacconist

right out of high school in Salt Lake City. John moved to Lincoln in 2002 to run Jake's for longtime friend Alex Roskelley. After serving a tour in Iraq with the Army Reserve he came home and bought into the original Jake's in downtown Lincoln. In August 2006 John and Alex opened a new shop in downtown Benson where he now resides with his fiancé. John spends most of his time smoking cigars while questing after the best beers, bourbons, and wines he can get his hands on.



"I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day."

Frank Sinatra

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Microbrews hit the Metro

by Marq Manner

The American micro-brew phenomenon that came to roost here in the 1980's has increasingly grabbed the attention of beer drinkers across the country. Where it was once relegated to yuppie bars in major metropolitan areas, it's now not too hard to find at least a Sam Adam's or Blue Moon in the smallest of rural communities.

Locally, the boom has really come on strong in recent years with retail stores and bars actually specializing in the many brands and styles available in the market now. Even the dirtiest of dive bars have had to cut a couple of rows of PBR to make way for a pale ale or a wheat beer. Omaha and Lincoln even have a nice array of brew pubs such as Nebraska Brewing Company, Upstream Brewing Company, and Empyrean churning out fine craft beers.

It's not as surprising as it seems that almost every community with a population of over 50,000, and many under that, has a locally brewed beer that represents them. In Omaha our choices have for the most part been limited to Boulevard, Shiner, Blue Moon, Sam Adams, Sierra Nevada, and New Belgium until recent times. Those are all fine breweries with many excellent styles, but it is nice to see growth in the market and enough choices becoming available to keep

the taste buds alive and guessing. Instead of going over the stalwarts available in our community this is a quick overview of some newer craft beers and those becoming more available here in the area. For further growth and exploration of microbrews check out the selections at Beertopia, Brewsky's Park Drive Bottle Shop, Jakes, and even many of the Hy-Vee grocery stores.

One of the newest additions to the Omaha market is The Left Hand Brewing Company out of Longmont Colorado. The brewery has many specialty and seasonal offerings like its Gooseinator Smoked Doppelbock and Warrior IPA along with its normal fare such as The Sawtooth Ale and Polestar Pilsner. It seems as if beer drinkers around Omaha though have become enamored by the brewery's Milk Stout. The Milk Stout pours dark brown and has a smooth and creamy texture and head. The beer features a smoky coffee and chocolate aroma. It's not

as intimidating as some stouts can be and definitely not as bland as some of the more popular stouts on the market.

Another new addition to the Omaha market last year was the Big Sky line of brews out of Missoula Montana. Big Sky is a simple brewery with four common styles including its Big Sky IPA, Scapegoat Pale Ale, and it's Trout Slayer Ale. The brewery has done some special editions and also releases a summer and winter seasonal every year. I am seeing some of the initial beers disappear out of the coolers at some of the local bars that stocked them, but Big Sky's staple beer, Moose Drool, seems to be hanging around. Probably bought more for the name than as an actual recommendation, this simple brown ale is an easy drinker once again with a sweet malty taste and hints of chocolate.

One of the most consistent breweries across the board in its styles is the Odell

Brewing Company out of Fort Collins Colorado. Odell's 90 Schilling ale has been in the area for quite some time now. The Scottish style ale is a staple amongst many bars. Thankfully, a lot of bars and stores have been picking up their other beers including one of the best wheat beers on the market - the East Street Wheat, their robust Cutthroat Porter, the 5 Barrel Pale, Levity Amber, and Isolation Ale. The Odell's IPA is a true standout though. This hoppy, slightly bitter beer has notes of grapefruit, lemon, and pine. It is not only the finest beer of its style readily available in many places in Omaha it is arguably one of the finest beers readily available in the area. Request it at your local watering hole if it is not there already.

The one brewery that has been available to the community for quite some time that I am surprised is not carried by more bars and liquor stores is Oregon's Rogue Brewery. Sure their Grateful Dead inspired Dead Guy Ale has been a staple in many bars, but this company has a plethora of styles to offer. Their selection ranges from the spicy and sometimes dicey Chipotle Ale, the truly Brutal Bitter, the rich Chocolate

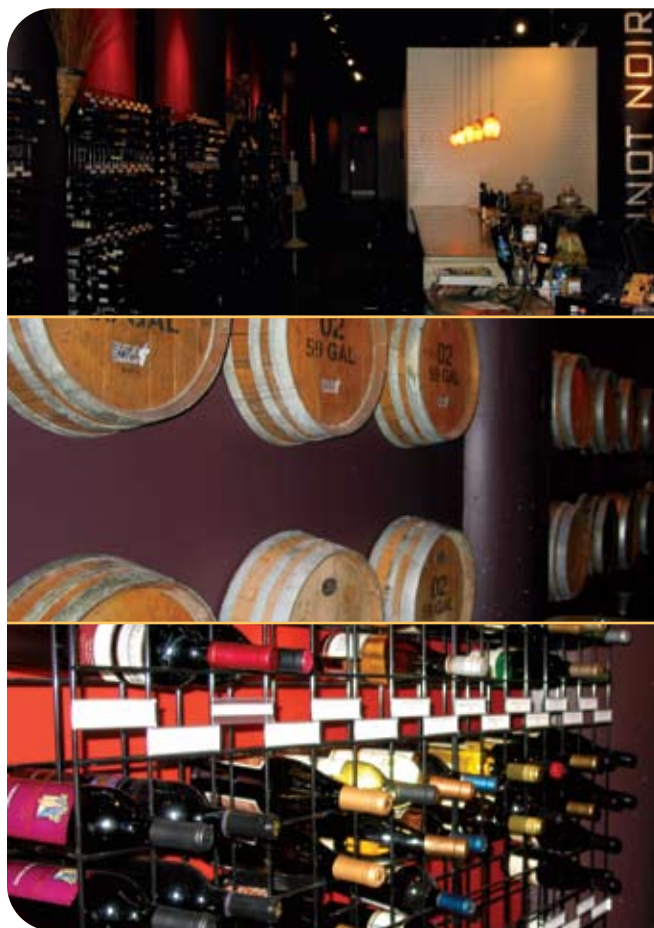
Stout and many more. Proprietors of fun and fine dining establishments could have a ball pairing the many offerings from this brewery with various foods. One of my favorites from them is the Mocha Porter. This almost black porter has a nose of chocolate and coffee as its name suggests and an intense yet drinkable bitter taste. Not a great starter beer for people just getting into the game, but a fine choice for those who like a strong hearty beer.

One of the newest additions to the Omaha market is The Left Hand Brewing Company out of Longmont Colorado.

Colorado has many great breweries including New Belgium, The Boulder Beer Company, and the above mentioned Odell Brewery. The Breckenridge Brewery is no exception to the rocky mountain tradition of brewing fantastic craft beers. The brewery's signature beer is its Avalanche Ale, but they also carry a nice Oatmeal Stout, an Agave Wheat, and their Trademark Pale Ale. I

have recently been turning friends onto the Breckenridge Vanilla Porter when I see it at bars such as The Slowdown, Jakes, and Burke's Pub in Benson - all of them have stuck with that selection over the course of the evening. It's interesting because most would consider this more of a dessert beer and not something to session with. The sweet vanilla flavor and not too thick texture makes this a nice alternative when one needs a break from some of the more bold extreme beers that are all the rage right now.

Again, there are many more options out there in the market with more and more coming into our state, and being made in our state all the time. If you are interested in further researching craft beers check out some websites such as beeradvocate.com, play around with pairing certain foods with the beers much like you would wine, and don't be afraid to ask your bartender or retail clerk about the beers they have in stock or request your favorites if you do not see them.



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Exploring Your Feelings (about Beer)

by Paul Kavulak

This column will be an exploration of Beer & Brewing. To be clear, soon we'll begin to dive more deeply into various beer styles but for now, we need to establish a baseline.

For those of you who might not know me, I'm not the type of guy to give you a sermon about what's good or bad - I want to guide you to your own decisions. I laugh as I say this - in this article, we're going to take some time to explore our feelings. If you're a guy like me, as soon as we hear these words we're already late for our next social engagement, hard labor, the corner bar, a phone call to fictitious long lost friends - anything but a direct discussion about our feelings.

But hang on a second. We're talking about beer here remember? So how the heck do feelings get to see the light of day in this type of discussion? Well, I'm the first to state that every beer has its place, so let me explain. Some beers have their place at special events, some during certain seasons, some with certain foods - and for some beers, their place is way the heck away from me. But that's just how I feel. Beginning to get the picture? Will you agree with the points I make in this article? Maybe, but frankly I hope I create some mental anguish - some social conflict that begins within your mind. My goal is to get you to re-think some of the things you thought you already knew, toss out some beer norms and create some new ones - based upon your own feelings...

So let's get to it. If you could reach for a beer right now - any beer in the universe of beers on the market - which beer would it be? Go ahead and make a mental selection

and then we're going to examine it for a bit.

Ok, now I'm sort of betting that the little grocery aisle in your mind isn't all that long. Oh sure, there are some of you that just went through the mental equivalent of a Wal-Mart but, for most of us, we probably opened the cooler door of a single solitary container of the stuff that we've known for years. The brands that call out to you from every street corner, every TV commercial, and from countless cardboard cut-outs decorated with cute little bikini-clad girls that make you believe there are only a handful of choices in life.

Therein lies our problem, and the basis for our discussion. Believe it or not - and I know this is where the conflict begins - when we reach for a beer, it should be an exploration - not simply a purchase that satisfies a minority line item in some larger list of evening goals. We'll expand upon this later, but first, that beer you selected is

getting warm.

Now that your beer is the center of attention in your mind's eye, ask yourself "Why?". This is the moment of truth. It could be that this one word could be your awakening. Why? You've made your beer selection but I'm here to tell ya - it shouldn't have been that easy.

The complexities of what you believe to be a simple beer are actually quite deep. From an ingredients perspective we're really only dealing with four basic items. Sure, there can be others but let's make it easy. Water, malted barley, yeast, and hops. That's it. If we remain at this basic level we're right in line with what may have just made that mental selection so easy. I guess in so many ways, it all comes down to marketing. Rocky Mountain streams, Clydesdales, cold filtering, and remember those little guys that never really existed? The Artesans? Anyway - you've done what the marketers had hoped.

You went with the masses and believed what they wanted you to believe. That's sad, people.

Let's try a familiar tangent. When selecting a wine – a fine wine, we take the time to understand the vineyard, the vintner, and for some unknown reason we tend to pay attention to price – as if the pricetag was also an indicator of quality. Buried deep beneath the hype of bikini-clad girls there exists a direct parallel from wine that should be applied to beer when it comes to quality, selection, flavor and inherent value. And why? Because, even though the girls failed to mention it, there is tremendous and wonderful diversity in beer.

Its true folks. Like wine, beer also has terroir. Like wine, beer also requires a deep understanding of climate, chemistry, yeasts, and aging – and what seems to be an infinite array of combinations when it comes to working with the variations within each of those four basic ingredients. And now, quite possibly, the ultimate revelation – that beer has incredibly wide ranging, deep and thought provoking flavors that can probably never be fully explored in a single lifetime. And just like an excellent wine, we usually



don't find this depth in the mass market varieties. We must seek them out.

Think back to the beginning of this article. I mentioned a few items that need closure (Guys, I know I'm using words that strike fear in you but please, hang with me).

Exploration. I'm going to give you a mission. The next time you're in the store, explore your options and take the time to understand that those shelves are literally filled with flavors and brands that you've never experienced before. It's ok to actually stop and stare. Besides, who the heck is going to notice, let alone pay attention to a guy caught dead in his tracks, drooling in the beer aisle? I swear, if you take five minutes instead of mere seconds to select something that you've never had before you'll feel good inside. Can I guarantee that you'll like what you've chosen? Nope

– but I can guarantee that you'll have lived more broadly than you have in the past – and that's truly the point.

Feelings. So here we are. We've been conditioned in life to think that this word goes hand in hand with something painful but hopefully you've learned at this stage that we're going to use this word in a new context. Explorations lead to observations and on to feelings that we'll ultimately carry forward in life. We store these for use in shaping our future decisions and moving on to greater moments.

So to recap, we've established that beer has depth, diversity, and incredible flavors that are within easy reach. Additionally, we've intertwined and dealt with a sometimes scary subject – and embraced it – and lived.

So go over to your significant other, new beers in hand, look passionately into their eyes, and tell this person that it's time to talk about your feelings. Trust me. This works on so many levels...



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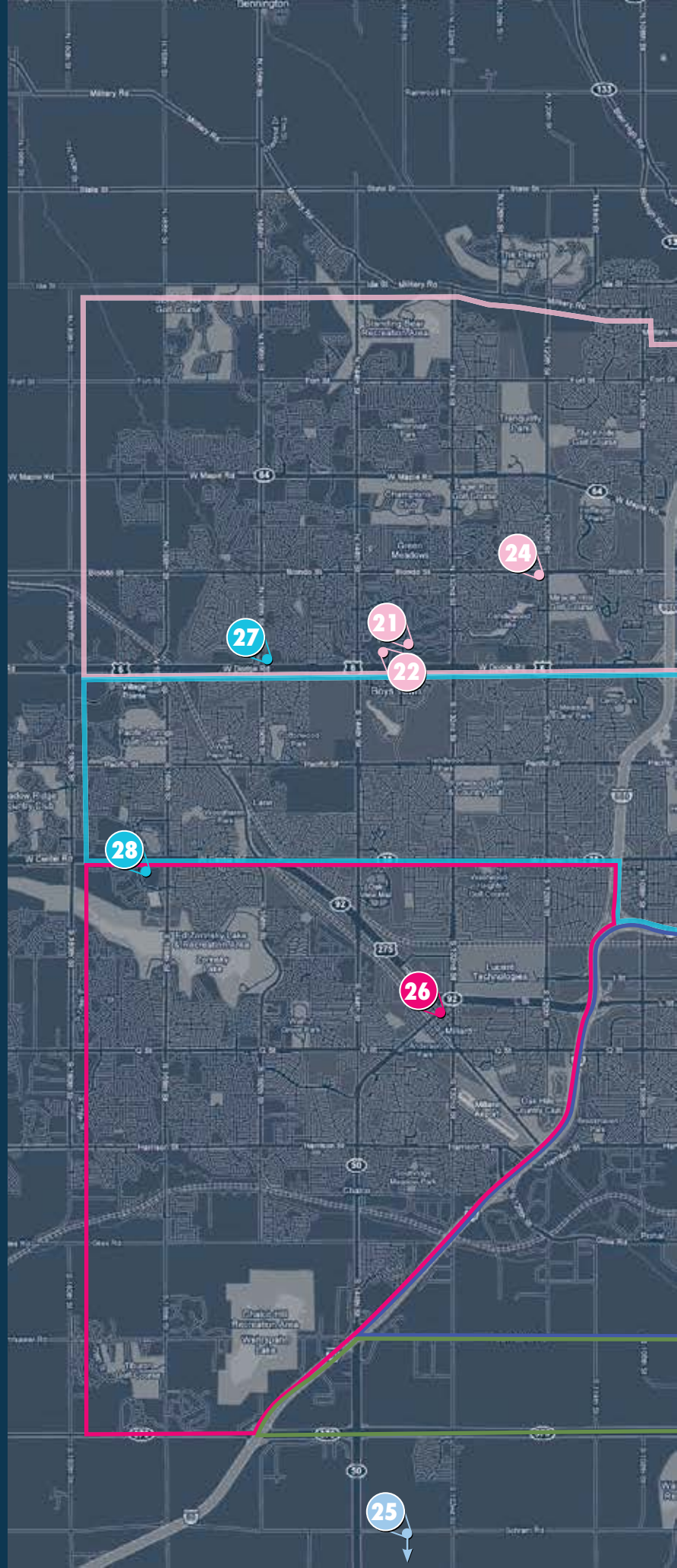


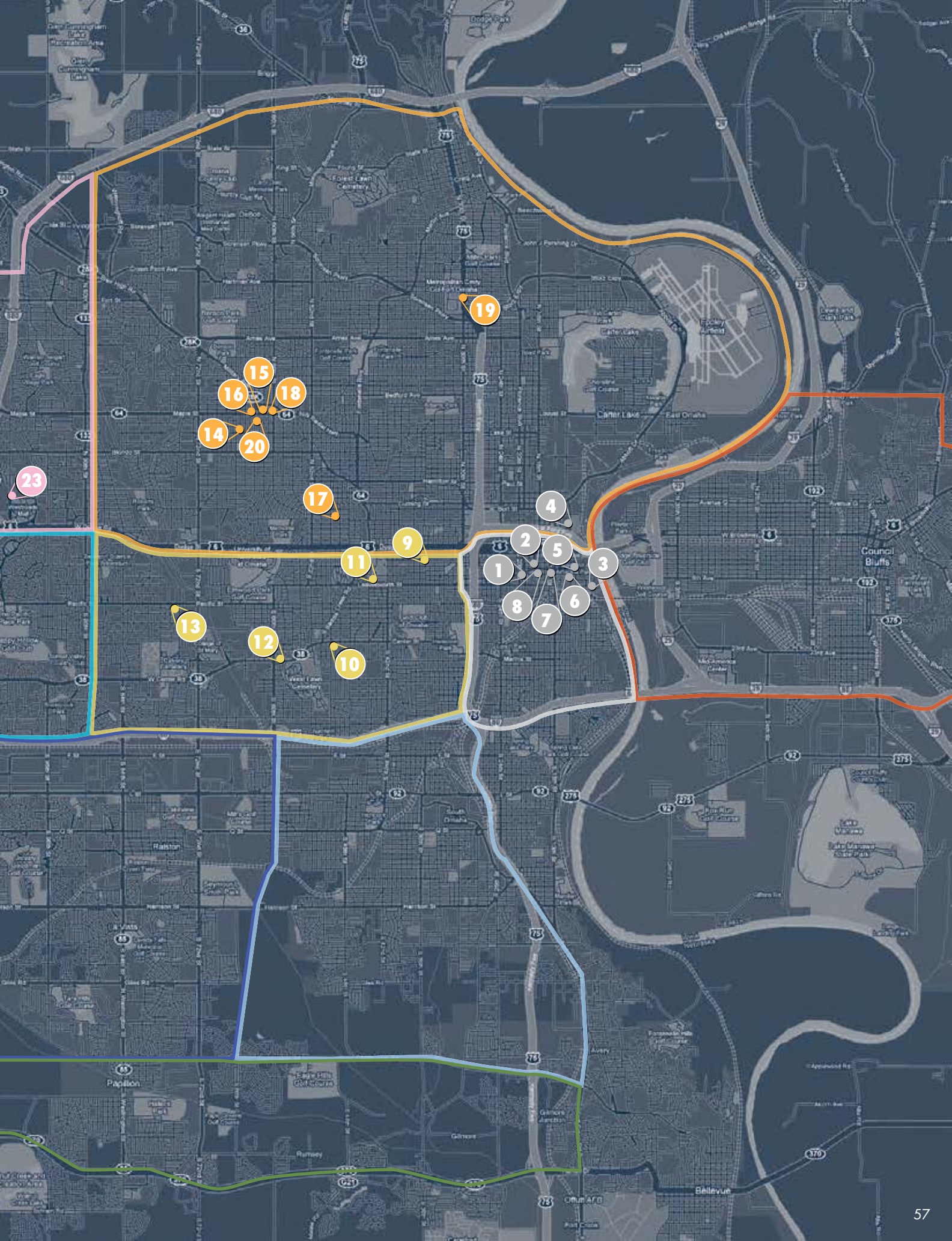


Paul's first professional life was spent working in IT. Most recently as the SVP of Enterprise Technology Integration for West Corporation and while this occupied his daylight hours, most of the others were consumed by an immersion in beer. Not physically – his passion exists in beer and brewing. Prior to starting up Nebraska Brewing Company with his wife, Kim – Paul had been homebrewing for roughly 17 years. This passion formed the basis for a dogged pursuit of perfection in numerous beer styles and beer history. Livin' the dream.

RESTAURANTS, BARS & LOUNGES, *and* HOTELS DIRECTORY

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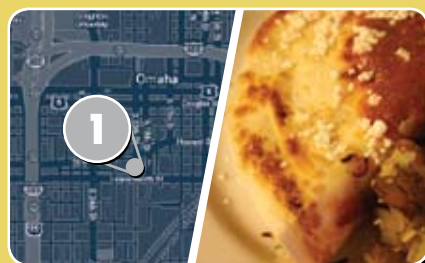
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RESTAURANTS Downtown

1 Dixie Quicks

402-346-3549
1915 Leavenworth Street



Dixie Quicks has a menu centered in a Southern, Cajun and Southwestern style. Prepared with chef and owner Rene Orduna's own twist, their loyal and valued patrons have enjoyed eating the food as much as they have enjoyed making it for the past twelve years. They've always been a small eatery, and are currently serving breakfast and lunch, and returning to their dinner hours this fall. Dixie Quicks' is expanding their offerings with a Beer and Wine license, plus the opening of the R.N.G. Gallery, a new twist to the mix. Give a call and stop on by ya'll.

2 The Flatiron Cafe

402-344-3040
1722 St. Mary's Ave.



The Flatiron Cafe's staff has been happily serving the theater crowd, business travelers and those celebrating special occasions since 1995. Chef Jennifer Coco oversees the preparation of the evenings special dishes. Wine specialist Adam Betts is always on the look out for exceptional wines to add to their list. Proprietors Steve and Kathleen Jamrozky keep it all together and host the finest dinner parties nightly. Please come.

3 Joe Banana's Food & Spirits

402-346-7227
1022 South 10th Street



Celebrating its 10th year on 10th Street, this restaurant-lounge serves breakfast, lunch and dinner, with an emphasis on American and Italian foods (try the pizza, a Sicilian recipe). One of the few places in Omaha you can still smoke. Try our amazing muffuletta!

5 M's Pub

402-342-2550
422 S. 11th Street



M's Pub has been serving Omaha's discriminating diners in the heart of the Old Market for over 33 years. Our cutting edge, award winning cuisine is complemented by the Wine Spectator-recognized wine list, and served by our knowledgeable & courteous staff! Make reservations today and join us...

7 Vivace

402-342-2050
1110 Howard Street



The owners of M's Pub opened Vivace over thirteen years ago to critical and public acclaim. Serving contemporary Italian fare accented by a Mediterranean flair, the menu is complemented by a Wine Spectator Award-winning wine list, welcoming & attentive service, and the "most beautiful dining room in the Old Market"! Reservations honored @ www.OpenTable.com

4 Liberty Tavern

402-998-4321
1001 Cass Street



Award winning Chef Glenn Wheeler invites you to enjoy selections from his wonderful menu. Liberty Tavern, located inside the Hilton Omaha, serves great American food and spirits in a comfortable, casual atmosphere with genuine hospitality. A perfect choice for those attending an event at Qwest Center or just looking for a dining relaxing experience, the Liberty Tavern offers complimentary parking at the Hilton.

6 Upstream Brewing Company

402-344-0200
514 S. 11th Street



Upstream Brewing Company, a delicious Omaha original, has been serving a wide variety of fresh-from-scratch dishes, decadent desserts and hand-crafted beers since 1996. So whether you're craving a Gold Coast Blonde Ale, a perfectly seasoned fillet or just a relaxing game of pool, the spirited atmosphere and distinctive aromas of the Upstream will keep you coming back. Again and again.

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BARS Central

9 Crescent Moon Ale House
402-345-1708
3578 Farnam Street



The Crescent Moon was established in 1996 as Omaha's Original Alehouse. Today 36th and Farnam is Omaha's Beerplex. Along with the casual atmosphere of the Crescent Moon, we offer the beer lover three other venues. The Huber Haus is our Authentic German Beer Hall, Max and Joe's doubles as our Belgian beer bar and private party room, and Beertopia is Omaha's Ultimate Beer Store with over 400 specialty beers in stock. Beer Lovers Rejoice!

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10 Harker's BBQ

402-554-0102
4865 Center St.



Harker's BBQ is Omaha's Best Kept Secret serving the finest in Hickory Smoked Meats and Italian Specialties since 1984. All of our meats are hickory smoked on premises. Also all of our sauces, (Regular, Hot, Sweet & Carolina) and our Fixins', (Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Mac Salad, Regular Cole Slaw and Jamaican Cole Slaw) are homemade and prepared on-site. And if you're in the mood for Italian, we've added Smoked Italian Sausage to go along with our hand made Italian Meatballs, Chicken Parmesan and our famous Spaghetti Sauce.

DON CARMELO'S NEW YORK STYLE PIZZERIAS	402-342-1978
DROVER	402-391-7440
ELLADA GREEK & MEDITERRANEAN FOODS	402-991-3320
FARMHOUSE CAFE AND BAKERY	402-393-0640
FERNANDO'S	402-396-8006
FIELD CLUB OF OMAHA	402-345-6343

11 La Casa

402-556-6464
4432 Leavenworth St.



La Casa Pizzeria opened in June of 1953 and with it the Omaha pizza scene began in earnest. Today La Casa features the same Neapolitan pizza recipes it began with in 1953. But the menu has evolved to showcase a myriad of pasta dishes utilizing our four signature sauces, as well as several specialty pizzas, including five "white" pies. Diners can also enjoy calzone, salads, sandwiches and Italian specialties like chicken or eggplant Parmesan. Patrons will also find a full selection of imported and micro-brewed beers and more than 22 wines complementing the Italian cuisine.

12 Petrow's

402-551-0552
5914 Center Street



A family owned Omaha tradition since 1957. The whole family will love this original diner's look and taste. The menu features all the classic staples, from hot beef and pork tenderloin to made-from-scratch pies and homemade ice cream. Serving breakfast at 6am, the dinner menu features hand-cut steaks through 9:30pm.

FIREWATER GRILLE	402-452-3473
FUDDRUCKERS	402-556-0504
GERDA'S BAKERY	402-553-6774
GOLDBERGS	402-556-2006
GORAT'S STEAK HOUSE	402-551-3733
GREAT WALL	402-393-5377
GREEK ISLANDS	402-346-1528
GROVER STREET FOOD & SPIRITS	402-397-2904
HARKERT'S BAR-B-Q	402-554-0102
HECTOR'S ORIGINAL	402-391-2923
HOUSE OF LEE	402-571-2000
HUNAN GARDEN	
CHINESE RESTAURANT	402-553-4511
JASON'S DELI	402-551-2233
JET'S	402-932-5387
JOEY'S SEAFOOD & GRILL	402-934-6485
JONESY'S TACO HOUSE	402-551-6088
LA CASA PIZZARIA	402-556-6464
LA HACIENDA	402-397-4778
LATIA'S HOT TAMALES	402-345-0904
LEE'S CHINA	402-397-3227
LITHUANIAN BAKERY & KAFE	402-391-3503
LOCO'S MEXICAN GRILL	402-393-8400
LO SOLE MIO	402-345-5656
MAMA'S PIZZA	402-553-9270
MARISCOS BAHIA	
DE ENSENADA	402-884-4720
MCFOSTER'S	
NATURAL KIND CAFÉ	402-345-7477
MCKENNA'S	402-393-7427
NICKS	402-614-5740
NOODLES & COMPANY	402-393-0586
O CASUAL DINING & LOUNGE	402-502-7888
OLD DUNDEE BAR & GRILL	402-558-0801
OLIVE GARDEN	
ITALIAN RESTAURANT	402-393-8404
OZARK SMOKED MEAT CO.	402-333-1744
PANERA BREAD	402-397-8800
QDOBA MEXICAN GRILL	402-934-9680
RICHIES	
CHICKEN & HAMBURGER	402-346-4650
ROMEO'S	
MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA	402-346-1110
SAIGON RESTAURANT	402-697-7000
SAKURA BANA RESTAURANT	402-391-5047
SAMMY SORTINO'S	402-933-5988
SEASON BUFFET	402-343-0687
SEÑOR MATIAS	402-391-0191
SPEZIA	402-391-2950
TA CHAN BUFFET	402-397-5900
THREE HAPPINESS EXPRESS	402-558-8899
VICTOR'S GYROS FALAFEL & MEDITERRANEAN FOOD	402-341-7347
VIETNAMESE	
ASIAN RESTAURANT	402-397-9125
ZIO'S NEW YORK STYLE PIZZERIA	402-391-1881

SPECIALTY SHOPS Central

13TH STREET COFFEE COMPANY 402-614-3787
BROADMOOR MARKET 402-391-0312
CATERING CREATIONS 402-558-3202

13 Spirit World

402-391-8680
 7517 Pacific Street



Spirit World is a gourmet deli and specialty wine, beer and liquor store located in midtown Omaha, Nebraska. Our knowledgeable and loyal staff has the experience and love of food, wine and spirits to help you make the perfect selection. The gourmet deli offers a variety of the freshest homemade salads, soups and sandwiches. In the evenings, enjoy a glass or bottle of wine with a cheese plate, appetizer or entree. For your next business meeting or social gathering, Spirit World caters and delivers.

BARS North

14 Barley Street Tavern

402-408-0028
 2735 N 62nd St



The little bar off the main strip in Benson has gained quite a bit of popularity in 2007. Barley Street Tavern offers an intimate environment with the accompaniment of great local music. You'll find cheap drinks, great smiles and no cover charge. So if you're looking to spend an evening with the neighborhood musicians while sipping a cocktail in the warm glow of candlelight, come to the Barley Street Tavern. Open 5pm to 1am Tues-Sat and 7pm-1am Monday

15 Burke's Pub

402-558-1365
 6117 Maple Street



A quiet neighborhood sports bar with an Irish flair. Enjoy a large selection of beer on tap and a vast variety of ice cold bottled Micro Brews. Have a great conversation and play Touch Tunes Jukebox, Golden Tee Live 2008, Silver Strike Bowling, Keno, or watch your favorite Sports on one of our 13 TVs. Burke's is also smoker friendly. Stop in today.

16 Jake's Cigars & Spirits

402-934-9633
 6206 Maple Street



Jake's Cigars & Spirits is an upscale, yet unpretentious full service smoke shop and liquor store. Smokers are met by a well stocked walk-in humididor as well as the most extensive line of import and premium cigarettes in Omaha. If an adult beverage is more of what suits your fancy then peruse our collection of eclectic and hard to find wines, single malt scotch, bourbon, vodkas, tequila, and import and micro brews. Have a cocktail in our stylish and intimate lounge. With over 125 bottled beers to choose from, 60 kinds of whiskey, and an atmosphere you're sure to love, you'll feel right at home whether you're drinking a cosmo, a cabernet, or a Corona.

3'S LOUNGE	402-457-4433
BRASS KNOCKER LOUNGE	402-572-9400
DOG POUND BAR & GRILL	402-551-9325
FULL HOUSE BAR	402-558-3133
HAPPY BAR	402-346-9677
HOMY INN	402-554-5815
JERRY'S BAR	402-558-8911
KENDALL	402-734-5997
LYNX	402-553-8787
MAC'S	402-571-2000
MELIBU	402-451-6663
MICK'S MUSIC & BAR	402-502-2503
MUSETTE BAR	402-554-5830
NIFTY BAR & GRILL	402-933-9300
NORTHSTAR	402-934-4572
ON THE ROCKS	402-884-0244
STEVIE J'S SPORTS GRILLE	402-884-7880
T'S TAVERN	402-934-9592
VELVET LOUNGE	402-614-3534
WAGGIN' TONGUE	402-453-3535
WILD ROSE	402-573-6902

RESTAURANTS North

17 Dario's Brasserie

402-933-0799
 4920 Underwood Ave.



Bienvenue! (Welcome!)

Is there such a thing as gourmet comfort food? Find out for yourself at Dario's, Omaha's first genuine French-Belgian brasserie. With a prime location in the heart of Dundee, Dario insists that you can get a delicious meal in a relaxed, casual setting. Experience la bonne cuisine in this Parisian-style setting.

What is a brasserie, anyway?

In true French form, a brasserie doubles as a café and a restaurant, serving single dishes and an assortment of fine beers. So whether you're coming to boire un coup (have a drink) or grignoter (snack), it would be our plaisir to serve you.

ALPINE INN	402-451-9988
ALVARADO'S MEXICAN FOOD	402-571-2333
ARENA SPORTS BAR & GRILL	402-571-2310
BENE PIZZA & PASTA	402-498-0700
BIG JACK'S BBQ SHACK	402-572-7427
BILL'S BBQ	402-451-5076
BOB MONKEY'S NOODLE ZOO	402-932-9971
BRAZEN HEAD IRISH PUB	402-393-3731
BREAD OVEN	402-934-1289
CAJUN KITCHEN	402-453-2658
CALIFORNIA TACO'S & MORE	402-342-0212
CAMILLE'S SIDEWALK CAFÉ	402-731-9727
CARRABBA'S ITALIAN GRILL	402-492-9500
CHINA GATE	402-393-3111
CHINA PALACE	402-556-8819
CHINA ROAD	402-431-0066
CLUB MEX	402-572-8640
DON CARMELO'S	
NEW YORK PIZZARIA	402-493-8595
DOWNING'S DELI & ICE CREAM	402-445-2422
DRAGON 88	402-455-8800
DUNDEE DELL	402-553-9501
EL RINCONCITO	402-991-5452
EL SABROSON	402-504-1866
ESPAÑA	402-505-9917
GET-N-GO FISH	402-342-4362
GOLDEN CHINA	402-558-5779
GOLDEN PALACE	402-493-2777
THE GREAT WALL	402-573-0227
GRUMPY'S GRILL	
& DONUT SHOP	402-455-6766
HAPPY FAMILY RESTAURANT	402-934-5288
HENRY'S SPORTS BAR	402-392-0488
HIRO JAPANESE CUISINE	402-933-0091
HOMESTYLE CAFE	402-934-8589

18 The Pizza Shoppe

402-556-9090
6056 Maple Street



The Pizza Shoppe/PS Collective, 6056 Maple, has been in Benson for over 11 years. The Pizza Shoppe has over 60 toppings to build delicious, homemade pizza 7 days a week, while also offering generous portions of tasty pastas, salads, and oven-toasted sandwiches. The PS Collective is our newest addition, offering customers a private party room and weekly artistic events. Check out our website at www.pscollective.com.

HONG HING RESTAURANT	402-573-1888
HOUSE OF LEE	402-571-2000
JADE GARDEN	402-498-8833
JC'S CHICAGO STYLE	
DELI & COFFEE HOUSE	402-884-4092
JC MANDARIN CHINESE CUISINE	402-393-7988
JCAT BBQ & CATERING	402-571-6626
J H CHINA	402-455-5555
JIM & JENNIE'S GREEK VILLAGE	402-571-2857
JIM'S FLORENCE GRILL	402-453-1260
JIM'S RIB HAVEN	402-451-8061
JJ'S CAFE & PIZZA	402-238-2700
JOE'S CAFÉ	402-556-9428
JULIO'S	402-572-5223
KIMSON SEAFOOD GRILL	402-926-2700
LAFATA'S CAFFE ITALIANO	402-397-1347
LEE'S SWEETS & MORE	402-342-8252
LEO'S DINER	402-553-2280
LISA'S RADIAL CAFÉ	402-551-2176
LONNELLE'S SOUTHERN DELIGHT	402-453-4867
MAMA'S PIZZA	402-553-9270
MAMA'S KITCHEN	402-934-5903
MARK'S BISTRO	402-502-2203
MARLOW'S	402-468-4200
MATT'S GRILL & CATERING	402-572-5223
MOTHER'S GOOD FOOD	402-455-1740
MT. FUJI INN	402-397-5049
NIFTY BAR & GRILL	402-933-9300
NITE HAWKES CAFÉ	402-451-0302
OJ'S CAFÉ	402-451-3266

19 Sage Student Bistro Metro Community College Ft. Omaha Campus, Bld 10

402-457-2328
30th and Fort Streets



Providing guest-centered learning experiences, Sage Student Bistro is an integral force for the Institute for Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College (MCC). Each visit is an opportunity for our faculty to create a training exercise for the benefit of instruction. Customer feedback and gratuity provide valuable support to the learning community at MCC's Institute for the Culinary Arts.

Bistro Hours

Mon. - Thurs. 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
www.mccneb.edu/bistro

ORIENTAL GARDEN	402-391-2828
OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE	402-392-2212
RAZZY'S SANDWICH SHOPPE	402-397-2131
RED ZONE BBQ	402-431-9663
RICE BOWL	
CHINESE RESTAURANT	402-558-1222
RICK'S BOATYARD CAFÉ	402-345-4545
ROMEO'S	
MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA	402-391-8870
ROMONA'S	402-451-0996
SAM & LOUIE'S	
NEW YORK PIZZERIA	402-884-7773
	402-390-2911
SGT PEPPER'S CAFÉ ITALIAN	402-558-7717
SKEETS RIBS & CHICKEN	402-344-3420
SMOKE PIT BBQ & LOUNGE	402-345-8681
STADIUM GRILL & BAR	402-991-7400
STEVIE J'S SPORTS GRILL	402-884-7880
SURFSIDE CLUB	402-451-9642
TIME OUT FOODS	402-451-2622
TROVATO'S	402-553-9305
WINGSTOP	402-594-9464

SPECIALTY SHOPS

North

20 Benson Grind

402-932-4040
6107 Maple Street



The Benson Grind is Omaha's finest coffee shop. Beautifully appointed, it doubles as an art gallery and has occasional live music. Located in the heart of Benson, the Grind serves only USDA certified organic, fair trade and bird friendly coffees. All your favorite coffee drinks are available along with fruit smoothies, Italian sodas, a wide selection of teas and more. A small and delicious café menu is served all day. The Benson Grind also offers catering for any event.

BLUE LINE COFFEE	402-502-6707
CLASSY GOURMET	402-955-2665
GREAT HARVEST	
BREAD COMPANY	402-551-8800
IN PLAY	402-991-7400
JAKE'S CIGARS & SPIRITS	402-934-9633
MARTIN PASTRY	402-392-2220
WINERY	402-391-3535

BARS

Northwest

120 BLONDES	402-934-4385
BAMBINO'S BAR & GRILL	402-384-8147
BAR FLY	402-504-4811
BOONDOCKERS	402-572-9400
BRASS KNOCKER	402-551-8800
BRAZEN HEAD IRISH PUB	402-393-3731
BROOK PARK LOUNGE	402-572-9503
CIGARROS	402-496-9595
CLUBHOUSE LOUNGE	402-572-5335
CLUB PATRICK'S	402-934-5061
DANNY'S BAR & GRILL	402-554-5821
DAVE'S PUB	402-391-2589
E'Z PLACE	402-334-4477
FEDORA LOUNGE	402-932-6559
GLACIER OMAHA	402-934-9674
GOLDEEZ	402-964-7494
GOLDEN CHINA	402-558-5779
GREEN ONION	402-333-2236
HAROLD'S	402-391-6313
HENRY'S	402-392-0488
HILLSIDE	402-393-3929
HOLIDAY	402-391-4442
JACK'S PLACE	402-289-3633
LIBRARY PUB	402-571-6262
LIQUID LOUNGE	402-334-2882
MANHATTAN CLUB	402-493-3009
MICKY FINNS SPORTS CAFE	402-498-2988
MOE & CURLY'S	402-493-9808
MUSTANGS	402-934-7837
MY WAY	402-393-9890
NORTH SHORE	402-571-1150
OLD MILL	402-493-1456
PAT & MIKE'S	402-571-3182
RED LOUNGE	402-445-2583
REVUE	402-934-4666
STOLI'S LOUNGE	402-614-2662
STU'S	402-572-9100
TAILGATORS	402-493-0351
THE COVE	402-991-3919
THE PEACOCK ROOM	402-932-6559
THE SPOTLIGHT CLUB	402-934-4385
VEGALOU ULTRA BAR	402-504-4644
WAYSIDE	402-391-7162

Want to see your
restaurant listed?

Give us a call at 402-203-6145

FOOD & SPIRITS
MAGAZINE | 2014 EDITION

RESTAURANTS

Northwest

21 Biaggi's

402-965-9800
13650 California Street



Biaggi's casual Italian restaurant offers an extensive selection of pastas, soups & salads, pizza, seafood, steaks and desserts. Enjoy large portions of affordably-priced dishes prepared with the freshest ingredients available in a comfortable, relaxing atmosphere. Our private event room and wine room are perfect to make any gathering an event to remember.

22 Charleston's

402-431-0023
13851 1st Natl. Bank Pkwy



Charleston's is a casual, upbeat restaurant with a modestly priced menu featuring traditional American items prepared from scratch daily. Hard-wood grilled steaks, seafood, prime rib, chicken, ribs, salads, burgers, sandwiches and kids menu, Charleston's has something for everyone. The atmosphere is warm, cozy, and inviting utilizing dark woods and gas lighting to create a handsome, understated décor. With an emphasis on service, Charleston's is here for you. Accepting reservations for parties of eight or more, Charleston's can accommodate that special event in your life. Come visit Charleston's for Lunch or Dinner seven days a week.
(visit charlestons.com for our full menu)

23 Granite City Food & Brewery

402-393-5000
1001 N. 102nd Street



Microbrewery style beer and made from scratch food encompassed in a Tuscan themed, high-energy restaurant setting. Weekly specials, service that sets the standard and a Sunday Brunch that instills fond memories is what Granite City guests have been raving about since its opening in October 2006.

24 Taxi's

402-898-1882
1822 North 120th St.

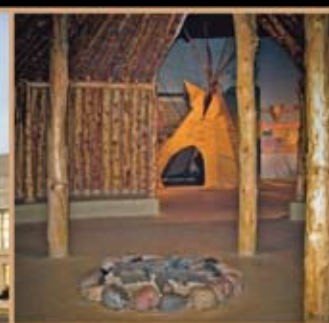


Taxi's Grille is meant to be a neighborhood spot. Developed by Mac Thompson and Bill Johnette, owners of The Neon Goose. The atmosphere and menu are best described as contemporary casual. Great before or after a movie, theatre, sporting event or just a quick bite. The menu is large with soups, specialty salads and sandwiches, comfort foods like pot roast and meat loaf, great fresh seafood and steaks. Prix Fixe items available nightly. Tuesday and Wednesday are half price bottle wines. Lunch Tuesday-Friday 11:00-2:30 Dinner Tuesday-Thursday 5-10 Dinner Friday and Saturday 5- 11 Sunday Brunch 10-2:00 Brunch is always popular with Egg Benedict dishes, omelettes, quiches, Grand Mariner French Toast, waffles, salad, seafood and more. Call ahead to put your name in.

7 MONKEYS	402-614-4100	GOOD TASTE		ROOKIE'S BAR & GRILL	402-493-0351
BEBOS	402-445-4111	CHINESE RESTAURANT	402-731-2500	SAM & LOUIE'S	
BENE PIZZA & PASTA	402-498-0700	GREAT WALL		NEW YORK PIZZERIA	402-445-4244
BILLY'S CAFE	402-496-9864	CHINESE RESTAURANT	402-289-4979		402-965-3858
BLONDO CAFÉ & DELI	402-390-2466	HARR'S	402-779-4040		402-496-7900
BLUE SUSHI SAKE & GRILL	402-445-2583	HIRO JAPANESE CUISINE	402-933-0091	SEATTLE SUTTON'S	
BOYD AND CHARLIES BBQ	402-289-4772	HOLLYWOOD DINER	402-445-8000	HEALTHY EATING	402-991-8234
CELLAR	402-934-4912	HONG KONG CAFE	402-493-8383	SPORTS LODGE	402-453-6300
CHAMPPS AMERICANA	402-431-0023	HU HOT MONGOLIAN GRILL	402-498-8890	STOKES GRILL & BAR	402-498-0804
CHEEBURGER CHEEBURGER	402-884-2440	ICEHOUSE	402-934-2337	SUMMER KITCHEN	
CHINA BUFFET	402-498-3868	JADE GARDEN	402-498-8833	CAFE & BAKERY	402-498-2800
CHINA ROAD	402-431-0066	JC MANDARIN	402-393-7988	TAJ	402-933-1445
CICI'S PIZZA	402-991-0044	LA MESA MEXICAN RESTAURANT	402-496-1101	TANNER'S BAR & GRILL	402-884-5100
CHOPSTICKS HOUSE	402-965-3333	LEGENDS GRILL & BAR	402-884-1006	TAXI'S GRILLE AND BAR	402-898-1882
CLANCY'S PUB	402-498-6400	LE PEEP	402-408-1728	TED'S MONTANA GRILL	402-493-6662
	402-315-9951	LE VOLTAIRE	402-934-9374	TGI FRIDAY'S	402-390-2600
CLUB PATRICK'S	402-934-5061	LIGHTHOUSE BAR & GRILL	402-498-3824	THAI PEPPER	402-445-9490
DELTA HOUSE	402-934-4042	LONE STAR		THAI SPICE	402-492-8808
DI COPPIA	402-392-2806	STEAKHOUSE & SALOON	402-493-1360	TIMBER LODGE STEAKHOUSE	402-491-0000
DJ'S DUGOUT	402-498-8855	MAHOGANY PRIME STEAKHOUSE	402-445-4380	THE ORIGINAL	
DONIA	402-963-9595	MEDITERRANEAN BISTRO	402-493-3080	VINCENZO'S RISTORANTE	402-498-3889
DON CARMELO'S PIZZERIA	402-289-9800	MIRACLE HILLS CAFE		WINGSTOP	402-934-9464
DOWNING'S HOMESTYLE		& COFFEE SHOP	402-496-4781		
DELI AND ICE CREAM PARLOR	402-445-2422	MUSTANG SALLY'S	402-934-7837		
EL BEES	402-779-2725	NEW GOLD			
ELI'S	402-496-2957	MOUNTAIN RESTAURANT	402-496-1688		
EXOTIC FLAVORS	402-933-0855	NEWMAN'S PASTA CAFÉ	402-884-0990		
FARO'S	402-932-0113	PEPPERJAX	402-964-2760		
FARUCCI'S BISTRO		PHOENIX FOOD & SPIRITS	402-493-7607		
& GOURMET GROCERY	402-496-0202	PRESTIGE WORLD CLASS	402-614-7660		
FETA'S GYROS	402-504-4976	QDOBA MEXICAN GRILL	402-884-1340		
FIGBY'S	402-498-0817	RED ROBIN GOURMET BURGERS	402-493-6223		
FOX AND HOUND		RED ZONE BBQ	402-431-9663		
ENGLISH PUB & GRILL	402-964-9074	RIVERA'S MEXICAN FOOD	402-932-1381		
FRANK'S PIZZA	402-493-0404	ROMANO'S MACARONI GRILL	402-955-1000		
GOLDEN PALACE	402-397-2526	ROMEO'S			
	402-493-2777	MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA	402-391-8870		

BARS South

ANDY & RUBY'S BAR	402-734-9099
ANDY'S PLACE	402-733-1985
BEER CITY	402-733-4782
BG'S UNDER THE BRIDGE	402-734-9068
BIG D'S	402-734-9062
BROWN DERBY BAR	402-734-6198
DARBY'S TAVERN	402-733-9696
DONOHUE'S PUB	402-738-9780
DRIFT INN	402-733-9505
JOHNNY Z'S	402-733-9602
KUTA'S KORNER	402-733-9777



DURHAM WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM

THE PREMIER MUSEUM DEDICATED TO THE HISTORY AND HERITAGE OF OUR REGION AND ITS PEOPLE.

Admission: Adults: \$7.00; Seniors (62+): \$6.00; Children (3-12): \$5.00; Children under 2 and members are free.

Hours: Tues: 10am-8pm; Wed-Sat: 10am-5pm; Sun: 1pm-5pm; Closed Mondays and Major Holidays. 801 South 10th Street | Omaha, NE 68108 | 402.444.5071 | www.dwhm.org

LALUNA	402-934-8002
LITTLE POLONIA	402-733-9000
SECOND BASE	402-733-9521
SIDELINES SPORTS BAR	402-614-6351
STARSKY'S	402-734-9071
STOCKMAN'S	402-734-9066
THE ECLIPSE TAVERN	402-934-4753
TRIANGLE	402-734-9073
WC'S PLACE	402-734-9089

RESTAURANTS South

AZTECA	402-991-2363 402-896-6766
BELCASTRO'S RESTAURANT - SPORTS BAR	402-991-6442
CHINA SONG	402-733-9335
DON GABY'S RESTAURANT	402-731-0936
EL 7 MARES	402-934-4753
EL ALAMO	402-731-8969
EL MUNDO DE MEXICO	402-731-2188
EL POLLO CATRINE	402-884-7608
EL RANCHITO	402-731-9717
EL RINCONCITO	402-734-0236
EL SOL RESTAURANTE	402-734-9001
GREAT DRAGON CHINESE RESTAURANT	402-731-4100
GUACA MAYA	402-733-3440
GUADALAJARA RESTAURANT	402-733-7047
HOME CAFÉ	402-733-7564
HOMESTEAD CAFÉ	402-738-9989
HOWARD'S CHARRO CAFE	402-731-3776
ISLAND D'LITES	402-734-6884
JADE PALACE	402-293-8089
JOE TESS' PLACE	402-731-7278
JOHNNY'S CAFÉ	402-731-4774
JOHN'S GRECIAN DELIGHT	402-731-8022
KAHN'S MONGOLIAN BBQ	402-731-4800
LA FUENTE	402-733-4834
LANSKY'S PIZZA PASTA	
PHILLY STEAK SANDWICHES	402-502-0555
LOS GALLOS	402-933-5834
PALETERIA & RESTAURANT SAN LUIS	402-933-9940
TACO DURANGO	402-733-0346
TAQUERIA EL REY	402-502-0674
TAQUERIA LA ESMERALDA	402-502-2274
TAQUERIA TIAJUANA	402-731-1281
THAI KITCHEN	402-733-0579
ZESTO'S	402-932-4420

See the Soaring
Wings ad for upcoming
event news
Located on page 49

SPECIALTY SHOPS South

25 Soaring Wings Vineyard

402-253-2479
17111 South 138th Street | Springfield, NE



Soaring Wings is a family owned operation. The land was purchased in 2001, and operations in the Vineyard began in March of 2002 with winery operations commencing in August of 2003. Sharon and Jim Shaw are the sole owners. Making high quality wine that competes on the international level is our goal. We are pleased to say that we have won over 80 medals in international wine competitions in the last 4 years. We presently have 7 acres of grapes at our winery site with an additional 40 acres of grapes under contract.

EDDIE'S CATERING & SOCIAL HALL	402-733-5444
MJ JAVA	402-342-5282
REGIS FOOD MART	402-502-3919

BARS Bellevue

DOUG'S TOWN TAVERN	402-291-5155
HAM'S BELLEVUE BAR	402-291-9941
JAMMER'S PUB	402-291-8282
PHARAOH'S	402-991-9000
PLAZA LOUNGE	402-291-9215
RUMORS	402-493-0351
THE LODGE	402-291-8585
VARIETIES	402-291-6131
VARSITY SPORTS CAFE	402-339-7003

RESTAURANTS Bellevue

ALEXANDER'S	402-393-8625
ALVARADO'S MEXICAN FOOD	402-292-2137
AMARILLO	402-571-2333
AMERICAN HEROES	402-292-3663
CATFISH LAKES RESTAURANT & LOUNGE	402-292-9963
CHANDLER INN PIZZA	402-734-0663

CHINA CAFE	402-292-6999
CHINA STAR	402-292-6999
CHINA TASTE RESTAURANT	402-738-1682
DAIRY TWIST	402-292-1303
DJ'S DUGOUT	402-292-9096
DON & MILLIE'S	402-291-9211
DOWNTOWN COFFEE SHOP	402-292-7100
EDELWEISS	
GERMAN RESTAURANT	402-291-3090
ELAINE'S KITCHEN	402-293-1588
GIAVONNI SANTINO'S	402-291-4444
GOLDEN DRAGON	402-291-9099
GOOD TASTE	
CHINESE RESTAURANT	402-731-2500
JOHN & FRAN'S RESTAURANT	402-733-6500
LA MESA MEXICAN RESTAURANT	402-733-8754
LIL' BURRO	402-292-0102
LUMS RESTAURANT	402-733-1646
MAID-RITE	402-292-6012
MAMA ALVINOS PIZZERIA	402-292-6666
MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL	402-291-6637
NELLIE'S BAR-B-QUE PIT	402-933-7427
NETTIES FINE MEXICAN FOOD	402-733-3359
NEW YORK BURRITO	402-291-8887
O'BANIONS BAR & GRILL	402-293-9760
PHARAOH'S BELLEVUE KENO	402-991-9000
POGO'S SUBS	402-408-0072
ROMEO'S	
MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA	402-292-2028
RUBY TUESDAY	402-292-9500
SZECHUAN SUNRISE	402-292-3888
SIAM CUISINE	402-292-7215
STELLA'S HAMBURGERS	402-291-6088
SUMMER KITCHEN CAFÉ	402-291-4544
SUPER BUFFET	402-682-9888
TERIYAKI GRILL	402-932-9225
THAT'S AMORE	402-934-5800
VARSITY SPORTS CAFÉ	402-932-0303
VIDLAK'S FAMILY RESTAURANT	402-884-5111

BARS South Central

BUCKY DEXTER'S	402-339-6016
BUSHWACKER'S SALOON	402-492-8000
CHROME LOUNGE	402-339-8660
CLUB ROXBURY	402-339-9791
CORNWELL'S TAVERN	402-592-1927
GETAWAY LOUNGE	402-593-8814
JUST ONE MORE	402-331-9998
LIFT	402-934-4300
MIXXERS	402-537-3080
MOLLY'S PUB	402-597-6033
MURPHY'S LOUNGE	402-339-7170
MVP LOUNGE	402-331-9815
OZONE LOUNGE	402-331-7575
PENTHOUSE LOUNGE	402-331-9851
PJ BAR & GRILL	402-596-0128
RALSTON KENO	402-592-3008

SCORZSPORTS CENTER	402-339-7771
SEAN O'CASEY'S	402-593-1746
SIDE POCKET BILLIARDS	402-934-9663
STRAIGHT SHOOTERS	402-331-9900
SUGAR CREEK	402-331-4579
SUNDOWNER BAR	402-733-9225
THOMASVILLE LOUNGE	402-593-8106
TIME CLOCK	402-339-1235
VILLAGE BAR	402-331-6076

RESTAURANTS

South Central

2010 CAFÉ	402-537-3080
ANTHONY'S	
RESTAURANT & LOUNGE	402-331-7575
BILL'S BBQ	402-592-3252
BOSTON GOURMET PIZZA	402-592-2337
BREWSKY'S	402-614-2739
BUFFALO COMPANY	402-592-9999
BULL FEATHERS	402-331-1818
CHINA GOURMET	402-991-2003
CHINA ONE	402-597-2888
CHINA ROAD	402-291-8855
CHINA STAR	402-339-1780
COSTA EL SOL	402-596-1978
DON & MILLIE'S	402-593-6099
DRAGON CAFE	402-731-4800
EL BEES 2	402-896-8417
FARMER B'S STEAK HOUSE	402-339-5522
GRAINERY WHOLE FOODS	
MARKET & RESTAURANT	402-593-7816
GRANDMOTHER'S	
RESTAURANT & LOUNGE	402-339-6633
GRECIAN GYROS	402-331-7110
GUSTO CUBAN CAFÉ	402-614-7800
GYROS SHACK	402-339-8131
HONG KONG CAFE	402-339-3888
HUNAN PALACE	402-597-1688
J-BIRDS FOOD & SPIRIT	402-991-3999
JOHNNY SORTINO'S PIZZA	402-339-5050
JUST ONE MORE	402-331-9998
KOREA KING RESTAURANT	402-593-6568
KOREAN FOOD RESTAURANT	402-593-0717
KOREA KING	402-593-6568
LAVISTA KENO JIMBO'S DINER	402-537-9001
LOLA'S DELI	402-597-3354
LUCINDA'S RESTAURANT	402-334-3198
MARIA'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT	402-592-3623
MING'S RESTAURANT	402-592-2390
RAZZY'S DELI	402-537-9600
ROMAN COIN PIZZA	402-339-1944
ROMEO'S	
MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA	402-331-5656
ROSE GARDEN	402-339-8588
ROUTE 66 PUB & GRILL	402-557-6766
SAM & LOUIE'S	
NEW YORK PIZZERIA	402-895-0811
SAN DIEGO TACO	402-339-1410

SEAN O'CASEY'S PUB	402-593-1746
SPAGHETTI WORKS	402-592-1444
SUMMER KITCHEN	
CAFE & BAKERY	402-592-8017
SUZEE'S CAFÉ	402-964-2200
SYZZLYN SKILLET	402-932-6665
VACANTIS RESTAURANT	402-331-4999
VARSITY SPORTS CAFE	402-339-7003
WINCHESTER SALOON	402-331-9933
WINGSTOP	402-934-9464
WONG'S HUNAN GARDEN	402-331-1615

BARS

Southwest

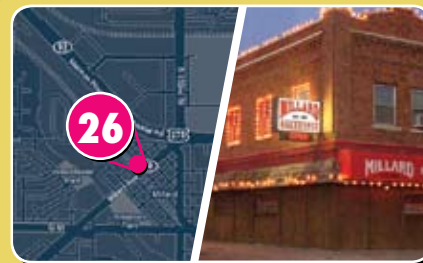
2 FINE IRISHMEN	402-933-3990
DO-HICKEY'S BAR & GRILL	402-895-3111
ONE-N-GO SALOON	402-895-6933
ON THE ROCKS	402-884-0244
OPPERMAN'S PUB	402-933-2419
PAT'S PUB	402-934-4242
PICCOLO'S BAR	402-895-9988
RATIGANS	402-895-3311
THE BEST PUB	402-891-9888
TOMMY O'S	402-330-4453
WHY-NOT LOUNGE	402-895-9990

RESTAURANTS

Southwest

26 Millard Roadhouse

402-891-9292
13325 Millard Ave.



A Millard family restaurant specializing in all your favorite home style foods. Broasted chicken, liver & onions, chicken fried steak as well as chicken, & homemade mashed potatoes & gravy just to name a few. We also have great appetizers, salads galore, sandwiches and your favorite beverages. There's a game room for all and we offer one of Omaha's largest children's menu with all their favorites served in a smoke free environment. Weekdays from 11-2 join us for our lunch buffet, and also on Sunday from 10-2 for our fabulous brunch buffet. Downtown Millard...food, friends, and family fun – that's what we're all about.

For those with discriminating taste:

Property Maintenance - Landscaping
Mowing - Trimming - Fertilization
Aeration - Seeding - Cleanup



598-7308 598-7308 598-7308 598-7308

Want to see your restaurant listed?
Give us a call at 402-203-6145

AUSTIN'S STEAKHOUSE	402-829-1616
BEIJING GATE	402-346-9226
BERNIE'S PIZZA	402-895-4433
BO BO CHINA	402-933-2518
BREWSKY'S	402-201-2739
BUFFALO WILD WINGS	
GRILL & BAR	402-492-9464
BUFFET APPLE	402-891-0888
CHAMPPS AMERICANA	402-697-9999
CHARLIE'S ON THE LAKE	402-991-9611
CHINA BISTRO	402-895-5888
CRACKER BARREL	402-891-8665
DON & MILLIE'S	402-991-9112
FINNEGAN'S	402-333-6181
FRANK'S TREEHOUSE	402-731-3297
FUDDRUCKERS	402-932-7790
GREAT WALL, THE	402-895-3811
JULIAN'S SPORTS GRILL	402-991-2663
KOREAN HOUSE	402-291-3900
MANCHU WOK	402-697-8500
MILLARD EXPRESS	402-896-8009
NEW YORK BURRITO	402-861-9667
NEW YORK CHICKEN & GYROS	402-891-0414
OZARK SMOKED MEAT COMPANY	402-894-0444
PIZZA MACHINE	402-829-1777
RUBY TUESDAY	402-932-0660
SAM & LOUIE'S NEW YORK PIZZERIA	402-895-2427
	402-895-0811
SAPP BROS CAFÉ	402-895-2122
SHARKS AT TIBURON	402-895-7337
SHIRLEY'S DINER	402-896-6515
THAI PEPPER	402-895-7788

Bars West

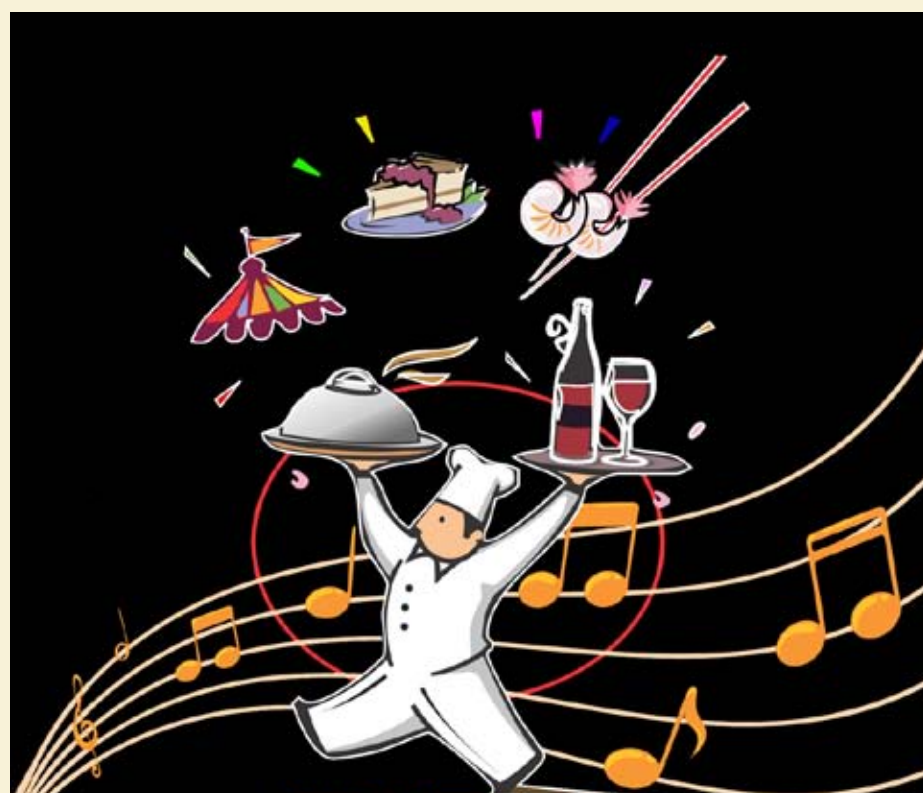
AMERICAN DREAM	402-330-2292
ARTHUR'S 4 SEASONS	402-393-6369
BEACH OMAHA	402-390-6152
CITRUS LOUNGE	402-934-4320
CLUB 108	402-932-7222
ELI'S	402-399-8585
E'Z PLACE	402-330-0505
FLASHBACKS	402-884-5437
HOLIDAY LOUNGE	402-391-4442
INDIGO JOE'S	402-502-2777
INTERLUDE	402-391-3060
MIC'S KARAOKE BAR	402-934-8640
NAUGHTY LOUNGE & GRILL	402-614-3407
NICO	402-614-2582
NO WHERE BAR	402-502-5656
O'BRIENS LOUNGE	402-391-2234
OBSERVATORY LOUNGE	402-334-9996
OFFICE WEST LOUNGE	402-330-1122
REDNECK SALOON	402-733-6365
SHARK CLUB	402-397-4275
THE REEL MARTINI BAR	402-884-7885
THE DRAFT HOUSE	402-884-2845

THE DRINK	402-934-5845
THE ECLIPSE TAVERN	402-502-9384
THE VELVET LOUNGE	402-614-3534
VINO 100	402-934-4739
VIP LOUNGE	402-393-9230
WET LOUNGE	402-502-9995
ZOGS	402-697-0179

RESTAURANTS West

BASHA'S RESTAURANT	402-934-6266
B & G TASTY FOODS	402-390-6096
BIG FRED'S PIZZA	402-333-4419
BILLY FROGG'S	402-397-5719
BONEFISH GRILL	402-391-3474
BREADOVEN	402-778-9296
BRONCO'S	
SELF-SERVICE DRIVE IN	402-334-7477

BROOKSIDE CAFE	402-330-0914
BROTHER SEBASTIAN'S	402-330-0300
BROTHER SEBASTIAN'S STEAK HOUSE & WINERY	402-330-0300
CAFE CAFE	402-334-7172
CAFÉ DI COPPIA	402-392-2806
CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN	402-343-0770
CAMILLE'S SIDEWALK CAFE	402-697-9727
CECIL'S CAFÉ	402-614-3334
CENTER DELI	402-933-2009
CHEEBURGER CHEEBURGER	402-884-5554
CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE	402-289-4210
CHINA GARDEN	402-397-1995
CHIPOTLE	402-697-4903
CICI'S PIZZA	402-991-2992
CLANCY'S PUB	402-505-4400
COLTON'S WOODFIRED GRILL	402-334-8100
DAVE & BUSTER'S	402-697-9988
DON & MILLIE'S	402-390-9096



WESTFEST

A Taste Of West "O"

July 11th, 12th & 13th - 2008

The Shops of Legacy
(168th & West Center Rd.)

www.TasteofWestO.com

BOULEVARD

DON CARMELO'S PIZZERIA	402-289-9800
ELI'S	402-399-8585
EMBASSY COFFEE SHOP	402-391-3501
FARMHOUSE CAFÉ	402-393-0640
FERNANDO'S	402-330-5707
FIREBIRDS ROCKY	
MOUNTAIN GRILL	402-359-1340
FLAVOR FUSION & GRILL	402-334-3873
FLEMING'S PRIME	
STEAKHOUSE & WINE BAR	402-393-0811
FOX AND HOUND ENGLISH	
PUB & GRILL	402-334-3133
GAETA'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE	402-392-2306
GANDOLFO'S DELI	402-932-3354
GENJI JAPANESE STEAKHOUSE	402-333-8338
GRAND FORTUNE	
CHINESE CUISINE	402-697-9888
GREAT WRAP	402-398-9727
GRISANTI'S	402-330-0440
HAPPY HOLLOW CLUB	402-391-2341
HECTOR'S WEST	402-884-2272
HONEY BAKED HAM	402-391-3233
HONG KONG CAFÉ	402-778-9888
HOUSE OF HUNAN	402-334-5382
HOWARD'S CHARRO CAFÉ	402-731-3776
HUHOT MONGOLIAN GRILL	402-408-3300
INDIA GARDEN	402-697-0101
INDIGO JOE'S	402-502-2777
JACK & MARY'S RESTAURANT	402-496-2090
JAIPUR	402-392-7331
JAM'S BAR & GRILL	402-399-8300
JC MANDARIN	402-333-1991
JERICO'S	402-496-0222
JOHNNY'S ITALIAN STEAKHOUSE	402-289-9210
JULIO'S WEST	402-330-2110
KATIE'S GREEK	
RESTAURANT & TAVERNA	402-558-5623
KOBE STEAK HOUSE OF JAPAN	402-391-1755
KONA GRILL	402-779-2900
LA FONDA	402-333-8048
LA CASA PIZZERIA	402-391-6300
LAZLO'S BREWERY & GRILL	402-289-5840
LEE'S CHINA	402-397-3227
LE PEEP	402-934-9914
LINGS	402-330-2390
LIT	402-905-2548
LONE STAR	
STEAKHOUSE & SALOON	402-333-1553
MAMA'S PIZZA	402-933-5090
MARKET BASKET	402-397-1100
MCKENNA'S BLUES,	
BOOZE, & BBQ	402-393-7427
MELTING POT	402-391-6358
MIMI'S CAFE	402-289-9610
MIRACLE HILLS CAFÉ	402-496-4781
MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL	402-933-6637
EW CHINA BUFFET	402-391-9313
NEWMAN'S PASTA CAFÉ	402-884-2420

NEW YORK BURRITO	402-965-9727
NEW YORK FRIED CHICKEN	402-955-0825
NOODLE ZOO	402-330-4846
NOODLES & COMPANY	402-330-1012
OFF CENTER DELI	402-933-2009
OLD COUNTRY BUFFET	402-393-6000
OLD FASHIONED GARDEN CAFÉ	402-393-0252
OLIVE GARDEN ITALIAN	
RESTAURANT	402-333-4002
OMAHA CHOPHOUSE	402-516-3600
OSCAR'S PIZZA & SPORTS GRILL	402-758-1910
OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE	402-697-1199
OZARK SMOKED MEAT COMPANY	402-333-1744
PADDY O'QUIGLEY'S	402-758-1910
PANCHERO'S	402-934-5677
PANERA BREAD	402-330-0819
PANDA HOUSE	402-691-0099
PARADISE BAKERY & CAFÉ	402-934-5757
	402-934-7800
PASTA AMORE	402-391-2585
PEPPERJAX GRILL	402-758-9222
	402-884-0430
PF CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO	402-390-6021
PRESTIGE WORLD CLASS	402-614-7660
PRIMA 140	402-697-7840
QDOBA MEXICAN GRILL	402-934-8840
RED LOBSTER	402-330-0162
RED ROBIN GOURMET BURGERS	402-334-6894
ROJA MEXICAN GRILL &	
MARGARITA BAR	402-333-7652
ROMANO'S MACARONI GRILL	402-955-1000
ROMEO'S	
MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA	402-330-4160
ROYAL CHINA HOME CUISINE	402-334-2289
RUBY TUESDAY RESTAURANT	402-391-3702
	402-932-0660
RUSTY NAIL INN	402-333-7370
SAIGON RESTAURANT	402-697-7000
SAKURA BANA	402-391-5047
SAM & LOUIE'S NEW YORK	
STYLE PIZZERIA	402-332-0072
SAMURAI SAM'S TERIYAKI GRILL	402-330-5588
SARKU JAPAN	402-330-6068
SEÑOR MATIA'S	402-391-0191
SPORTS SUBS	402-505-9005
SUPPER THYME	402-933-4521
SZECHUAN EXPRESS CHINESE	
RESTAURANT	402-330-9779
TANDURI FUSION INDIAN	
CURRY & GRILLE	402-505-9209
TASTE	402-884-3175
	402-991-7100
TASTE OF THAILAND	402-691-9991
TASTING ROOM, THE	402-505-9463
T-BONE'S GRILL	402-330-8881
TEXAS ROADHOUSE	402-504-4449
THAI KITCHEN	402-697-3887
THAI SPICE	402-493-9944

TOKYO KITCHEN	402-758-1839
VIDLAK'S BROOKSIDE CAFÉ	402-330-0914
VINCENZO'S	402-393-8282
WAVE BISTRO	402-496-8812
WHEATFIELDS	402-955-1485
WONG'S HUNAN GARDEN	402-331-1615
ZIO'S NEW YORK	
STYLE PIZZERIA	402-330-1444
	402-397-4040
	402-391-1881

27 Le Voltaire

402-934-9374
569 N. 155th Plaza



Recognized as one of Omaha's finest restaurants, Le Voltaire's features classical French cuisine with a flair. The Executive Chef and Owner, Cédric S. Fichépain is committed to providing an atmosphere of understated elegance, fine service and extraordinary cuisine.

Each dish is prepared using the freshest flavors of the season and ingredients of the highest quality. The wine list is constantly updated to represent the best wine selections from the regions of France.

28 Upstream Brewing Company

402-778-0100
17070 Wright Plaza



Upstream Brewing Company, a delicious Omaha original, has been serving a wide variety of fresh-from-scratch dishes, decadent desserts and hand-crafted beers since 1996. So whether you're craving a Gold Coast Blonde Ale, a perfectly seasoned fillet or just a relaxing game of pool, the spirited atmosphere and distinctive aromas of the Upstream will keep you coming back. Again and again.

SPECIALTY SHOPS

West

ACCESS 66 CATERING	402-390-3380
BROADMOOR MARKET	402-391-0312
CATEGORY ONE	
GOURMET & GIFTS	402-390-9684
CORKSCREW WINE & CHEESE	402-991-2927
GLOBAL GATHERINGS	402-677-3730
GREAT HARVEST	
BREAD COMPANY	402-390-9988
INTERNATIONAL CATERING	402-334-5446
KRISTEN'S COOKIES	402-391-4331
LITHUANIAN BAKERY & KAFE	402-391-3503
SPIRIT WORLD	402-391-8680
THE CAKERY	402-691-0770
THE TEA SMITH	402-330-7070
THE WINERY	402-391-3535
WHOLE FOODS	402-393-1200



By carpooling 5 days a week, a person can save over \$2,600 a year with a 10 mile commute.*

To calculate your potential savings and find instant carpool matches, visit www.MetroRideshare.Org today!

*Figures from American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates

HOTELS

Omaha Metro

COUNCIL BLUFFS

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT	712-346-2200
DAYS INN	712-366-9699
	712-323-2200
HAMPTON INN	712-328-2500
HAMPTON INN & SUITES	888-682-0900
HARRAH'S CASINO & HOTEL	712-329-6000
SUPER 8	712-322-2888

CARTER LAKE/AIRPORT

COUNTRY INN & SUITES	712-347-5600
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS	
HOTEL & SUITES	402-505-4900
LA QUINTA INN	712-347-6595
SLEEP INN & SUITES	402-342-2525
SUPER 8	712-347-5588

DOWNTOWN

COMFORT INN AT THE ZOO	402-342-8000
COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT	402-346-2200
DOUBLETREE HOTEL & EXECUTIVE	
MEETING CENTER	402-346-7600
ECONOMY INN	402-345-9565
HAMPTON INN & SUITES	402-345-5500
HILTON OMAHA	402-998-3400
HILTON GARDEN INN	402-341-4400
SUPER 8	866-232-9330

CENTRAL

BAYMONT INN & SUITES	402-391-8129
COLONIAL HOTEL	402-551-4543
COMFORT INN & SUITES	402-934-4900
DOUBLETREE GUEST SUITES	402-397-5141
HAMPTON INN	402-391-8129
HOMEWOOD SUITES BY HILTON	402-345-5100
HOLIDAY INN OMAHA	
CONVENTION	402-393-3950
HOWARD JOHNSON PLAZA	402-397-3700
SUPER 8	402-390-0700

NORTH

ASPEN CORPORATE LODGE	402-553-1239
HOMEWOOD SUITES BY HILTON	402-345-5100

NORTHWEST

COMFORT INN	402-445-0400
COUNTRY INN & SUITES	402-445-4445
HOLIDAY INN	800-465-4329
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS	402-505-8181
LA QUINTA INN	402-493-1900

SOUTH CENTRAL

BEST WESTERN KELLY INN	402-339-7400
COMFORT INN	402-593-2380
DAYS INN	402-331-8220
HAMPTON INN & SUITES	402-895-2999
HAWTHORNE SUITES	402-331-0101
LA QUINTA INN	402-592-5200

SOUTHWEST

CLARION HOTEL	402-895-1000
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OPEN DOOR MISSION

SUMMER OF
HOPE
2008Volunteer
Opportunities

Volunteers make a difference!

Consider: Just 2 hours per month x 12 months = 24 hours of service...24 hours that help change lives!

LOAVES & FISHES TEAM

Your church, business or service group can serve meals to the homeless at ODM.

SOS TEAM VOLUNTEERS

Help sort, organize and shelve donations at our Timberlake Outreach Center.

CHILDREN'S SUMMER BIBLE DAY CAMP

Schedule time to spend with children who attend our Summer Bible Day Camp, June—August.

In 2007 we provided:

403,840

Hot meals

101,290

Nights of safe shelter for men, women and children

64,117

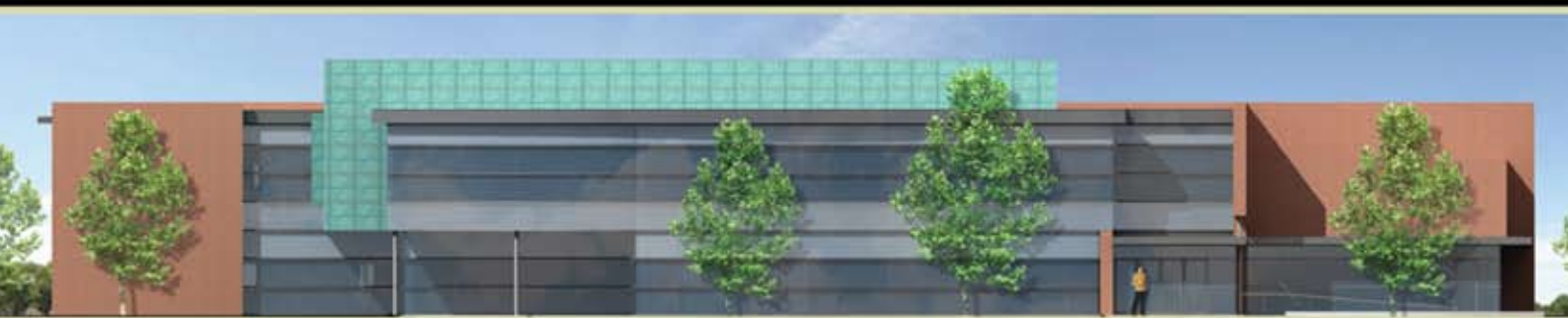
Individuals with food, clothing & furniture from the Timberlake Outreach Center

Groups Now Forming!

Call your volunteer hotline at (402) 422-1111, ext. 1202 to learn more about opportunities for service

To give, send to 2828 N. 23rd St. East,
PO Box 8340, Omaha, NE 68108.
Call 402.422.1111 or
visit online at www.opendoormission.org

One person can have a vision. It takes a community to craft the future.



Institute for the Culinary Arts & Alumni Conference Center

Groundbreaking

Thursday, May 22, 2008
Groundbreaking & remarks 5:30 p.m.
Reception 6 p.m.
Fort Omaha Campus • 30th and Fort Streets
Omaha, Nebraska

METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
402.457.2400 | www.mccneb.edu



A learning place - To meet consistently growing enrollments, the Institute for the Culinary Arts will add state-of-the-art instructional space.

A training place - With new training options, our world-class instructors will be able to meet the continuing educational needs of the regional culinary workforce.

A gathering place - The Alumni Conference Center will offer much-needed conference space for up to 800 people. A student-operated bistro with seating for 80 will also be open to the public.

Join us as we extend our distinguished tradition of education, workforce development and community-building.

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESENTS

THIRD ANNUAL GREAT PLAINS THEATRE CONFERENCE

MAY 24 - 31, 2008



FEATURING:
PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT
DOUG WRIGHT

METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
402.457.2618 OMAHA, NEBRASKA

EVENING HIGHLIGHTS

Monday, May 26

Breathe by Javon Johnson
Omaha Community Playhouse

Tuesday, May 27

I Can't Remember Anything, an evening with two-time Tony Award winner Tammy Grimes, accompanied by Joel Vig
Omaha Community Playhouse

Wednesday, May 28

Reception honoring Doug Wright
Omaha Community Playhouse

Thursday, May 29

Scenes from the works of our honored playwright Doug Wright
Introduction by playwright Doug Wright
Creighton University

Friday, May 30

A production of *I Am My Own Wife*
Introduction by playwright Doug Wright
Creighton University

Saturday, May 31

Gala, video tribute and presentation of Great Plains Playwright Award to Doug Wright
Hosted by Patricia Neal and Joel Vig

Full schedule available at
www.mccneb.edu/theatreconference

THE FIRST ANNUAL

FOOD & Spirits

ROCK STOCK & BARREL

SEPT.
13TH
2008



**SOARING
WINGS
VINEYARD**

NOON - 10:30 PM

FEATURING

**SARAH BENCK &
THE ROBBERS**

THE WHIPKEY 3

KYLE HARVEY

MATT COX

BRAD HOSHAW

**SCOTT SEVERIN & THE
MILTON BURLESQUE**

**THE WHOLES &
BIG BAND REPRISE**

This event will benefit the Food Bank. Tickets for the entire day are \$25 and include food tastings throughout the day. Call 402-203-6145 for ticket information or you can buy the tickets through all ETIX locations and online. Advance tickets sales begin June 1.

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