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Issue 9

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

MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION

Omaha's Largest Pizza Review II pg. 22

The Logos of Cooking pg. 9



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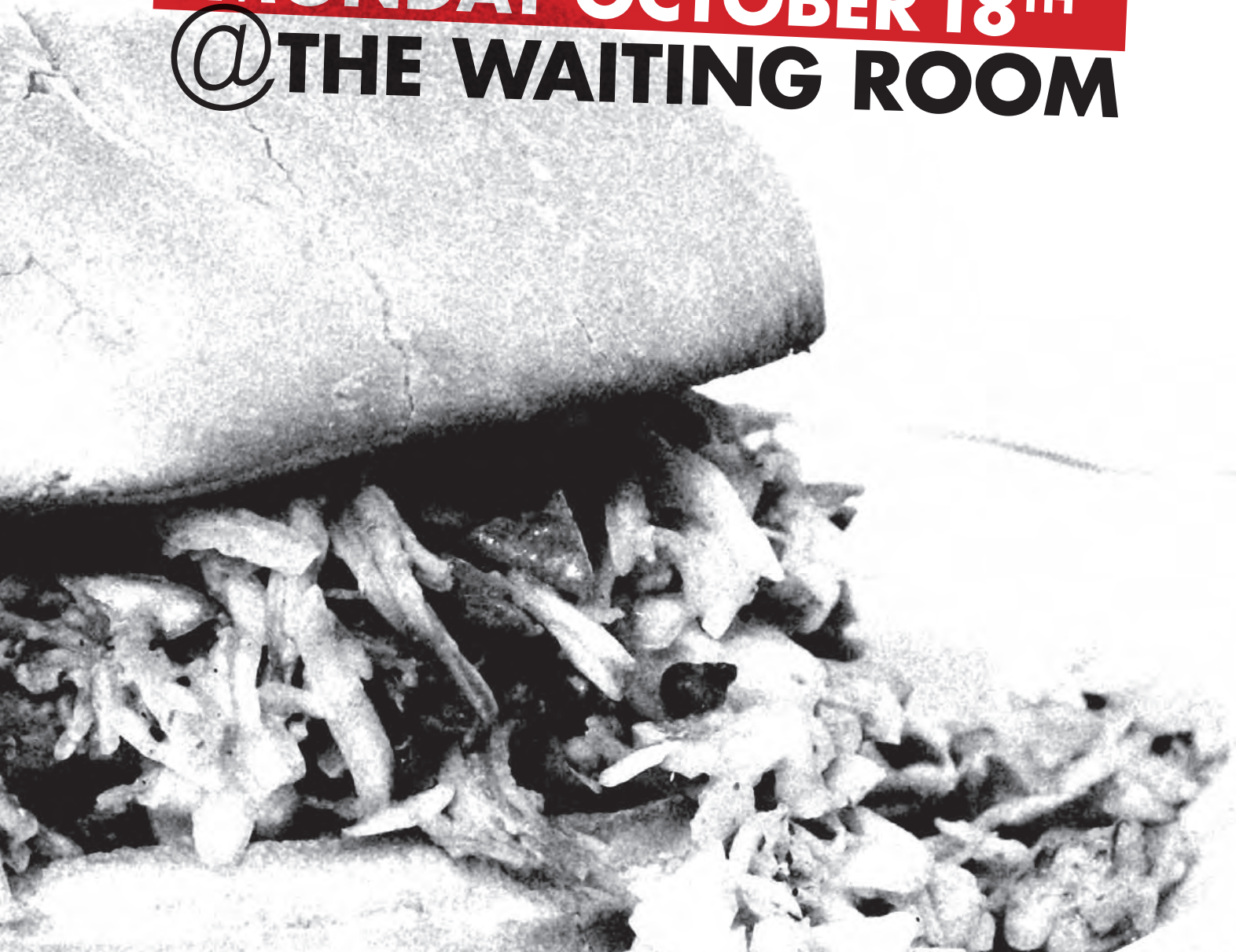
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On the Cover

The pizza that claimed another "Peoples Choice Award" for Mangia Italiana – two years running.

Photo by David Ahlquist.

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



While preparing this issue of Food & Spirits Magazine, our ninth, I had the opportunity to sit down

and reread the original business plan for FSM. I stumbled across it while unpacking a number of boxes that had been in the office closet since I moved into my house.

Written in 2005, I was struck by how many things have changed from the original concept (Wine & Dine Magazine was the original name). As well, I was also struck by both how insightful it was in many areas while at the same time missing the point in others (it was mostly going to be in black and white).

“Covering the dynamic food and spirit industry in Omaha and giving it a voice is something I think we can cross off the list.”

The end of the business plan details the goals we established and thoughts on how we could carry them out. In many ways we accomplished a lot of what we set out to do; producing a national caliber magazine that showcases the incredible Omaha creative talent that is present in our fine city is something that we’ve done. As well, covering the dynamic food and spirit industry in Omaha and giving it a voice is also something I think we can cross off the list.

But we’ve had our shortcomings too. Being a native Nebraskan but moving to Omaha from San Francisco, I remember thinking when I first moved here and lived in the Old Market, that the different parts of the city seemed distinctly separate in many ways. Western Omaha was seen

as almost a different city to many people and the same could be said for South and North Omaha, Midtown and the Old Market. We imagined FSM as something that could unite the different parts of the city by giving the food and spirits industry a sort of central gathering spot. After-all, food and drink are food and drink no matter where you go, right?

“Over the coming months, we will be adding even more people to the excellent staff that is already in place.”

Somehow, we lost sight of that goal. As happens to all of us, we got so wrapped up in solving the day-to-day problems that we stopped thinking about some of the bigger issues that we could be part of the solution with. As well, FSM has always been a collaborative project on every level but, over the coming months, we will be adding even more people to the excellent staff that is already in place. More people equal more ideas and different perspectives and we like that.

All of us here at FSM are rededicating ourselves to those original goals. We’ve been expanding more to the west and the south and we will be giving those areas the coverage and distribution they deserve. As well, we’ll also be holding a number of events over the next year that will incorporate all the different areas of town. If you would like to be involved, on any level, let us know.

So all that is to say, we’re still pushing as hard as we can and always looking to improve the magazine and the way we do business. It’s been a fun ride over the four years I’ve been working on the magazine and I’m looking forward to the next four. And remember, because we do, that this is your magazine. As always, if you see something you like let us know, and if you don’t like something let us know that too – we’re always listening.

No. 9

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EXPERTS PANEL

MEET THE FULLY QUALIFIED PANEL OF INDUSTRY EXPERTS WHO HAVE DEVOTED THEIR KNOWLEDGE TO THIS ISSUE...



1 Michael Campbell

Michael Campbell, former owner of Mick's Music & Bar in Omaha, is a singer/songwriter and humorist. His CD, *Used Without Permission*, is available in stores, and his weekly essays can be found at PickyMick.blogspot.com. He is the author of *Are You Going To Eat That?*, a collection of fifty humor essays.

2 Corey Caughlin

An Omaha native, Corey later traveled to Denver where he became a chef's apprentice. While in Denver, Corey helped prepare lunch for Julia Childs at her last book opening and managed two restaurants. Corey later settled in San Francisco and held various jobs including a sales position for the Chronicle newspaper, as well as writing and illustrating the comic PloP. Recently, he returned to Omaha and is working in the service industry and is the author of the Food & Spirits Magazine comic, Blackout.

3 Dan Crowell

Cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed "spirits nerd", Dan is the Luxury Brands Specialist for Sterling Distributing Company in Omaha. He talks incessantly about the virtues of what he calls "investigative imbibement" and is an eternal student of the distillers' art. Dan encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.

4 John Finocchiaro

John Finocchiaro is a past owner of Finocchiaro Wine Company, Inc., a Nebraska wholesale wine, spirits, and beer distributorship dating back to 1935. He also formerly co-owned Johnson Brothers Finocchiaro, LLC. John is a former Certified Public Accountant and a Certified Specialist of Wine.

5 Dr. John Fischer

Dr. 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 two books: *The Evaluation of Wine—A Comprehensive Guide to the Art of Wine Tasting* and *Wine and Food—101*.

6 Jeremy Hunter

A food service warrior, Jeremy's 20 years of experience spans every aspect of the industry, from a dishwasher to owner of his own pizza restaurant. Above all, he loves being a server. When he's not behind the bar or helping customers, you'll find him with a nice microbrew and a glass of Grand Marnier.

7 Marq Manner

Marq Manner is a fan of Americana. He is interested in small town cafe's, roadside BBQ, getting a hotdog from a stand made in the likeness of George Washington, and the grittier eating atmospheres found in out of the way places. MarQ has been writing about the local music scene for The Omaha City Weekly for the past five years and has also written music features for many other rags and blogs.

8 Jason McLaughlin

Jason McLaughlin is a Beer Judge Certification Program judge, craft beer aficionado, and award-winning homebrewer living in Lincoln. Jason's love for outstanding beer started early when his lifelong friend, Adam Curfew of Salt Lake City, got his start at Squatter's brewery. The rest is history, as Jason travels around the country judging beer competitions and attending related events. Beer tasting and evaluation is his passion, and he can appreciate a great example of any style regardless of hype. His idea of a nice summer day is a lawn chair and a pint of Russian Imperial Stout.

9 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.

10 Ron Samuelson

Ron is co-owner of M's Pub and Vivace, which recently celebrated 15 years of operation in the Old Market. His career has spanned from Dallas and Denver to Omaha, with stints in the kitchen as well as management for both corporate and locally owned concepts. Currently serving a five year term on the board of the Downtown Business Improvement District, Ron has also served as President of the Omaha Restaurant Association is an inductee into the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame.

11 Brian Smith

Brian and his wife operate Black Sheep Farms, a chemical-free family farm near Bennington. He is a speaker and writer on the topic of local food, and he has a minor food addiction. Wanna go to lunch?

12 Ann Summers

Ann is a writer, amateur naturalist, mother, cook, and slow food advocate. She writes children's nature books as well as print and web articles on food, fitness, nutrition, education and families. Her recipes and food ideas can be found on annrsummers.com and the NE Food Coop website: nebraskafood.org.

Bring on the Farmers Markets!

by Samantha Schrader



It's that time of year again - when everything is moving outdoors, including our meals. In the past, farmer's markets were the primary connection between the production by farmers and the consumption of food by the end consumer. With the growth in popularity of locally produced food, farmers markets have been popping up all over the country, and Omaha is no exception. Farmers markets opened all over Omaha throughout May, and throughout the entire summer, there will be a weekly market close to all Omaha residents.

As I walk down Harney Street, with a pocketful of cash and my collection of reusable bags, I can already hear the sounds of the market - it's packed down here. I hop past cars waiting for elusive empty parking stalls. Sprawled out in front of me from Howard to Jackson were excited vendors and shoppers. At each booth there is conversation about the products, about the beautiful weather, about upcoming events, and the best ways to grill vegetables.

"Each week over 6,000 shoppers visit the market for locally grown food, meat, granola, homemade soap and balloon hats."

The Omaha Farmers Market in Omaha's historic Old Market kicked off on Saturday, May 1st, and will be open every Saturday through October 9th, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The Omaha Farmers Market in the Old Market is the largest market in the Omaha area. Each week over 6,000 shoppers visit the market for locally grown food, meat, granola, homemade soap and balloon hats. The Market was started during the turn of the 20th Century and ran until 1964. The Market was revived in 1994 in the same historic location, and still essentially serves the same purpose: a direct market for local farmers to sell their products, and form relationships with individuals and business owners within the city.

The Benson Farmers Market is held at Military Ave. and Maple Streets, approximately 61st and Maple, every Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Still growing with only about 15 vendors, the Benson Farmers Market is not able to draw crowds from all over

town but the Benson locals love it. For its small scale, this market offers a surprising variety of vendors. Some of the offerings include fresh produce, homemade granola, vegetable plants and flowers. You can also start the weekend off with a relaxing massage, join an online community supporting all natural food production, or pick up an issue of the Found in Benson Magazine. Nearby, Jane's Health Market has also begun a Saturday raw food brunch. The sparse traffic in the market is a refreshing change of pace from the hustle of the workweek. Vendors selling radishes, shallots, rhubarb, and spinach can be engaged in leisurely chat, unhurried by long lines of shoppers. The Benson Farmers Market is worth the trip to stock up on fresh food and be a part of one of Omaha's oldest communities.

West Omaha has its own farmers market at Village Pointe that's held every Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. through October 2. The Village Pointe Farmers Market focuses on fresh produce and farm products such as meats and cheese. It was established with the mission to promote sustainable, locally produced food to the community in West Omaha. While there are not vendors of craft items at Village Pointe, the selection of fresh local food is fantastic - it's definitely worth the trip. Table after table are covered with tomatoes, green onions, lettuce, and rhubarb. Vendors offer samples of cheese and bread, and locally raised beef, pork, and lamb can be purchased. The Village Pointe Farmers Market draws a large crowd, but both vendors and shoppers are cheery and energetic, making the experience fun and productive.

"Luckily for us, there are unique farmers markets all over the Omaha metro area."

Tomato Tomäto, Omaha's year-round indoor farmers market caters to anyone who cannot make it to any of the farmers markets offered on the weekend. The market is located at 2634 S. 156th Circle, and is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tomato Tomäto was founded in May of 2008 as a distribution outlet for Garden Fresh Vegetables in O'Neill, Nebraska. After being involved in the Village Pointe Farmers market, and after networking with other vendors the idea was born to have a year-round market for local farmers to sell to consumers. Tomato Tomäto now sells from over 30 vendors, and is continuously looking for ways to grow and serve its customers and vendors. True to its name, Tomato Tomäto continues to sell a huge variety of locally grown tomatoes. While you are in picking up ingredients for your award winning salsa, you can stock up on popcorn and grain products, specialty meats, all natural fruit chews, seasoned soy nuts, honey, and jam.

Shopping at the farmers market is much different than the typical grocery shopping experience. Purchasing food at a farmers market deepens and enhances the relationship you have with the food. All of the salsa recipes on the internet are not a match for the advice of a farmer who has been growing tomatoes for twenty years. There are countless reasons people flock to the markets all summer long and luckily for us, there are unique farmers markets all over the Omaha metro area.



The *LOGOS* of COOKING

by Ann Summers

If there is an ethos in cooking, we project it through our own creativity, passion and respect for what we make. Most home cooks would probably just as soon leave it at that. But to really cook, as the immortal Elizabeth David said, does not mean, “skimping the work or the basic ingredients, throwing together a dish anyhow and hoping for the best.” The logos of cooking, then, is simple but never crude.





Culinary skill is about the science of proportion in this very human Liberal Art. It is gastronomic chemistry, and chemistry is all about the numbers. $H_2O + NaHCO_3 =$ leavening, for example, or $Vermouth_1 + Gin_3 + Olive_2 =$ a respectable martini. And when you know a little chemistry, the rising of dough and batter, and the mixology of flavors becomes more predictable. To get the proportions wrong, however, can result in anything from bombed biscuits to musty martinis to gloppy greasy gravy. When you have mastered the basic classic proportions of recipes, you can add, embellish and improve to your own taste. When you have educated and coaxed your palette through many firings of baked goods, stir fries, sautés and grills, you can approach any dish from any country on any level of complexity with confidence. In other words, knowledge, practice, evaluation and feedback are how we learn to taste and to cook, and are essential to anyone preparing food.

“When you have mastered the basic classic proportions of recipes, you can add, embellish and improve to your own taste.”

Never underestimate science’s ability to produce things that are 1) measurable, 2) predictable, and 3) reproducible. These three terms define science, and they are relevant for omelettes and cupcakes alike. Don’t be daft like those people on reality shows who say things like, “I’m not here to make friends,



I’m here to create,” or “I just like to do things my own way,” all the while imagining that they are much cleverer than they are, and that rules are for suckers. Whether you are building an earthquake-proof sky-scraper, or a tailored jacket or a perfectly smooth zabaglione (an Italian egg custard with sparkling wine), the same thing applies: you must understand the basic scientific principles behind the thing. How does egg thicken liquid? What are the properties of casein and lemon juice and how do they affect milk? What are the basics of fermentation? What is a Maillard reaction? How do different proteins behave in different types of heat? Why does asparagus go with nothing else except more asparagus?

“You don’t have fifteen tiny pots or time to clean them. You have a life.”

Remain ignorant to basic science at your peril in the kitchen. For me the best way to learn cooking is to watch good cooks, and listen to their “asides,” or comments about how you mustn’t get the pan too hot or you will get scrambled egg instead of zabaglione, or how you can’t add flour to boiling liquid unless it’s in a paste of fat or butter, and how to knead pasta dough until it feel silky. I have stood next to grandmothers and other good cooks, but I have also watched uncounted hours of cooking shows. You remember cooking shows, don’t you? When people used to cook food and show how to do it? And instead of talking about all their famous friends they were going to feed, they talked about the food. You can still get good cooking shows on DVD from stores and libraries. Look for *The French Chef* with Julia Child for starters. PBS also occasionally broadcasts shows where chefs cook, but beware those chefs who

are suffering from cooking fifteen things in separate tiny pots. You don't have fifteen tiny pots, or time to clean them. You have a life. Even Jacques Pepin, who came up through the obsessive-compulsive world of classical French cheffdom, melts chocolate in the microwave now, and happily proclaims, "My wife taught me how to do it and it doesn't mess up the kitchen!" Bravo Mme. Pepin.

Understand your history. Did Marco Polo invent the noodle? Did the Chinese wage war with the first meatball-launching siege weapons? Is Martha Stewart a hack star or is she in fact, a classic chef and possibly the smartest person to ever live besides Einstein and Dick Feynman? Who were all those old dead French guys anyway and why do I care?

Before you judge this recipe or that, or who can cook, or what is truly gourmet or exciting and what is pretentious crap, you had better know your history. Perhaps it was Brillat Savarin or one of his many avatars that said there are no new recipes, and that everything we have ever made is only a copy of something much older. Regardless, before you put your hand to a cookbook or food blog or steamer of dumplings, you had better know what came before you. The Flying Karamozov Brothers used to say during juggling shows, "There's more to the theater than repetition," and then repeat it to great comic effect.

Unless you are aiming for comedy, you would be wise to know your history lest you end up repeating something hideous. Observe and learn. You can do in a few months of watching classic cooking videos what it took most apprentice chefs a lifetime to see. And you can read - good for you! Go to the library and start reading. Forget shiny cooking magazines until you know the basic terms on the cover. Read cookbooks, food journals, ethnologies, food history, and gastronomical diaries. Read and read and read until it starts to make sense and you can put a voulette with its spinach, Swiss cheese and nutmeg, into perspective.

"Unless you are aiming for comedy, you would be wise to know your history lest you end up repeating something hideous."

Understand the makeup of a dish and why it tastes good. Sometimes sweet, salty and sour go together impeccably like a Thai curry soup, sometimes they are disgusting like savory duck breast laced with cinnamon, ver-jus (a vinegar-like product of wine-making) and enough fresh fig compote to drown a horse. Personal taste aside, you can know what is good and what is not. Barbecue for instance, has more factions than a militant third-world political machine, but it does have basic rules that are knowable. Pit-smoking, for example, is really a no-brainer. What you do after that is subject to heritage. And there are unforgivable mistakes. Like insipidly sweet mega-national-franchise barbecue with no slaw. No slaw! Oh, the horror... So what makes a decent pork roast? Or chili? Or pasta dish?

If you don't know you cannot judge a good recipe from a bad one, and if you smoke (not pork in a pit, but cigs in a designated smoking area), or do other things to deaden your palette, like drink too much, eat too much salt, fat, and preservatives, so that you can no longer taste simple, plain flavors, then you might as well wipe down the kitchen, go to the drive-through and refrain from judgmental comments on food altogether. Go forth and eat. Experiment, and watch others experiment. Try and fail, and understand and accept that failure. Taste everything, and know what it is. Eat, drink and be wary.

Work on the logical aspects of cooking, and see why French food took over the world before and Asian flavors are taking it over now,



and why a soufflé rises or doesn't, and how different rice cook differently just as different types of meat do. And as you do that, remember:

Start with the basics. Look for recipes with fewer, not more ingredients.

Cook a basic recipe the first time as it is given, and after you master it, you can change it.

If you change a recipe, note or remember what you changed.

Don't be afraid of new food, but admit when you are over your head.

Explore new worlds of food and ingredients together, gradually, as you learn. Don't just go putting sugar-cured smoke-dried squid nuggets into everything.

Ask people who can cook to show you their favorite simple recipe. Why do the work someone else has already done?

Don't be picky, but care about what goes into your body. It's the only one you've got, and you're probably not getting a new one.

I ask you to focus, to work, to make messes. It's how good science and good food happens, and really, if you think about it, everything else that's fun, rewarding and worth bragging about.



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Review of *The Recipe Box*:

Produced by Nebraska Education Television by Ann Summers

If you love reading the stories behind family favorites, *The Recipe Box* (named for the NET program of the same name) is the cookbook for you. The recipes all have the authentic feeling of something your aunts and grandfathers scribbled down, which got handed lovingly across the years and the family to become “classics.”

“This is farm food, comfort food, grandmother food. It’s food for gathering people together.”

The recipes and their origins definitely reflect Nebraska’s original immigrant makeup, which was largely Northern European, and culturally, they have the flavor of what has become Midwestern cooking. This is farm food, comfort food, grandmother food. It’s food for gathering people together, and the stories back that up.

I cooked what appealed to me, and there were definite favorites. “Texas Caviar” was a fresh veg, herb and black bean dip that was so delicious, it actually made me think kindly of Texans. And all of Nathan Kramer’s salads were authentically German, and bang on flavor-wise; if you’ve never done potato salad with green onion,

bacon, and vinegar you don’t know what you’re missing. I love that there are no actual vegetables in the “Vegetable and Side Dish” categories, unless you count potatoes and macaroni, and there is one Main Dish of rattlesnake. Well, it is Nebraska!

Showstoppers in the “Bread” section were the Swedish Coffee Bread and Gramma Annie’s Cinnamon Rolls. I would even say, “So good, you’ll want to slap yourself,” but if you do, I can’t be accountable. The “Desserts” and “Cookies and Candy” sections are a wonderful mélange of updated depression-era penny-pinching recipes. One thinks gratefully of war-rationing relatives, and pictures these vintage concoctions and the fanfare they must still arouse. My favorite was a Glaswegian spiced raisin cake that matches Scottish practicality with tea-time elegance. “This and That,” included Joe Turco’s Chicken Cacciatore, which I have never seen made with fennel seed – something I adore: it was fabulous and very Italian.

I recommend buying this book, sampling it like I did, and then attaching your own family name to your favorite recipes. You could make up a relative of the appropriate heritage. But whatever myth you choose to nurture, cook them and share them. I imagine that must be the best way to honor these family stories and the food that inspired them.

– Chew on this. –

Second Place “Best Magazine Cover Design”
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(with a view)
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OMAHA PRESS CLUB

Parmiggiano-Reggiano: *The Meaning Behind the Name*

by Matt Biggins



What's in a name? There are many names in the cheese world from names that describe a general type of cheese, to very specific styles of cheese, to recognized brand names.

When you see the name "Cheddar" on a package of cheese, you know a bit about it. You know that this cheese will be semi-hard, that it will melt well. But the flavor can vary a great deal, sharp to mild, American style to Irish. The name only gets you halfway.

"Regulated by Italian and EU law, PR is produced by many companies in Northern Italy."

Then you have a name like Cambozola. This name belongs to one company. It's a registered trademark. I know exactly what I'm getting when I see that name. It's an absolutely sublime blend of triple cream Brie and Gorgonzola.

On the subject of names, I am let to the name Parmiggiano-Reggiano (PR), the undisputed king of cheeses. Similar to some names in the wine world, this one is regulated by law. Regulated by Italian and EU law, PR is produced by many companies in one of five regions of Northern Italy.

The regulations governing the production of PR are surprising in their breadth. Every step of the production of this masterwork is meticulously regulated. From what, when, and where the cows eat and live to the size and shape of the cheese mold, everything is laid-out in great detail.

First, the raw cows milk is placed in a large stainless steel vat. Here the cheese maker separates off some of the cream, producing a skim milk. After adding rennet, the milk forms curds. The curds are then cut down to about the size of a grain of rice. They are then collected and loaded into a stainless steel round form. Here it takes the familiar shape of a slightly bulbous, large wheel. After a couple days in the form, its time for a salt bath. The cheese maker lets the wheel soak in a brine solution for up to 25 days. After the salt, the wheel is moved to a dry rack to age for one to five years (if any reader has heard of PR aged more than 5 years, put down the magazine and send me an email immediately – I'll be right over). From there, the regulations continue including stipulation on storing, marking, and shipping. Full details on these regulations can be viewed at www.famigliagastaldello.it/a_52_IT_251_1.html.

Is all of the extra work worth it? Absolutely. The finished product is the most useful, versatile cheese on the planet. Simple, nutty and sublime. Most of the PR you'll see in stores is aged 12- 24 months. I would suggest buying the oldest you are able to find and afford. With age the salt crystals become more pronounced. At five years, the crystals abound and the flavor goes deeper. A small company, caputosdeli.com, sells five year aged PR. You'll need to call to arrange shipping. Having finished my last block of it a couple months ago, I wish I had some here to review for you. But take my word for it; this is the stuff dreams are made of.

In conclusion, spend the money, buy real Parmigiano-Reggiano – you will not regret it. Also, pay attention to the names of your cheeses. Write them down, do some digging. And most of all, enjoy!

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COUNTING CALORIES

by April Christenson

Diners who frequent Panera Bread restaurants may have noticed something new on the menu in recent months. No, it's not a new sandwich or salad. It's the calorie count of each item and it may surprise you. That Sierra Turkey on Focaccia with Asiago Cheese sandwich you were about to order... it's packing a whopping 970 calories, nearly half the daily recommended caloric intake for adults. Perhaps you would rather go with the Smoked Turkey Breast on Country bread, at a mere 560 calories, and save some room for desert. That is, of course, if you noticed the calorie count next to the item you were about to order at all.



“A provision of the health care bill recently passed by Congress requires chain restaurants to begin clearly posting calorie counts on menu boards.”

Panera Bread, a company which seems to pride itself on offering healthier, more nutrition-conscious options to its consumers, decided in recent months to preemptively begin posting calorie counts on menu boards in all of their company-owned locations. By next year, however, Panera Bread won't be alone. A provision of the health care bill recently passed by Congress requires chain restaurants with 20 or more locations nationwide to begin clearly posting calorie counts on menu boards. The law also applies to owners of vending machines with 20 or more locations.

Registered Dietitian Rebecca Beaudoin recently took a weight loss class she teaches to a local Panera Bread restaurant to see how her students responded to the menu labeling.

“They loved it,” Beaudoin said. “You have to be informed, but if the information is there and you're looking for it, it's helpful. But these people are trying to lose weight. As for the average public, we'll see.”

The new law comes as a reaction to the obesity epidemic in the United States. Nearly 34 percent of American adults and 17 percent

of children are not just overweight, but obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Many nutrition experts credit the great increase in obesity among Americans over the past quarter century to the prevalence of fast-food in the American diet. And it's no wonder... when you add up the calories of a McDonald's Big Mac, medium french fries and a medium Coca-Cola you get a shocking 1130 calories, over half the daily recommended calories for an adult.

But will posting calorie counts on menu boards really make a difference? Most experts say... maybe.

“It will basically provide the consumer with more options,” said Jim Partington, Executive Director of the Nebraska Restaurant Association, which supports the law. “I don't know if it [the legislation] will change much, but it will give the consumer more options and the ability to make an informed decision.”

Some in the industry say the law won't make much of a difference in the fight against obesity, noting that calorie content and other nutritional information has been on food packaging in grocery stores for years. Beaudoin disagrees with this argument, saying she thinks people do pay attention to food labeling in grocery stores, but it's often confusing.

“I think people do pay attention [to nutritional information in grocery stores],” Beaudoin said, “but it's complicated. There's about a hundred things on the label and it's hard to look for.”

On a nationwide scale, public health officials and others have been looking to the results of a similar bill, passed in New York City in early 2008, for answers. That law required chain restaurants with 15 or more locations to begin posting calorie contents clearly on menu boards, not stealthily placed on throw-away fast-food wrappers or in other places where consumers rarely noticed them.

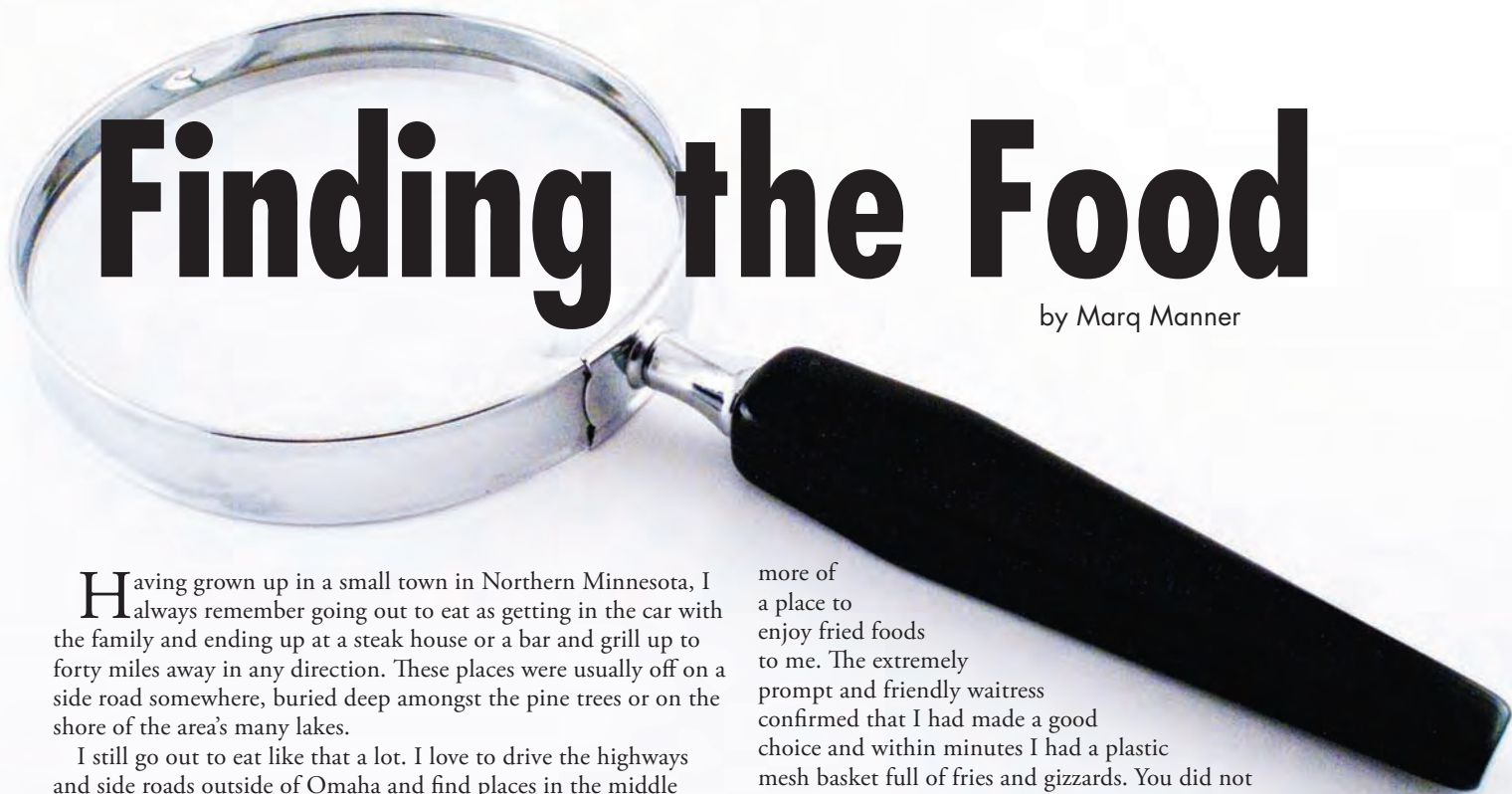
The journal *Health Affairs* has published several studies since 2008 on the effects the law has had on diners in New York City. One study surveyed 1,156 adults at fast-food restaurants in low-income, minority New York City communities. Of those surveyed, only 27.7 percent said they noticed the calorie labeling and it influenced their food choices. That study is just a snap shot of the overall effect of the food labeling laws on consumers in New York City, but it seems representative of the overall consensus that menu labeling has not made a huge difference in what diners consume.

Another study, performed by the Rudd Center at Yale University and published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, was conducted of 303 individuals divided into three groups. One group was given menus citing calorie counts as well as a reference guide showing the daily recommended caloric intake for adults. A second group was given menus that cited calorie counts with no additional information referencing daily recommended caloric intake. A third group was given a menu with no calorie counts or other information. That study found that the diners in the first group, which received menus with calorie counts and a reference guide showing daily caloric recommendations, consumed fewer calories during that meal and in subsequent meals that day.

While Partington said he isn't sure whether the law will have an effect on consumer's food choices, he said the Nebraska Restaurant Association, as well as the National Restaurant Association, supports the bill, in part because it will standardize menus and make things simpler for restaurant owners and consumers.

Whether you're dining at a restaurant with menu labeling or not, Beaudoin has some recommendations for eating healthy when dining out.

“Research if you can,” Beaudoin said. “A lot of restaurants have online calorie counts. I tell my clients if they know they're going to be eating out later, plan ahead. Don't skip meals, but be reasonable. And don't be shy. Ask your server questions about what's in the food if you don't know.”



Finding the Food

by Marq Manner

Having grown up in a small town in Northern Minnesota, I always remember going out to eat as getting in the car with the family and ending up at a steak house or a bar and grill up to forty miles away in any direction. These places were usually off on a side road somewhere, buried deep amongst the pine trees or on the shore of the area's many lakes.

I still go out to eat like that a lot. I love to drive the highways and side roads outside of Omaha and find places in the middle of nowhere or in small towns. Sadly, as I drive these roads I do see many steak houses and old restaurants that I would love to experience, but they are now dilapidated and condemned buildings barely hanging onto the signage that let's you know what they once were. There are still some interesting places outside of town

"The sign on the window said it was opening the weekend I was there, but it was a ghost town."



although many of them are less than twenty years old and still building up their own history.

Recently I decided to explore a portion of the area between Omaha and Lincoln. The area I chose is the area around Linoma Beach, Ashland, South Bend, and Greenwood. It's not exactly out in the middle of nowhere as you have some of the state's top tourist attractions all right there, but these are unique

places doing their own thing and in areas not heavily populated.

The first place I visited was the Round The Bend Steakhouse & Saloon outside of South Bend. This is where the Testicle Festival happens every summer. Yes, you will have a "ball" there. This place is a stand alone building high above the highway and you don't really get a good feel for its size until you are in the parking lot. I was expecting more of an old school steak house feel to the place, but with all of the windows letting in natural light and the scenic views of farm fields and the forest it felt more like one of those places that would sit next to a lake.

The place had many steaks available and some unique takes on prime rib, but I saw the gizzards on the menu and this just felt like

more of a place to enjoy fried foods to me. The extremely prompt and friendly waitress confirmed that I had made a good choice and within minutes I had a plastic mesh basket full of fries and gizzards. You did not have to put up a fight to eat these gizzards. They were tender and easy to bite into. They were not the over battered type where restaurants try to hide the fact that you are actually eating a gizzard underneath a silly amount of breading. They were served with a pre-packaged side of Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ sauce, which was fine, but of course you always hope for an original house made sauce. The breading was not overly seasoned and, you really get a taste for the actual gizzard, which is what I enjoy. I am guessing those testicles are not sugar coated either. The crinkle cut fries were your typical variety found in small town Dairy Queen stands. There were plenty of them and I took them home along with many of the gizzards that were generously served. This is a great place to stop by if you are out golfing, biking, or driving through the area. It's a perfect place to take the family before or after a day trip to one of the area's many attractions.

"The Ashland area is a great for day trips for many different reasons."

As stuffed as I was at this point, it was a gorgeous Saturday and I wanted to head to the main street in Ashland. Ashland's main street should be an archetype for small towns across the nation. It is pretty, inviting, and almost all of the shops are full of vibrant businesses. Unfortunately a portion of it looks to have been hit by a fire recently, but I am sure that town will have that rebuilt in no time.

Driving through, I was immediately attracted to a place called Cheri O's. It had a bright awning that told me it was an ice cream and coffee shop. It had plants on the sidewalk and a sandwich board advertising a crab chowder soup on special.



The place was packed on a Saturday afternoon and you immediately knew that this is where the locals gathered to discuss the topics of the day. It was a quaint place that felt family run and was packed with knick knacks, a gift shop, and felt like what it is; a small town ice cream, coffee, and sandwich shop.

I pulled up to the "bar" and looked at a mammoth sundae being made in goblet style glass dish and figured I would need to go the cone route considering I just had a big lunch. One of the fun things here is that they have many kinds of cones to choose from. Cookie, chocolate, waffle, and a few other varieties. I had to try the pretzel cone and it went surprisingly well with the Goodrich peanut butter fudge ice cream I had them fill it with. I also took away a toasty and tasty cup of coffee to go for my drive back to Omaha.

My final stop, albeit a few days later, was at Parker's Smokehouse which is located in the middle of Ashland and Greenwood on Highway 6. This BBQ joint isn't native to the Ashland area, as there is one in Lincoln as well, but it did have a local vibe to it. It's only been in existence since 2008, and I was surprised to find that they didn't try to faux junk the place up. Restaurants such as this should let that stuff build up over the years and not just go dump old signs and rusted out stoves all over to add atmosphere. Thankfully this place just dimmed the lights just right, put in some nice tables and booths, and some large paintings depicting days past.

I seated myself at the bar and was immediately given a menu and asked for my drink order. The bar serves domestics, but seems to have some deal with Nebraska Brewing Company, as well, as they had many of their craft beers on tap and you could take home growlers of the brew from Parkers.

I ordered a two meat plate with brisket and four ribs along with some steak fries and mashed potatoes. The ribs were tender and not the fatty fall off the bone type. They were dry rubbed and eating them naked ended up being preferred over drenching them in one of the six sauces. One of the welcomed services the bartender did for me without asking was to bring me out six steak fries for me to try with all of the six sauces as I was waiting for my food. There was an original sweet sauce, which I ended up sticking with on my brisket, and many hotter vinegar based sauces which were not over the top but plenty hot and sometimes mixed with the sweet. The brisket was extremely tender and served on a plain piece of bread as it should be. This was the highlight of the meal. The mashed potatoes were skin on and cooked perfectly with a tasty country brown gravy and the steak fries were standard variety and lightly seasoned.

I really enjoyed my meal here and will be making future trips just past Ashland to enjoy it again. I also have to say that the service here was some of the best I have had in years. I felt like they wanted me there, they educated me on their establishment, and wanted me to enjoy my experience and come back again. With summer here, the Ashland area is great for day trips for many different reasons.



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Something *New* is Cooking at *España* by Alexander Lund



España has a new menu filled with exciting and delicious tapas as well as the old favorites that we all love. Let me start by talking about what tapas are. Tapas are also known as the “little dishes of Spain.” A never-ending feast of small delectable servings of traditional Spanish cuisines, they can be a first course, or can be mixed and matched to create a meal.

Tapas can be traced back to the Andalusia sherry region of Spain. It is believed that a small piece of bread was put over a glass of sherry to keep the dust and fruit flies out. This simple, brilliant idea soon evolved into an array of little dishes. Recipes for tapas were passed down through generations. Olive oil, dried fruit, fresh fish, and cured meats are all staples in the Spanish diet; the keystones

of a healthy, Mediterranean lifestyle. Tapas bars also serve as social meeting spots, and are a favorite pastime of Spain.

Beyond its extensive menu of tapas, España also offers its customers various traditional paella dishes. Paella originated in the fields of Valencia, over time, becoming the national dish of Spain. Paellas are typically very large enough to feed an extended family of eight to ten people. Paella is the epitome of “sharing a meal with friends and family.” This traditional dish can be made large enough to feed twenty!

Paella was traditionally prepared outside on a large flat bottom pan. Paellas consist of rice, saffron spices, and vegetables, but after that, you can add whatever else you want. Historically, paella was made with whatever could be found locally. Snails, shrimp, and rabbit are just a few examples. All of the ingredients would simmer to perfection in the pan over an open fire.

“España has a new menu filled with exciting and delicious tapas as well as the old favorites that we all love.”

There are some new items to the wonderful menu at España. First is the “montadito de solomillo con salsa allioli picante.” This dish has marinated sirloin sliced on a toasted baguette with garlic butter, manchego cheese grated on top, with parsley and a spicy allioli sauce. Next is the “montadito de vieiras en salsa pesto.” It consists of a pesto sauce with parsley roasted garlic pine nuts,



“España’s menu appeals to a wide variety of tastes... light, tasty salads, excellent seafood and some traditional dishes.”

stuffed chicken with Serrano ham, manchego cheese, and Spanish olives. This is definitely my favorite, however I have tried them all and the verdict is guilty in deliciousness!

España’s menu appeals to a wide variety of tastes. They have many light, tasty salads, excellent seafood, and some traditional dishes that are so rich and decadent that it is hard to finish a single serving. Also, España has a lot of delicious hearty meats to eat that come with some of the best sauces I have ever tried.

España is also the place to go for the perfect mojito and traditional Spanish sangria. These drinks are very smooth and tasty, especially on a hot summer day. The mojito has mint and limes with simple syrup that is muddled then topped off with rum and soda water. The sangria is a wine that is marinated in fresh cut fruit with liquors. Then the sugar is added plus the wine and soda. All together they are marinated for four to five days.

If you have not eaten at España before, I highly recommend giving them a try. If you have eaten there, come back for more great food and drinks. España is a fine dining experience and is also a lot of fun for everybody including the staff. They make sure you and your family or friends have a wonderful meal, and a wonderful time.

BUEN PROVECHO!



“Beyond its extensive menu of tapas, España also offers its customers various traditional paella dishes.”

manchego cheese on a toasted baguette with grilled diver sea scallops. Next is the “datiles envueltos y rellenos.” Stuffed dates with cabrales blue cheese and marcona almonds wrapped in Serrano Ham with a sangria reduction. Then there is the “chorizo Espanol y gambas,” which is shrimp and chorizo sausage sautéed with shallots, lemon juice and a sherry wine. Finally there is the “pollo relleno,” a

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Eulogy, Last Supper and Resurrection

by Oliver B. Pollak



When you hear about the death of a friend or acquaintance following a long illness, you wonder how you lost contact and did not know about the health problems. Had you known you would have visited, given support, schmoozed about old times; now all you have is lapsed remembrance or worse... guilt. The unexpected disappearance of restaurants leaves a vaguely similar void. They leave a wake of empty bays. The loss of leases and chefs are disastrous for independent restaurants. Owner retirements and death also take their toll.

EULOGY

Le Café de Paris, opened in December 1969 on 6th Street in South Omaha's Little Italy, in the space of the former Italian Gardens, (fondly recalled earlier in these pages by Bill MacKenzie). Ivan Konsul from Yugoslavia via France and Washington DC, and chef Freddy Hiltbrunner soon made it Omaha's highest rated restaurant. Its twelve tables were a destination for epicures across the nation. It was a special event venue – anniversary, birthdays, graduations, birthdays containing a zero or five, visiting out of town gourmets, and farewell events. Tie and jacket were required and were provided to the uninitiated by the maitre de. Bigger purses

“Tie and jacket were required and were provided to the uninitiated by the maitre de.”

ate their regularly, with brass plates identifying their tables. My first luxurious meal, with out of town guests in 1975, was Boeuf Wellington, my last in 2000, a going away party for a coworker. Dirty martini, Hermitage Cote du Rhone wine and a sumptuous array of food ended with the expected financial reckoning.

Scott from Houston wrote on MyTravelGuide.com in May 2006, “An intimate, elegant little jewel with professional but friendly, attentive service in the European fashion, the way it should be delivered. Traditional French food that is prepared to perfection.

Superb menu, fine French wines. Reservations and Jacket required, but well worth it. Yvonne and his fine staff will provide for and perhaps even anticipate your every need.”

Imagine my surprise when I wanted to enjoy Ivan's cuisine to learn it had been closed for almost two years. In December 2006 Chef Freddy Hiltbrunner retired and subsequently reappeared as a consultant to Bellevue's Confluence, which closed in January 2010.

LAST SUPPER

No too long ago, Passover and Easter were observed. The New York Times Magazine on February 14, 2010 (p. 6) printed a montage by Korean born Ji Lee, who lived in Sao Paulo and New York, that inserted the last supper into the 1856 painting, “Washington as Statesman at the Constitutional Convention,” by Junius Brutus Stearns. The well publicized closing of the popular Tavern on the Green in Central Park permitted devotees to partake in a memorable nostalgic last meal.

Attilio and Maria LaFata left Lentini, Sicily, with their three children in 1979 to come to Omaha, Nebraska. Attilio served for several years as a pastry chef at LaStrada (now Spezia). In 1990 he took over Daylight Donuts and opened Something Different, a mom and pop shop, in 1990 at 2304 N. 72nd Street at the south end of a strip mall, all within a few block of him and his church. He renamed it LaFata's Caffè Italiano in 1993.

We were regular Friday dinner guests at LaFata's. We would descend with anywhere from four to ten guests and play rubics cube, rearranging tables in the 30 seat establishment. We watched as the family and friend wait staff changed, and as Attilio aged while his wife Maria stayed eternally youthful. Simple faire, tastefully prepared – rolls, butter, and on lucky Fridays, filet of sole, seasoned boiled potatoes, fresh vegetables. LaFata's had no liquor license and we brought our own until the neighborhood got a bit antsy about it.

Altajoe reported on Tripadvisor.com in May 2005

“LaFata's is a small family run Ostaria type restaurant located in a small strip mall. It looks like a deli, which I'm guessing it was. So, absolutely no atmosphere. This is no romantic place. The food is the closest to real Italian I've come upon in Omaha. The menu is not particularly extensive and the portions are smallish, but the blends of flavors is perfect. The clientele [sic] is often the traveler who has been to Italy on more than one occasion that recognizes beauty of simple Italian fare.”

Fortunately I had one last pleasant meal on closing night and got to say goodbye and best wishes to the owners and other diners. Today Caribbean Delight graces the location. My wife and I had goat there but it did not replace the pasta and marinara sauce in our heart.

Fred Garber writing on October 10, 2006 in qarrtsiluni an online literary magazine was not so fortunate, “I was in Omaha a few weeks ago and my favorite restaurant has closed. La Fata's at 72 and Blondo... I will miss the place.”

RESURRECTION

When my wife Karen and I moved to Omaha in 1974 the city lacked Indian, Japanese sushi, Schezuan cuisine, and a bagel store. By 1980 Omaha had all four, and we transplants from London, Toronto and Los Angeles felt more at home.

Joel and Susan Brezack moved from Long Island to Omaha and opened the Bagel Bin at 119th and Pacific on the north end of a strip mall in 1980. They were the first tenants. Bagel Bin was Omaha's only commercial retail kosher bagel bakery. It quickly became a destination to nosh and kibitz. Joel died in 2004 and Susan and two of her sons, David and Scott baked and boiled on.

"Brother Sebastian's reemerged from the ashes following a fire several years ago, so will Bagel Bin."

The glass case contained water, egg, onion, salt, poppy seed, sesame seed – and to make purists shudder – raisin, cinnamon and blueberry bagels, accompanied by various cream cheese schmirs. Bagel Bin's Friday production of challah, egg bread, made it a ritual stopping spot for Shabbat preparation.

The 2009-10 winter was unprecedented. The low temperature and volume of snow and ice led to a boom in road, sidewalk and roof snow removal. The winter elements blocked the flu leading to the ovens resulting in a three alarm fire on January 8, 2010.

Loyal patrons created their own electronic internet firestorm. By mid-February, "REBUILD Bagel Bin!!!" on Facebook had over



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2,700 visitors and countless words of bagel longing and kvetching about inferior alternative bagel suppliers. Patrons grieved the loss of bagels and the social meeting place. No doubt this encouragement will speed Susan's motivation to reopen the three-decade-old business. Nearby Brother Sebastian's reemerged from the ashes following a fire several years ago, so will Bagel Bin. Bagel Bin reconstruction is slated to start in April 2010.

Familiar restaurants are like friends. We visit, we enjoy, we lose, we miss, and we reminisce. Good memories, bon appétit, and keep looking for new friends.

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**OMAHA'S
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- EVER (PART TWO)

by Erik Totten
photos by David Ahlquist

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INLESS STEEL CHINA



A shot of the stormy skies outside of the Waiting Room during the event.



An MCC Culinary Institute student helping with the event.

For our food review this issue, we revisited an event we held last year, appropriately named “Omaha’s Largest Pizza Review, Ever.” We gathered nearly 20 of Omaha’s pizza places and invited the public to share in the pizza extravaganza. The event was a benefit for The Food Bank and included music by Cass Fify and the Family Gram, Bluesharks and The Matt Cox Band.

We invited nearly every independently-owned pizza place in town to participate in the review – we also invited Godfather’s since they’re such an Omaha classic. Some places declined, and some places didn’t return our messages but, in the end, we ended up with 19 places that certainly represent some of the best pizza that can be found in Omaha. The participating pizza places were asked to send five pizzas, all the same kind, their choice.

“Despite a nasty storm, nearly 200 people showed up and the pizza eating was frantic – we went through 95 pizzas in about two hours.”

The review was held at The Waiting Room (6212 Maple St.) in Benson. We also had Lucky Bucket Brewery on hand with \$2 Lucky Bucket pints. Despite a nasty storm, nearly 200 people showed up and the pizza eating was frantic – we went through 95 pizzas in about two hours. All those that came were asked to vote for their top three pizzas. Food & Spirits Magazine’s judging panel was also on hand to record their expert opinions on the pizza. Our judges this issue were Jeff Snow, Jeremy Hunter, Marq Manner and Derek (from GastronomicFightClub.com). Like last year, we awarded a People’s Choice, a Judge’s Choice and the Publisher’s Pick.



Left: Mangia Italiana claimed another People’s Choice Award for a second year in a row.



Cass Fify provided some of the live entertainment during the event.

A hungry crowd forms a line to get a taste of their favorite pizza.

PARTICIPANTS

- La Casa Pizzeria** (4432 Leavenworth St.)
- Mangia Italiana** (6516 Irvington Rd.)
- Don Carmelo's Pizzeria** (10821 Prairie Brook Rd.)
- Orsi's Italian Bakery** (621 Pacific St.)
- Lo Sole Mio** (3020 S 32nd Ave.)
- Pudgy's Pizzeria** (16919 Audrey St. # 110)
- Mama's Pizza** (715 N Saddle Creek Rd.)
- Frank's Pizzeria** (711 N 132nd St.)
- Sgt. Pepper's Café Italiana** (1501 N. Saddle Creek Rd.)
- Mama Alvino's Pizzeria** (2861 Capehart Rd.)
- Pizza Shoppe** (6056 Maple St.)
- Goodnights Bar & Gourmet Pizza** (1302 Fahey St.)
- Bene Pizza & Pasta** (12301 W. Maple St.)
- Dante Pizzeria Napoletana** (16901 Wright Plaza)
- Pizza Gourmet** (7515 Pacific St.)
- 94/95 Sports Grille** (17857 Pierce Plaza)
- Vivace** (1108 Howard St.)
- Godfather's** (6303 Ames Av.)
- Clancy's Pub** (7120 Pacific St.)

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Jeff Snow (left) and Jeremy Hunter (right) casting their votes for the Judge's Choice.



Dante Pizzeria brought a mobile pizza oven, preparing their pizzas on-site.



Dante Pizzeria brought a mobile pizza oven, preparing their pizzas on-site.

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

The People's Choice Award was a *runaway*. Voters were asked to pick their top three choices and we assigned every first place vote three points, second place votes got two points and third place votes received one point. Worth noting is that every participating restaurant received at least one vote for first place. The winners were:

- 1) **Mangia Italiana**
- 2) **Dante Pizzeria Napoletana**
- 3) **Sgt. Pepper's Café Italiana**
- 4) **Orsi's Italian Bakery**
- 5) **Pizza Gourmet**
- 6) **Mama's Pizza**



THE JUDGE'S CHOICE

Our judges were asked to rank the pizzas on a ten point scale, with ten being the best. Although there was some overlap in the results from the people's votes, it was a surprise that the judge's votes ended up being fairly different. The judge's choices were:

- 1) **Dante Pizzeria Napoletana (8.9)**
- 2) **Orsi's Italian Bakery (7.6)**
- Vivace (7.6)**
- 3) **Sgt. Pepper's Café Italiana (7.3)**
- 4) **Mama's Pizza (7.1)**
- 5) **Pizza Gourmet (6.8)**
- 94/95 Sports Grille**
- Goodnight Pub & Gourmet Pizza**
- Don Carmelo's**

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

Don Carmelo's – "Nice, balanced sauce – great flavor. Crust is cheesy and crisp." *Jeff Snow*

Mama's Pizza – "Huge pieces of spicy sausage with a great, medium-thick crust. A sauce that doesn't overpower with a good amount of cheese on the pizza. Damn good pizza." *Marq Manner*

La Casa – "Nice fresh, tasty sauce. The light crust and sauce shine in this pizza." *Jeff Snow*



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Orsi's Pizza took second for the Judge's Choice Award.

Frank's Pizzeria – “Good, tangy sauce. Good New York style pizza that’s confident in sticking to the basics.” *Marq Manner*

Sgt. Pepper’s – “Very creative – good combination of toppings. Great with the salsa.” *Jeremy Hunter*

Dante – “The crust is crispy and chewy like a nice, French baguette. Great sauce and cheese along with fresh basil. Overall, a great pie.” *Jeff Snow*

Vivace – “A little surprised by how good it is. The pizza is really good and the clams work well in the composition. Great Italian sausage and the crunch from the onions play nicely to the overall texture and taste.” *Derek@gastronomicfightclub.com*

Lo Sole Mio – “Loaded with beef and onions with a good, soft, thin crust.” *Marq Manner*

Goodnights – Thin crust that’s not too chewy or crispy – it’s good. The sweet sauce goes well with the spicy meats.” *Jeremy Hunter*

Bene Pizza and Pasta – “A thin style crust that is very crispy – nice!” *Jeff Snow*

Mama Alvino’s – “Nice crust that rivals Orsi’s (I double-checked). Chock full of toppings – there was a lot in there and lots of cheese. It was great.” *Marq Manner*



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Orsi's - "A good balance of ingredients. The crust holds up well without getting in the way." *Derek@gastronomicfightclub.com*

Mangia - "A thin and moist crust that's tasty. A good combination of flavors." *Jeremy Hunter*

Pizza Shoppe - Good crust and interesting sauce and flavors with a good mix of toppings. A nice change of pace." *Marq Manner*

Pizza Gourmet - "A great thin crust with toppings and sauce that are well done." *Jeff Snow*

94/95 Sports Grille - "I like the surprising zing of heat. Not bad by any means." *Derek@gastronomicfightclub.com*

Clancy's - "Nice, tightly packed pizza that has a lot of flavor. A great basic pizza that I could eat a lot of." *Marq Manner*

Pudgy's - "The crust reminds me of breadsticks. A good effort for gluten free. I'm giving them some marks for effort." *Derek@gastronomicfightclub.com*

Godfather's - "Doughy crust and that slightly burnt taste with minimal sauce that we all grew up with. Not great but this is comfort food for people that grew up in Omaha." *Marq Manner*

THE PUBLISHER'S PICK: VIVACE

I'm a traditionalist when it comes to pizza. I like the basic toppings – nothing fancy like chicken, or seafood, or Thai sauce. I know those types of pizza can be great, but that's just not my deal and I've never ordered a pizza like that. Ever. Give me a basic pepperoni pizza and I'm as happy as a clam – which brings me to my publisher's pick.

"It takes something special to get me to think outside the box when it comes to pizza... this one did the trick."

Vivace's clam, sausage, prosciutto, potato and sweet onion pizza was incredible. I never would have tried it any other way than at the pizza review, but once I did, I was sold. It takes something special to get me to think outside the box when it comes to pizza and this one did the trick. Besides that, the open clams on the pizza makes for a cool presentation. A close second place finish for the Publisher's Pick was Dante with their mobile wood-fired pizza oven – impressive by itself, but even more so when they're out cooking in a thunderstorm – nice work!

So those are your winners, as voted on by the public, our judges and me. So many restaurants participating and the close scores in the voting show the great quality of pizza that is cranked out by so many Omaha restaurants. I didn't hear any negative comments during the review and as I mentioned, every restaurant that participated received at least one first place vote from the public. Given the tremendous response, we'll be putting together "Omaha's Largest Pizza Review, Ever - Part 3" for next year – see you there!



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FOOD SERVICE WARRIOR

WHAT'S A "REAL" JOB?

by Tony Kimble

I have been working in the restaurant industry for about the past five years now and I currently bartend at M's Pub. I'm very grateful to be working with great people and doing something I enjoy very much. I'm writing this sitting across the street from the very first restaurant I ever worked at while on a mini-vacation in Chicago. Recently, on several occasions I have overheard people (and in some cases coworkers) assume that a person who works in a restaurant or bar is really just there to make quick money while focusing on getting a degree in school or trying to get a better job.

"To suggest or question that what we do for a living isn't 'real' is just plain wrong."

The problem with this is that there's a common misconception that what we do for a living is like a temporary setback to working in what some people call a "real job". I couldn't tell you what defines a "real job". I do know however, that at the end of a shift, I bring home real money. I love what I do and I feel extremely lucky that I'm able to make drinks for people and get paid to do it. Don't get me wrong, there are many people who are in the service industry (myself being one) that are also in school, or looking for a better job, etc. And that's perfectly fine. But to suggest or question that what we do for a living isn't "real" is just plain wrong.

Through working in restaurants, I have been able to meet different people from all walks of life, many of whom I still connect with on a consistent basis. What we do in this industry is a trade or craft that we can carry with us for the rest of our lives. There was a girl I used to work with in Chicago who was a bartender and ended up moving to Prague. After a few months she was running out of money and couldn't afford her apartment and eventually applied at several restaurants in the area. Since she couldn't speak the language fluently she was unable to bartend or wait tables, but since she was able to convey the fact that she had bartended she was hired as a barback. I don't know of too many jobs where you can basically pack your things, move to a different city and find a job as quickly as in our industry.

"Being in this industry has given me an enormous amount of self-confidence."

This doesn't just apply to the front of the house staff either. I have an enormous amount of respect for line cooks, chefs and dishwashers. A friend of mine named Raúl was a line cook in a restaurant I worked at. After five years of working, was able to build a house for his family who were still living in Mexico.

Working in a restaurant is never monotonous either. You can pretty much guarantee that each shift is going to be different: never expect the same thing. As a friend of mine once said, working in this industry is like gambling - you never know who you could potentially meet, or what might happen in the duration of a shift; just like if you were sitting in front of a slot machine.

I was talking to a friend of mine who has been working in restaurants for the past few years. We both started at the same restaurant as bussers and now a few years later, we are both bartenders. We talked about how when I was a busser, I was terrified to approach any tables and actually converse with guests.

Being in this industry has given me an enormous amount of self-confidence. It has changed me in so many ways it's ridiculous. Thinking back on when I first started wiping off tables to where I'm at now, it's been a great past few years that I wouldn't trade for anything in the world. For me, that's real.

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Inconvenience Food

by Brian Smith

During a conversation I had with a chef recently, I realized that we shared a common personality trait: we make life more difficult for ourselves. I also immediately understood that this scenario was a good thing. Let me explain.

Chef was explaining the concepts behind his farm-to-table restaurant and his dreams of being able to process and preserve foods at their peak of freshness. For instance, he wants to buy beautiful, flavorful tomatoes in August and can them for use during the cold winter months. For meat, he wants the freedom to go to a farm and slaughter the animals that he serves. That way, he has access to local ingredients all year and controls the quality. That's difficult. Working like that is much more involved than ordering frozen chicken fingers and Canadian hothouse tomatoes from a national food distributor.

“There is no such thing as cheap food. The true cost is always paid somewhere.”

I see the benefit in this. Our commerce system is set up to be convenient to a consumer. A consumer buys available products to fill needs. They take what they are given. Chef and I both have rejected the role of a consumer in favor of the role of producers. Producers make things, especially things they want that are not immediately available. Of course, it's less convenient to be a producer, but there are payoffs. I'll list three that make a difference to me.

One payoff is self-gratification. You get what you want, including the ability to fulfill your philosophical ideals. My partner and I started farming because we wanted to explore and share our ideas about how food should be grown and eaten. We also wanted this food for ourselves, but in a grocery store, there are very few answers. We wanted food that was free of genetic modifications, chemical treatments, questionable additives and corporate greed. Part of the answer for us was to take control of our food production. We purchase heirloom seeds from independent farms who share our views against GMOs, raise our plants without agricultural chemicals and sell them directly to people who have concerns similar to ours. Our farm relies on our labor and the help of willing volunteers. We are willing to spend our time and effort to make this a reality.

Another payoff is self-sufficiency. We can make our own things. In our case, we grow the food we eat and save some of the seed for the next season. As a producer, that gives us the ability to

act outside of the commerce system. We spend effort instead of dollars. Socially, issues of food security can be addressed by shifting from the role of a consumer to a producer. A family who grows a garden has a much more stable food supply than a family who buys expensive processed foods. It's easier to let someone else do things for you, but you lose control.

A third payoff is self-discovery. Buying stuff is the easy answer to filling a need. Making stuff requires more work. As we've produced things on the farm, we have learned about our abilities and strengths as individuals and as a team. We have tackled projects that have challenged our skills and understanding of the world. We have built trellis systems, poultry transport boxes and, most importantly, confidence in ourselves. We realize our identity is defined by more than what products we buy.

Chef and I live in a world of convenience foods. Theoretically, we could buy things to eat from a grocery store or fast food joint. Prebaked bread, gas station gyros, individual-size bags of potato chips. We don't need to look far for something to fill our base need of hunger. But, there are other issues involved in our thoughts about food. The process of creating food that fits our philosophies, preferences and palates fulfills us on a deeper level. We are involved in our own care and the care of others. Growing and cooking takes time, but we feel it is time well spent.

There is no such thing as cheap food. The true cost is always paid somewhere. When you eat at a restaurant, you are benefiting from the labor of others. You pay more money for that. When you eat junk food, your body deals with substances that it didn't evolve to digest, like sodium aluminosilicate. You pay for that with your health. When a farmer sprays petrochemicals on crops to kill insects, the environment suffers and requires cleanup. When you grow vegetables in your garden, wash them and cook them, you pay for that with your personal time. For every cost, there is a payoff.

In the end, this comes down to issues of freedom. Let's make a distinction between the words “decide” and “choose.” When you decide something, you weigh the benefits of options that are presented to you. When you choose something, you select based on what you want. Consumers decide which cheese to buy. Producers choose to make a cheese. Alternately, a producer can choose to buy a cheese, but they are still driven by a deeper understanding of how their selections are made. There are greater possibilities in the realm of choice. Chef and I might make our lives a little more difficult, but we chose that for ourselves. Without those choices of inconvenience, the world would have one less chef and one less farmer. I like to think that our world is a tastier place because of us.



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President's Letter

Greetings fellow ACF members, I'm pleased to announce that the ACF Chefs and Culinarians of the Heartland has appointed Chef Paul Goebel as its Executive Director. Paul brings a vast and storied career to help our organization grow in all areas. Paul's focus will be establishing standards in operations to include a new mailing address, updated operation manuals, by-laws, and bonding insurance. Chef Goebel will also be active in fund-raising, education and building new membership. The executive director will also be the constant and mainstay position that will stay solid as the board of director's changes.

The board, along with the executive director, have outlined a plan to breathe new life into our chapter. There is not a better time to be a member of the ACF. I would urge members of the ACF to become more involved with your chapter. I would also encourage all chefs, educators, students and people who just love to be involved in culinary activities to join the American Culinary Federation.

"The board, along with the executive director, have outlined a plan to breathe new life into our chapter."

We held our second practical exam in April. We had four candidates attempting to get certified on all different levels. We had Certified Executive Chef, Chef De Cuisine, and Pastry Cook. We had one successful candidate complete the exam. Also during that exam we had four more area chefs complete their ACE evaluator's apprenticeship. Now we have six area chefs who can evaluate practical exams.

Your ACF chapter has plans to hold another practical exam this summer – keep in touch with me for details! The

other general goals of our chapter are creating opportunities for the members in education, certification, competition, social engagements, and in culinary fellowship. We plan on concentrating our focus on creating a strong ACF Chapter with emphasis on these items. We have a family social planned in late August with confirmed dates to come

"YOU need to be a part of brainstorming, creating and implementing fresh, new ideas to build our chapter."

at a later time. We are also putting together an ACF annual chefs night out dinner to be held in November.

The board has decided to create a member survey. We want to hear from you as to what you expect from your chapter. The survey will contain opportunities for both the board and the members to communicate as to where the chapter will focus its energy and limited resources. Please take the time to file this out so we can hear from you. The survey will be coming via e-mail in the next few weeks. Your participation is greatly needed so we can build this chapter together as members.

The board has also decided to have the monthly meetings at various establishments. We want to reach out to our members and to recruit more of you to show up. We will be having our next meeting on July 13 at Methodist Hospital. I will be communicating the time and location via e-mail. Your help and attendance is needed at our meetings, to maintain our purpose. YOU need to be a part of brainstorming, creating and implementing fresh and new ideas to build our chapter.

Taste Everything,
Kevin

Junior Olympic Team Journal Entry by Jose Cardenas



It is something we never saw coming: O'Malley asking us our age then telling us about this awesome opportunity we are eligible for. Michelle Bond,

Jose Cardena, Chase Grove, Beth Anderson, Nalani Lamendola, Kate Arant, and Jon Ahrens: we have all been asked to try out for 5 spots to represent the Midwest at the Culinary Junior Olympic Trials in Anaheim, California.

It is going to be a long road and we have experienced a lot already with our first practice consisting of more tourne carrots in one day than most people think of doing in their lifetime, but all of us stood there without complaining. We are all learning quickly with a whole day dedicated to just Cold Platter, glazing some delicious Canadian Bacon and more tourne carrots. It did take us all day, but now we know the process and can now dream about glazing and getting rid of those pesky bubbles.

Lately, we have been focusing on our Hot Food courses; there are two of us assigned to a course with Kate on pastry. We just finished a few run throughs, getting the idea of what everything is going to be and what order we should do it in. There is a lot of work to be done, but we are focused, excited, and determined. We also have some of the best mentors to guide us all the way to Anaheim, who will be there to keep us focused, excited, and determined.

I feel really humbled that I am just getting the chance to tryout to go to the tryouts in Anaheim, California. This road to Anaheim is very short and it seems i have much to learn, but I'm sure with the knowledge and skills the instructors have here that i'll be ready in no time to give it my all.

Culinary Team Nebraska Update by David Kinney

The ACF Central Regional Conference took place in Indianapolis, with cold platter presentation and hot food cookery taking place from March 26–28. There were nine student teams present representing Oklahoma, Madison, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Michigan, Minneapolis, St. Louis, and of course, Nebraska. The Team members for the 2010 MCC team and their positions were:

Hot Food

Dawn Cisney, David Kinney, Andrew Rager, Jon Ahrens, Lauren Melhus

Cold Food

Cassie Jacobs, Rory Franco, David Campbell, Jessica Smolinski, Lindsay Phelan, Kendahl Meissner, Kerry Williams

Commis

Jose Cardenas

As far as a team name, we are known as Culinary Team Nebraska and officially sanctioned as ACF Professional Chefs & Culinarians of the Heartland. However, we are more than a team name we are a slogan, a team motto, handed to us from last year's team. Each year the team takes

everything they have learned, both at the table and otherwise, and passes on a key phrase or set of words to inspire the next year's team. That motto for 2010 was Care. Deliver. Delicious. To Care: "serious attention; solicitude; heed; caution;" and "temporary keeping, as for the benefit of or until claimed by the owner."

To care takes a lot of effort: you must find local and fresh produce, also practice cookery techniques until the most desirable outcome is reached, and to pay attention to nothing else except the task at hand, to put all other worries and problems, on the back burner, as it were, and to devote all of what you are to the task at hand. Deliver. On time is on time. With practice no food should arrive early or late. Hot food should be hot, and cold food should be cold. Delicious. Food doesn't have to be fancy to be good, all it has to be is delicious. A peanut butter and jelly sandwich, with someone who has cared and can deliver, will be better than a slice of overcooked foie gras on top of an under cooked brioche. If you care. deliver. and it's delicious, than you have done all that you can.

The culinary team has never earned above a bronze at regional competition until this year, which shows

that we are advancing, and year by year learning more and more from both the experiences that are brought to the team, and from the knowledge gained and passed on from previous teams. The scoring system is much like a school's grading, whereas anyone with a certain percent can get an A, a B, etc.

From our debrief, the discussions regarding our food from the judges after it has been delivered and evaluated, we took notes with which none of us were surprised, nothing they said or had noted blew us out of the water. We had practiced so many times that most decisions finally came down to doing it one way or the other, and in many of the "problems" they pointed out, we had simply chose the wrong one.

Now that regionals are over, we begin planning for next year's team. Collecting all the notes, all the ideas, and all the critics we had received this year and getting them down on paper, so as to better prepare next year's team. A well-lit torch had been handed to us, and far be it from us to do anything but add to that torch and carry it until five more culinarians push themselves to caring to deliver delicious.

Omaha Standard: Dundee Dell's Fish 'n' Chips by Brian O'Malley



Three-Piece Fish 'N' Chips \$10.95

I am no aficionado¹.

Throughout my youth I had consumed perhaps a dozen pieces of fish prepared in the style suitable for them to be called "English Fish-n-Chips". Most of those were either at church fish fries during lent, or at the Dundee Dell before it picked up sticks and moved to Underwood Avenue. I was a fan. Who wouldn't be? Fresh cod in a sweet batter, fried golden brown and served with a tart little mayo... delicious. I realized my love and affinity for the Dell's version however in the strangest of places—London.

"Fresh cod in a sweet batter, fried golden brown and served with a tart little mayo... delicious."

While not officially the birthplace of either fried fish or chips², London is the official, and undisputed, home of the chipper³. I was there for a brief stay in the late fall of 1999. As a proper travelling culinarian, I am compelled in

all locales to gorge myself on the local fare. In London, I knew there were but two things that I must try (in addition to ale and gin): roast beef and fish 'n' chips.

My first night in town, I went out for a roast beef dinner before the theatre. A touch of roasted joint gravy, sausage-studded mashed potatoes, and a pint of Newcastle. After the show, it was off to find a pub. I happened upon a place called The Salisbury. It was a classic Victorian pub with all the trappings. I meant to sit for another pint and to enjoy all the people speaking English—I had been in France just before this and it was really welcoming to just here people speaking a sort-of familiar language. Once I was seated however, I kept seeing order after order of beautiful little fried cod fillets atop disk of grady's⁴ pour out of the kitchen.

I asked the barman⁵, "why all the fish 'n' chips? I thought those were best enjoyed from the chipperies."

I was kinda trying to show off that I knew the right word for the shops.

"I agree lad," he threw back at me in a jolting Irish brogue, "but these feeking Westenders feel like they gotta eat 'em at a table with a piffy. They all fingering us the best in laundry, so we fancy 'em upabit and takem from 10 pound."

Now, I wasn't really sure what he was getting at, being a flatlander from the States and all, but I was pretty sure that he meant they were darn toot'n good. I placed an order for some. They arrived in no time at all, I dug in, and they were awesome.

Awesome Crisp; Awesome Hot; Awesome Juicy; Perfectly tender crust; Perfectly seasoned fish; Amazing chips.

The most awesome thing about them however was that they transported me home. In my first bite, I closed my eyes and reopened them at the Dell. In one bite I was amidst the plumes of cigarette smoke, Nirvana on the Juke Box, and familiar waitresses. In just one bite, I really wanted to be home. Home amongst the familiar faces of midtown. Home where the fish 'n' chips come with tartar sauce and ketchup. (I know they come with malt vinegar at the Dell now too, but this is still America, isn't it?)

I finished my plate. I was flabbergasted. The food was delicious, but all I could think of was getting home. I had barely been homesick on my travels, and now, just a couple days before my flight home, I was aching to be back in the Dell. Like I said, I was hardly an aficionado before I left, but trying fish 'n' chips in a London pub, made me realize the sanctity of one

of our true Omaha Standards: The Dundee Dell.

I have been a friend of the Dell for as long as it has been a friend to me (officially since June 9th, 1995). Their menu offers a great variety. The Big Easy and Fried Pickles receive the patronage of my culinary friends quite often. They have marvelous bartenders⁶ and wait staff. The kitchen is populated with real pros – pretty unique for the Omaha bar scene. The scotch selection is without equal worldwide and there is almost always a friend lurking somewhere in the place willing to strike up a conversation. There is however one standard bearer at the Dell that transcends it all. The quality of the Fish ‘n’ Chips has transcended all the changes in kitchen management, ownership and even physical location over its nearly 100 years in business. I have eaten 50 orders at least since

I returned from London. Each one of them convincing me more fully of the feeling that I had that night in the West End—that somebody in Omaha, Nebraska cares enough to do it as well as the 150 year old chipperies across the pond. Spot on my friends. Spot on.

“Trying fish ‘n’ chips in a London pub made me realize the sanctity of one of our true Omaha Standards: The Dundee Dell.”

1) Aficionado: a devotee, follower, ardent supporter or fan. In common usage also someone with advanced knowledge or insight into said object of affection.

[Note: I purposely avoided some

ridiculous wordplay like aficionado here, I promise]

2) Both exact moments are lost to history, but serious claims are made that the Irish were the first to start selling fried chipped potatoes (cut into slabs) and that the Portuguese Jews were the first to offer fried battered fish for sale. The English have however, made a real business at it.

“Enduring Love” <http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/jayrayner>, <http://observer.guardian.co.uk>, The Observer, London, England Sunday 19 January 2003

3) Chippery: a street vendor or walk-up stand selling fish and chips throughout the U.K.

4) Grady’s: Irish for potato.

5) Barman: English for bartender, also known as a barkeep or barkeeper. Someone who minds the p’s and q’s.

6) Bartender: American for barman.

The Difference by Stephanie Slyter

Trust. You might not think about it, but when you eat the food that others grow, sell and prepare, you trust them; trust them with your sustenance, your health, and ultimately your life. Throughout most of history, this was not a problem. You raised your own animals, fruits and vegetables; there was no question of the integrity of the food. However, since the industrialization of our country and the migration from working the soil to working at the office, the issue of trust has risen.

“There are people that want us to be able to trust our food again.. people that make a difference.”

Anyone who has read or heard about “The Jungle” by Upton Sinclair, a story about the corruption of the Chicago meat industry at the turn of the last

century, never looks at meat the same. The result of this story led to the founding of the Food and Drug Administration, an agency that was designed to help us trust our food again, but not completely. Just one word will start all the doubts again, hormones. How about mad cow disease?

Thankfully, there are people that want us to be able to trust our food again, people that live close to home, people who make a difference. The people at Hollenbeck Farms are just one of many that are reviving our trust in the products of Nebraska. Metropolitan Community College uses their family farm raised, all natural, source verified beef in their very own Bistro. (hollenbeckfarms.com)

For the last two quarters the Bistro has served Hollenbeck Farms braised short ribs that practically drip from the bone. *Here is the recipe from Chef Oinstein:*

5 pounds short ribs. Bone in or out
1 carrot
1 yellow onion

2 stalks of celery
1 cup of red wine
10 black peppercorns
2 bay leaves
3 sprigs fresh thyme
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 gallon veal stock

Salt and pepper short ribs and place in cooler a couple of hours or overnight.

Peel and rough chop vegetables.

In a wide pan sear short ribs on all sides. Take out and sweat vegetables.

Add tomato paste and cook until vegetables are caramelized.

Deglaze with red wine and add herbs and spices. Reduce liquid to half.

Add stock and place short ribs back in pan and cover with lid.

Place in oven at 170F or low heat on stove for at least 12 hours, but 24 to 48 is the best.

Remove short ribs and strain braising liquid. Reduce by half to thicken and reheat ribs in sauce.

Serve with the pureed reserved vegetables.

The Boiler Room (Omaha, NE)

House cured Finocciona, Bresaola, Pork Rillettes & Duck Liver Pate, house made pickles, baguette, & mustard.
\$15

Aixois (Kansas City, MO)

Imported French Ham, dry sausage, house pate.
\$11

Craftsman (Minneapolis, MN)

House cured Coppa, Pancetta & Salami. Served with homemade sauerkraut & crackers.
\$15



20 Questions with Chef Lorraine Howard

by Jo Anne Garvey

JG: How long have you been in the industry?

LH: Close to 20 Years.

JG: Where do you work and how long have you worked there?

LH: I just left Ameristar Casino as their Assistant Pastry Chef for a Promotion at Horseshoe Casino as their Pastry Chef.

JG: Before that?

LH: I have worked at a few country clubs, convention center, catering, wholesale/retail bakery, hotels, and Walt Disney World.

JG: Do you have a family?

LH: A husband, twodaughters, and a son.

JG: Why did you choose the career you are in?

LH: Growing up as a kid and living on a farm we were always in the kitchen trying out new recipes and cooking/baking for large family gatherings. I think it is fun and I love to eat!

JG: What is the most rewarding part of your job?

LH: Seeing the smiles on my friend's

faces as they are enjoying the perfect chocolate mousse torte that I have made for them. And also having one of my three children requesting some sweets made for them to share with their friends/teachers at school.

“I have missed my shares of family get-togethers, but I knew that before getting into the business.”

JG: When is it the most challenging?

LH: Around the Holidays when I have to leave my family as I go to work to prepare desserts for our guests who are celebrating together as a family. I have missed my share of family/holiday get togethers. But I knew that before getting into the business, and I have adjusted.

JG: Who has inspired you?

LH: My Dad who was a very hard worker, and where I get my work habits from. Also my very first boss, her name was Dee Shope, and I worked at her bakery which she owned and I learned a lot from her.

JG: How did you learn your skill?

LH: I went to Kendall Culinary College in Chicago, but I would say most of it is from actual work experience. And I continue to read and learn many new skills/techniques which I love. You will find me a lot of the time looking through recipe books or surfing the internet to try something new.

JG: What are your degrees or certification levels?

LH: I have a Pastry Certificate from Kendall Culinary College and also recently my certification for Executive Pastry chef.

JG: Did you attend a culinary school?

LH: Kendall Culinary College.

JG: Why should someone who is interested in baking or pastries go to school?

LH: You learn the basic foundation and knowledge to become a Pastry Chef. It shows your future employers that you are serious about your career by making that investment of money and time. And when you do graduate you have to remember that this is only the beginning of learning, you need to continue to learn and

grow as you further your career.

JG: Have you had an opportunity to travel?

LH: I did go to France to see the World Pastry Cup. And I have lived in many different states such as Minnesota, Iowa, New York, Illinois, Texas, Florida, and presently in Nebraska.

JG: What helps you balance a busy working schedule and family life?

LH: We eat together as a family a lot, my kids don't like it because it cuts into their play time with their friends so we usually have a few extra kids at our dinner table. And I also stress to my family that when I have full day off on a Sunday that we spend it together, (no neighbor kids/friends are invited) we like to go out and about, which will usually include dinner at a restaurant.

JG: Best food eaten dinner and or pastry?

LH: Recently we were down in Florida vacationing as family and we were at the beach, and I wanted to eat seafood. The name was J.B Fish Camp in New Syrma Beach. The oysters were awesome. And as for pastries (can I recommend mine?), there is a bakery in Minnesota named, "French Bakery".

"You need to continue and grow as you further your career."

JG: Career highlights?

LH: Receiving my certification as Executive Pastry Chef through the American Culinary Federation.

JG: Professional Affiliations?

LH: I was involved in a few committees at work, A.C.F., church organizations, and E.P.S.(Essential

Pregnancy Services)

JG: Favorite quote?

LH: "The whole point of being alive is to evolve into the complete person you were intended to be," (Oprah Winfrey)

JG: Best and/ or favorite Omaha eats.

LH: Waterfront Grill which is now called Bourbon's.

JG: Anything else? Long or Short term goals?

LH: Right now I am concentrating on my present position at Horseshoe. The management team would like to see some new ideas in their outlets and I want to concentrate on making a name for us. Presently teaching part-time, but I would like to get more involved at Metro. I am thinking about going back to school to get a business degree. Maybe down the road owning my own retail/wholesale bakery. Right now I have my plate full at the casino.

Dining Elsewhere

by Amy Cohee-Hatfield

There are sacrifices students make when they join Culinary Team Nebraska. However, it can be said there are some perks as well. Eating dinner together after long days, weeks and months of preparation is a definite perk. Recently our teams, Culinary and Knowledge Bowl, had the chance to share a special meal at Oakley's Bistro in Indianapolis.

The quiet, unassuming suburban strip mall was probably unprepared for the onslaught of hungry culinarians of the heartland, but Oakley's Bistro wasn't.

The Bistro was cozy and intimate; small, but perfect for our crowd of 22 as we enjoyed the table by the front window. The kitchen was open and the chefs were all business. The other diners – this was a Saturday night – looked like familiars and were easily chatting with the staff, who were a sincere bunch and very accommodating to our large table.

We gathered together shoulder-to-shoulder as our chef and proprietor, Steven Oakley, created a four course menu.

Our meal started with an amusing amuse bouche of shrimp corn dogs drizzled with honey. Other than the shrimp being a tad overcooked, the

cornbread batter in combination with the honey was delicious – a fabulous way to start a dinner that mixed sweet and savory items.

Our first course was a charcuterie plate featuring a pate and ultralight foie gras honey mousse. Also served was a sausage and vanilla cured ham. Pickled vegetables were a crunchy foil for the creamy rich meats. But more than anything I thought the plate was visually stunning.

"We came, we saw and we devoured every course... comrades with forks and knives."

The second course was my favorite. A phyllo wrapped cod was moist on the inside and crispy, crunchy on the outside. The lightness was offset by the substantial taste of the quinoa. The roasted garlic added a depth of flavor to the chewy, yet deceiving light quinoa. The best part of the dish was the romesco sauce. Bright orange-red and tangy, romesco brings a richness

to the dish the fish and quinoa needed to bring it home.

A sous-vide hangar steak was the star of the third course. Fork tender, yet with a red and juicy center; the steak was delicious. The steak light texture was grounded by an earthy combination of mushroom ragout, smoked onions and a red wine- beet cream. Served alongside was a tall potato tower, filled with a potato purée with a carrot purée on the plate underneath.

As for dessert, all I remember is something about bacon ice cream...

Our meal was truly memorable and Chef Oakley proved to be a talented chef. But more than that, the Culinary Nebraska team got a chance to get out of chef whites and enjoy food being served. We got a chance to look, smell, touch, and taste someone's food with appreciation for the love and care someone gave to our food. Granted we were probably, most definitely an annoying bunch, but we love food. And being able to enjoy good food and good company is one of the perks of our team. We came, we saw and we devoured every course, elbow to elbow, comrades with forks and knives without a sacrifice in sight.

Fighting Hunger with Strength

by Sarah Lewis



Left to Right: Sarah Lewis and Katee Upton

A typical day in the office for Share Our Strength's Operation Frontline Omaha Coordinator Kathleen Upton is nothing short of a trip to the grocery store and coordinating cooking classes for over 50 participants a week. In between classes, she took some time to answer a few questions for Food & Spirits Magazine about what exactly Operation Frontline does in the community to raise awareness about ending hunger in Omaha.

FSM: So tell us about the mission of Share Our Strength.

Share Our Strength is a National program dedicated to end childhood hunger here in the United States. Some of their events you may have heard about include Taste of the Nation, Great American Bake Sale, Great American Dine Out and A Tasteful Pursuit. The Operation Frontline event is nationally sponsored by the ConAgra Foods® Foundation and is a ground-breaking nutrition education program that connects families with food by teaching them how to prepare healthy, tasty meals on a limited budget.

Most of our classes are held at after school programs or at community Centers – anywhere we can get a group of 5 to 12 people together. We utilize a curriculum-based class that runs for 6 weeks. Each class is about 90 minutes to 2 hours in length. Classes build upon a skill you learned from the previous class. Participants are involved

in activities that discuss a range of topics appropriate to that audience and then they learn some cooking techniques in the best way they can – through hands on training! They get to make a recipe together and then sample what they have prepared.

FSM: You mentioned that during class the participants have hands-on training; do you have to know your way around the kitchen in order to be in this class?

Most of our classes are led by a professional chef from the community that has generously volunteered their time during classes to help people learn skills that will help them be safe and efficient in their kitchens at home. The chefs share personal experiences and demonstrate their time-saving skills and techniques to the participants so that the participants can practice during class and then again at home.

FSM: Do you feel there is a need for Operation Frontline in this community? Why Omaha?

One in ten of the children in our community are affected by hunger and more importantly food insecurity. This is where the child has limited or unsure access to foods that are safe or nutritionally adequate. Sometimes we find out our clients have cut back on meals or portions and don't have enough food to go through the month. I think food budgeting is a great lesson for

all of us in the community. Resources are available; we just need to know how to utilize them to the best of our advantage and that is what our classes teach.

FSM: Earlier you mentioned that chefs volunteer their time?

Volunteers are very important to our program. We have a few dedicated volunteers that have been with us since we started here in 2003. The time commitment is not that demanding if you are interested. A class commitment could be a total of 20 hours spread over 6 weeks, more if you want more classes. We are always looking for volunteers – you can check out our blog at <http://ofloma.wordpress.com> if you want more information on volunteering with us. Many of our volunteers like to give back to the community and they really like the idea of being able to utilize their professional talents and skills giving back. Chef Betty found a professional advantage in talking with refugee participants about how food is prepared in their native lands. Chef Robert gleamed when he told the story about the 4th graders making their own macaroni and cheese from scratch and not a box “the students remarked ‘Wow that looks like it came from a restaurant’ and to that he replied ‘and you made it all by yourselves’” – on that particular day the students had learned enough from Chef Robert that he let them do everything alone with just his supervision.

Our volunteers also get the benefits of national recognition. We have mixers every year with other Share Our Strength Operation Frontline programs from across the nation. The national office really values the opinions from the chefs in the classrooms and often will seek their advice on how to make classes more efficient or add another recipe to the curriculums. After volunteering for 15 courses, Chefs get inducted into the Hall Of Fame for Share Our Strength at the Annual Conference of Leaders Ceremony.



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Blue Ribbon Beer?

by Jordy Clements

Pabst is an American success story in the truest sense. Founded by a German, and recently sold to a Greek, it's a brewery that brews no beer, as it's under contract with an American/Canadian/South African company (MillerCoors), partially headquartered in London. Pabst is also a resurgent brand, and the story behind its most famed asset, the iconic Pabst Blue Ribbon, is just as convoluted, and as quintessentially American, as the company's bricolage past.

Attempting to untangle the Blue Ribbon's many threads brings us first to Milwaukee. Like many US brewers, Pabst owes its heritage to the influx of German immigrants that found their way to the upper Midwest in the mid-19th century. Jacob Best, whose surname might help explain the seemingly outrageous claim made by another Milwaukee beer, emigrated in 1844 and soon established the Empire Brewery.

"The story behind Pabst's most famed asset is as convoluted as the company's bricolage past."

With the help of his sons (two of whom would later defect to found the rival Plank Road Brewery, eventually sold to Frederick Miller of Miller Brewing), Best turned the Empire Brewery, now called Best and Co., into a success. Upon retirement, he transferred control to his son Phillip, and he in turn passed it to his son-in-law, steamboat captain Frederick Pabst.

Let's fast forward a little. On May 26 of this year, Greek-born investor C. Dean Metropoulos purchased Pabst (along with Old Style, Schlitz, and a few other beers) for a quarter of a billion dollars. Metropoulos, known for reviving such exciting brands as Vlasic Pickles, Bumble Bee Tuna, and Chef Boyardee, does not know anything about brewing beer. This is convenient, as Pabst does not actually brew any.

As stated above, Pabst actually contracts MillerCoors to make the beer, a common practice in the brewing industry. When it comes to making "American Lager beer" (i.e. cheap swill), the economics of scale make it prohibitive to compete with the major brewers. If you are drinking inexpensive, mass produced beer, it is likely brewed by a giant international company like SABMiller, Molson Coors Brewing Company, or Anheuser-Busch InBev (who control 25% of the global market alone).

As much as anyone can figure, Pabst started placing the ribbons around bottle necks to signify that it was an "award winning beer." The beer became successful, and Pabst started ordering blue ribbon by the mile, apparently keeping one turn-of-the-century factory working around the clock for a year to fill a 10 million yard order.

To this day, labeling on PBR cans famously claim that, "This is the original Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer. Nature's choicest products provide its prized flavor. Only the finest of hops and grains are used. Selected as America's Best in 1893."

There are only two small problems with this. First, Pabst had started using the ribbon in 1882, 11 years before being selected as "America's Best" in 1893. Second, the claim of America's Best is a reference to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, where accounts vary widely as to anyone winning. Some reports state that organizers frustrated vendors by awarding bronze medals to multiple

breweries for "essential excellence" rather than judging them on their "relative merits."

Pabst hasn't significantly changed its labeling for over a century, and the Blue Ribbon is its calling card, despite not really signifying much, if anything. Compared with other large American breweries, who seemingly revamp their image every few years, Pabst is relatively stable, and that appeals to a certain customer base.

More than anything owing to its recent success is that fact that Pabst somehow became synonymous with "hipsters." Though that word's cultural clock is ticking, PBR is a brand that shows no signs of going anywhere. It survived Prohibition as a lucrative cheese business, eventually sold to Kraft, and similarly weathered the light beer wars of the 70s and 80s. Is outlasting skinny jeans really going to be that much of an accomplishment?

PBR is quite popular in Omaha, perhaps nowhere more so than the strip of Benson bars on Maple Street known for music, beer, and a younger, bohemian bent. Marty, a bartender at Jake's Cigars & Spirits, estimates they go through 18-20 cases of PBR tall boys (the name for the larger 16oz cans) a week, using as many as 43 cases in a night during Benson block parties. Asked why Pabst is so popular, Marty says it's, "good," before pausing. "...And cheap." Just down the street from Jake's and The Waiting Room is the Sydney, a trio of bars who likely sell as much Blue Ribbon as anyone in the city, possibly even the state. Kenny, a bartender at the Sydney, states that "it's definitely the cheapest beer we have," and figures PBR's rise in popularity coincided with price hikes from Old Style.

So, in the end, does the Blue Ribbon, and its popularity, stand for cheap price or good quality?

Exactly.



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YEAST INSPECTION:

American IPA by Jason McLaughlin

India Pale Ale was first brewed in England back in 18th century. The beer was originally designed with gratuitous amounts of hops because of the plant's natural preservative powers. The heftier hop addition and higher alcohol content helped the beer survive the long voyages by sea to British troops in India.

Two hundred years later, the IPA is relevant in a young and growing American craft beer movement. American brewers are the undisputed kings of taking historical beer recipes and creating new versions that push the limits of the style. This process often spawns a new style in itself. The American IPA is a perfect example of this evolution. The powerful citrus and pine character of American grown Pacific Northwest hops are the catalyst. The American IPA may be shocking to the unaccustomed palate, but to the discerning beer drinker, the intensity and flavorful bitterness are pleasing. This is a style that has its own culture of followers, the appropriately named 'Hop Heads'.



New Belgium Brewing Co. Ranger IPA (Fort Collins, CO)

6.5% ABV

Appearance 3/3

Pours a clear, bright gold with a huge frothy white head leaving loads of lace clinging to the walls of the glass. Good head retention yielding a foam cap throughout.

Aroma 9/12

Grapefruit and mandarin orange hop aroma with a floral like quality. Definitely hop dominated, but a light and pleasing toasty malt character is also present.

Flavor/Mouthfeel 19/25

A sweet, biscuity malt character in the beginning has a slight graininess. Moderate hop bitterness balances, but is far from abrasive. The hop flavor leans towards grapefruit, but it also has a spicy, pine-like note that adds to the complexity. The finish has focus on the grapefruit and spice of the hops. Light in body with a dry finish, and moderate carbonation lending to a dryer feel.

Overall 8/10

A very well done IPA. The aroma comes off much more vibrantly than the overall hop flavor, but the balance is still pleasant. It is great to finally see the famed Fort Collins brewery jump into the world of hop power, deliciously done.

Total Score 39/50 A

Lucky Bucket Brewing Co. IPA (Omaha, NE)

6.3% ABV

Appearance 2/3

Presents a clear deep copper color with a pillow of bright white creamy head. Lacing and overall head retention is great, and adheres to the glass in a tight web.

Aroma 10/12

Filled with hop complexity. Notes of orange, pine and even a slight strawberry like character come to life. Very light bready malt comes through the mountain of hops on the nose.

Flavor/Mouthfeel 20/25

Loads of hop flavor with succulent oranges and grapefruit citrusy focus. Floral, fresh green grassy hop notes are met by caramel malt sweetness and a kiss of molasses. The hop bitterness is moderately high, but balanced and appropriate. The finish is dry with a fruity orange hop character. A medium body, and it has moderate carbonation feel.

Overall 8/10

An exquisite example of an IPA. The aromatics are unreal, and the malt backbone seems to create a perfect marriage of balance. Nebraskans are blessed to call this one our own. Very well done.

Total Score 40/50 A+



Odell Brewing Co.
IPA (Fort Collins, CO)

7.0% ABV

Appearance 3/3

Pours a clear, vibrant copper color bordering on orange. A slightly off-white head of tightly packed foam blankets the glass walls and retains its white cap.

Aroma 10/12

Sweet grapefruit and mango jump right out as the power of the hop aroma. Floral hops are also detected along with notes of resinous pine. Very faint biscuity malt sits in the back.

Flavor/Mouthfeel 20/25

A huge grapefruit hop character takes stage front and center. Tropical fruit and pine add to the powerful hop display. Slightly sweet bready malt character takes a back seat to the hops. Bitter, but the sweetness adds just enough to balance. Long, dry finish with a focus on the citrus hops. Medium in body, with a somewhat prickly carbonation feel that is enhanced by the hop bitterness.

Overall 8/10

Hop lover's beer. The fruits pulled from the aroma and flavor seem to be never-ending. The balance is way towards the hops, yet seems so well done. A wonderful treat from yet another great Ft. Collins Brewery.

Total Score 41/50 A+



SKA Brewing Co.
Modus Hoperandi IPA (Durango, CO)

6.8% ABV

Appearance 3/3

Presents a hazy, deep coppery-orange body. An off-white head is bountiful and smothers everything it touches with a sticky coating of lace.

Aroma 9/12

A piney resin hop aroma jumps out of the nose, with additional herbal and citrus zest hop notes poking through. Faint caramel malt adds a hint of sweetness to the overall aroma.

Flavor/Mouthfeel 19/25

A mighty wallop of resinous pine and grapefruit are bracing at first sip, followed by a pleasant herbal hop character. Sweet caramel malt jumps right in to balance everything out, with additional notes of toffee and biscuit maltiness. Moderately-high hop bitterness gives a very clean character, and citrus zest lasts well into the finish. Medium in body, with a smooth, mild carbonation feel.

Overall 8/10

For the incredible display of hops and bitterness, this is one of the most drinkable IPA's I can remember. The marriage of the resinous hops and caramel malt is fantastic. The fact that it's offered in a can just adds to my joy.

Total Score 39/50 A



BAR CHAT: THE INTOXICOLOGIST

by Dan Crowell

I first met Cheri Loughlin (aka The Intoxicologist) a few years ago at a cocktails class we both attended. At that time, she was just beginning to post on the web the results of some of her research into distilled spirits and cocktails. Today her site, Intoxicologist.net, receives thousands of hits a day and millions over the course of its existence. Spirits producers including Bacardi, Beam Global, and Pernod Ricard have contracted her services, and content from her site has been referenced by such publications as Luxist, Men's Health, and Esquire. Her Intoxicologist Facebook page boasts friends in very high places in the world of mixology, including Dale DeGroff, Audrey Saunders, and Gary 'Gaz' Regan. Cheri was kind enough to sit down for an interview recently with Food & Spirits Magazine.

"I once made a margarita using Zima just to see if it could be done. It can if that's all you have!"

FSM: When & how did you decide to create "The Intoxicologist"?

Anytime I mixed a cocktail I tried to tweak it. I once made a margarita using Zima just to see if it could be done. It can if that's all you have! In my opinion liquor and liqueurs are sort of the equivalents to spices in a chef's cabinet only we have to be more responsible with them due to the alcohol content. Just as spices mingle together harmoniously when mixed in a balanced manner, so too spirits along with fresh juices and mixers can blend together in a cocktail the same way. I wanted to know how to do that. I figured if I wanted to know how to do that

others did too, so I started writing about my own personal findings and the things I learned about through research.

FSM: What are the various online incarnations of The Intoxicologist? Do you generate any other web content? Is any of it not related to spirits & cocktails?

The Intoxicologist began as Straight Up Cocktails on Blogger, but quickly moved to The Intoxicologist Is In on Wordpress. Last year I moved to my own domain name at <http://intoxicologist.net>. There was so much content on The Intoxicologist Is In on Wordpress that it was virtually impossible to move it to the new Intoxicologist site. I kept busting bandwidth. So, I am slowly updating the content and reposting reviews to the Intoxicologist.net site little by little.

I have written a few guest blog posts in the past and am asked to do so frequently, but am more selective with my time in that regard. I do write to other sites that are non spirits & cocktail related.

FSM: How many hits do your sites receive in a day?

That varies depending upon time of year, time of month, whether there is a holiday, if someone has linked me somewhere; the list could go on and on with variables. The month of October sees great climb due to Halloween being huge for parties serving themed cocktails. During that month I was still writing to two Intoxicologist sites which saw combined hits of 175,377. As of today (May 13, 2010) The Intoxicologist site has an Alexa Traffic Rank of 308,163 worldwide and 47,644 in the U.S. Honestly, what the stats really say is there are real people behind every number on that board. Give people

good information and they will come back willingly; not because they were won over by slick advertising.

FSM: What is your goal with The Intoxicologist?

Site goal: Bringing liquor information to consumers. Everything does not trickle down through advertising, marketing and the liquor store shelf. Once product is on the shelf, it is not necessarily self explanatory either. My goal in that regard is to help people know what to do with it or help them gain the confidence to play around with a product to find something they like to mix with it themselves. It's just liquid in a bottle much like spices in a jar. Nothing magical about it.

Personal goal: At the moment all of the time spent researching, creating, photographing, writing and posting content to The Intoxicologist site is completely unpaid. So, my personal goals are to publish my cocktail creations in

“Give people good information and they will come back willingly; not because they were won over by slick advertising.”

books, ebooks, phone apps or all of those mediums. The only paid work I currently do, which I would like to do more of, is creating more recipes directly for companies, restaurants and bars.

FSM: How do you go about creating content for The Intoxicologist?

Various ways. Reader feedback is the most reliable. Holidays and times of the year dictate particular content for obvious reasons. New releases into the marketplace and spirits that are sent out for review also add to content. I read articles daily from all over the web which spark ideas for questions to readers for interaction on The Intoxicologist Facebook page and the Intoxicologist Twitter account. This interaction gets readers involved and adds a little something different for variety. I also learn a lot about what other people think which gets me outside my little computer box. I like that most of all.

FSM: Can you name a few spirits producers, national publications, etc you've worked with?

Currently I have created cocktail recipes complete with photographs specifically for the Hiram Walker products for Pernod Ricard through one of their PR agencies. Beam Global Spirits commissioned cocktail recipes with photos specifically for cocktail menu use in a chain of restaurants. The May 2010 issue of Men's Health magazine uses a photograph of The Seelbach Cocktail from my collection of photographs. I was extremely excited when they contacted me about purchasing the photo for use. Brugal Rum also commissioned two photos for use for their 2009

fall cocktail, Dulce Dominicana. Esquire.com asked me for quotes for Bad Beer Ads in December 2008. That was fun.

FSM: Is there travel associated with The Intoxicologist? Where have you been on behalf of the site?

I have been rather fortunate to have been invited to several places to cover events and tour facilities. Bacardi invited me to Puerto Rico early 2009 for five days. While there I was able to visit the Bacardi facility on a private tour and meet with Joaquin Bacardi III.

My most recent trip has been to New Zealand for a week at the invitation of 42Below for their Cocktail World Cup 2010 bartender competition. The once in a lifetime experience was incredible from a location standpoint to be sure, but as always, I come away with deeper understanding of the brand and respect for the spirit of the people behind that brand.

FSM: What's your philosophy / methodology in creating a new cocktail?

I most often try to stick to five ingredients or less using easy to find ingredients when creating cocktails for The Intoxicologist site and for companies. Cocktails should be user friendly and taste good. Cocktails with ten ingredients might look interesting, but are more difficult to reproduce at home.



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FSM: What do you drink when you go out?

Depends on the bar. At Boiler Room, my fall back is Chris' Bobby Burns or he makes a Negroni exactly how I like it. But, Chris whips up great cocktails that I love to try anytime, so I always know I'm safe to try lots of interesting things there. Most bars I try to find something interesting on the cocktail menu for a first round, but usually ask that the sweet factor be dialed down a bit.

FSM: What's your favorite cocktail to make for guests?

There isn't one in particular. When guests come to my home they usually ask what new cocktail I'm working on or what new spirits have arrived. I am big on allowing people to sample many things and throwing out anything that they don't particularly like. Sip, sample and throw away. No sense in drinking something that doesn't entirely float your boat.

FSM: What advice would you give to bartenders? What about consumers?

Advice for bartenders: When someone tells you how they like a cocktail, make it like they like it – not how you think it should be made. Above all, get to know the products. Continually learn. Your customers will teach you many things you can't learn just by mixing on your own.

Advice for consumers: Try many things by sampling at bars & free sampling at stores. Read reviews and take

note of those you consistently agree with to form a frame of reference for future spirits. Don't be entirely swayed by advertising. Drink what you like, how you like it.

FSM: What's the next big thing in spirits & cocktails, in your opinion?

Simplicity. Classic cocktails never really go out of style, but rather morph into new creations through the years. Consumers don't mind messing up one drink out of a bottle. They will play with one drink and then continue to pour drinks they like if that one creation didn't turn out quite right. In listening to my readers, reading and listening to comments from cocktail competition judges and looking at some of the winning recipes from cocktail competitions, the continuing thread seems to be simplicity.

FSM: When you're not writing about spirits & cocktails, what do you do?

What every 'normal' person in the world does, I suppose; juggle a household and family of six, four of whom are teenagers with one heading to college in the fall.

FSM: Anything you'd like to say to our readers?

Sample at least one new thing each time you go to a bar. If your liquor store doesn't have something on the shelf, ask. They might be able to order it. You don't have to finish every drink. If it isn't good, it isn't worth finishing.

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Seasonal Wines & Outdoor Cooking

by John Fischer



There is nothing better than sipping a cool refreshing glass of German Riesling while lounging about on a hot summer day. Indeed, light bodied white wines are the beverages of choice on such occasions.

The gentle sweetness and clean, fresh acidity of a Riesling Kabinett are uplifting and energizing. What's more, you are not likely to get tipsy, as the alcohol content is low, usually between 7-10%. This is in contrast to the alcohol content of most red wines, which range between 12 -16%.

Tart, light-bodied wines, such as Riesling, Pinot Grigio, Chablis, and Pinot Blanc are great accompaniments for cheeses, hors d'oeuvres, or mid afternoon snacks. Their light unencumbered character and flavor supporting acidity are ideal for such fare. Nonetheless, there is a definite place for big, rich reds. For most outdoor cooking, especially barbecuing, big hearty red wines have a clear-cut place. Indeed, they are the perfect match for most barbecue dishes.

“For most outdoor cooking – especially barbecuing – big, hearty red wines have a clear-cut place.”

There is a little bit of confusion in regards to the terms grilling and barbecuing, so let's first start by defining our terms. Barbecuing is a cooking method that employs indirect heat and smoke from wood or charcoal in a barbecue pit or smoker. It is a method for slow cooking and smoking of tough cuts of meats. This process also usually entails steeping the meat in a rich flavorful marinade prior to cooking which further tenderizes the meat and enhances its flavors.

Grilling is used for cooking hamburgers, sausages, and more tender cuts of meats, as well as fish and vegetables. In this method the food product is placed on a grill directly over the heat. The

cooking time is quicker and the item is stamped with characteristic grill marks. For example, you would employ grilling when cooking a filet of beef, but for a brisket, the method of choice would be barbecuing.

Both of these cooking methods will enhance and fortify food products making them heavier and richer. The full-bodied nature of such foods call for a similar styled wine. Wines such as Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, and wines from the Rhône Valley (such as Châteauneuf du Pape, Côtes du Rhône) might seem a little heavy for summer, but in the environment of such rich foods, certainly have their place. Many of these wines have smoky, peppery, meaty flavors that pair seamlessly with similar flavors in the food.

Malbec, a grape variety from Argentina, is beginning to become popular in this country. It is a food friendly wine that is a great match for barbecue, but also works well with grilled meats. Beef reigns supreme in Argentina. The classic method of cooking beef is called asado, which translates to barbecue. The meat is lightly seasoned and slow cooked over an open pit fire fueled with wood. In addition to a complex variety of fruity savors, the wine has good flavor supporting acidity and a smoky, meaty flavor which reflects back to similar flavors in the meat.

Barbecuing usually imparts a more casual ambiance than grilling and calls for less formal wines, especially when such foods are served in a “picnic” styled environment. However, the matching wine also depends on the character of the food product. Barbecued chicken or ribs are informal foods; however, barbecued shrimp can be served in more sophisticated surroundings.

“Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah have smoky, peppery, meaty flavors that pair seamlessly with similar flavors in the food.”

You certainly would not consider grilled hamburgers or hotdogs formal, but a grilled filet mignon can sit with ease at a formal dinner party and demands high quality rich wines such as Cabernet Sauvignon or red Bordeaux.

Although barbecued fish and shellfish are cooked by the classic slow indirect method, cooking time is much shorter than for meats. These items have more smoke and a bit more flavor than grilled seafood. White wines are the best options for smoked seafood. Try these items with a good Brut Champagne, New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, or Riesling Kabinett. If there is any accompanying sweetness, such as a sweet fruity barbecue sauce, a German Riesling is a wonderful choice.

Pulled pork, barbecued chicken, brisket, and ribs by their very nature are informal. Bring on the beer, or less formal wines such as Zinfandel, Australian Shiraz, Malbec, Beaujolais, or Côtes-du-Rhône. That is not to say that Cabernet or Bordeaux would not match with such foods; however, the finer nuances that these up-scaled wines have would be somewhat obfuscated by the powerful flavors in the food.

There is little doubt that foods grilled or barbecued have their flavor enhanced by the cooking process. They are more flavorful than foods cooked in the oven or in a fry pan and require similar styled wines: rich, flavorful, and full-bodied.

Summer is suddenly upon us, and my mouth is watering for some untroubled outdoor cooking. There is nothing better than the alluring flavors of dishes prepared from the grill and barbe. Nevertheless, these cooking methods are a year-long attraction and never go out of style. It's just a little more challenging to fire up the coals on a cold winter day.

Wine and Food – 101

A Comprehensive Guide to Wine and the Art of Matching Wine to Food.

The purpose of this book is *twofold*: to supply the reader with a basic knowledge about wine, and to develop the expertise necessary to successfully match wine with food. The concepts are simple, logical, and easy to understand. After reading this book, matching wine with food will be a snap. The pleasure you derive in pairing wine with food will be greatly enhanced by your newly acquired knowledge of the culinary arts. I think that you will find this book to be enlightening, enjoyable, and easy to read.

- *John R. Fischer*

“Extremely readable – I especially like the organization, which makes it a great educational tool for novices, as well as connoisseurs.”

- *David Rosengarten, former host of the Food Network television show Taste. Author of the book, Red wine with Fish.*

“Fischer has redefined the concept of matching wine and food. Scientific, though easy to understand, this book is a must-read for wine aficionados and professionals.”

- *José R. Garrigó, Chairman of the International Wine and Food Society Board of Governors of the Americas.*

“A simple and logical approach to matching wine to food. It is easy to understand and enjoyable to read. We have thoroughly enjoyed using it at the Institute for the Culinary Arts, and have received many compliments from students.”

- *James E. Trebbien, Dean, The Institute for the Culinary Arts, Omaha Nebraska.*

“Well organized, clearly written, light without being lightweight and enlightening without being self-important”.

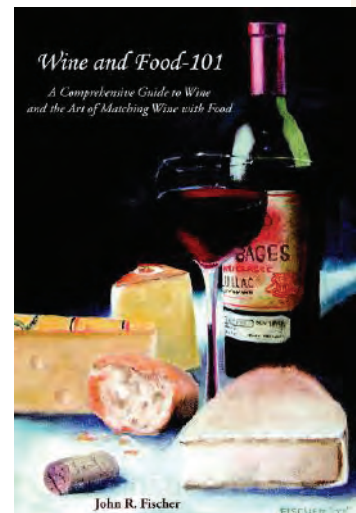
- *Mike Scott, winemaker and vice president of Lone Canary Winery (Spokane, Washington).*

Wine and Food - 101 is available or can be ordered at most book stores and online at Amazon.com

Available in hardcover (\$26.00) and paperback (\$20.00).

For an autographed copy, mail the inscription that you wish to be written along with your check to John Fischer, 12504 V St., Omaha, NE 68137. Include an additional \$2.75 for postage & handling.

Send any inquiries to jrudyf@cox.net.



Literary Wine Travel Tales

by Oliver B. Pollak

Vacation is almost over. You are at the airport. You have some loose change, some odd Euros. There is the duty free store. Will it be perfume or cologne, chocolates, Cuban cigars, single malt scotch whiskey, or wine?

Wine can loosen the tongue, make you sociable – or obnoxious. Wine can make you forget. The empty bottles, gathering dust as mementos, can make you remember. Empties upright, on their sides, in the trash, recycled are “Dead soldiers”.

What is the selection at David Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv? Barons Herzog and Rothschild, Eshkol, Gan Eden, Hagafen, Mogen David, Manischewitz, Carmel?

“What do you choose to collect? What do you choose to drink? When do you self-diagnose and clean up your act?”

Leaving Rome in 1997, after a delightful late spring holiday, with the scent of May flowers still in my nostrils, I spied a cardboard box featuring two bottles; a 1993 Machiavelli Chianti Classico from Poggibonsi, and a 1994 Chianti Dominus Johannes Boccaccius from Certaldo – we had been to both Tuscan towns. The hook was Boccaccio’s Decameron: the first near pornography/erotica I ever read. The stories, at 11 years of age, were racy, and my parent’s copy contained alluring illustrations by Rockwell Kent. My earliest wine recollection was Chianti in grass-skirted bottles. In the early 1970s I drank Portuguese Mateus Rose in Zimbabwe.

In Paris in January 2001 I picked up an attractive wooden case with three bottles vintage 1998 labeled “Anthologie,” a sampler of Bordeaux, Médoc, and Côtes de Blaye. Now I had a theme: wines evoking literary names. In American liquor stores, I occasionally found labels with literary references. California led with Paradigm, Novella, Conundrum, Icon, Irony, and Kenwood’s Jack London. I am sure a systematic rather than a haphazard and anecdotal search would yield a library worth.

My moment of truth came while educating myself in London, Ontario, in a LCBO, Liquor Control Board store, accompanied by my cousins Jean-Pierre and Judith Schachter. There was a bottle of Scholastica Accademia for \$13.95. I placed it in the shopping cart. By the time I got to the cashier, my epiphany and self analysis said leave it behind, tamp down that OCD... Karen bought a fine California and French red for our cousins.

The following day in Toronto I decided to leave the empty bottle of Portuguese red, labeled Egotista, consumed at the trendy Piri Piri restaurant. It would not be carried back to the states.

So this is the point: What do you choose to collect? What do you choose to drink? When do you realize this absurd collecting shrick should go to another level: When the empty bottles take too much

space? When you realize they are dust catchers? Hobbies/tastes/interests come and go. You know they are going to be thrown away some day, so why not sooner than later? When do you self diagnose and clean up your act?

The clincher: write down the names and pertinent information – provenance. Red, white, the mixtures (Sangiovese, Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Grenache, Mouvedre), alcohol level (11.5 to 14.5 or higher %), city, and of course, year.

Following a Friday night service closed with Kiddush over the wine, we went to an American Italian chain located in 21 cities in 12 states. The reserve wine list fed my pretentious affectations and revealed humorous gaffes in provenance and spelling, requiring personal inspection of several bottles.

Geography is important: The Luis Phillipe Edwards listed as a Spanish wine turned out to be Chilean. An Italian Rivola Tempronillo [sic] turned out to be Spanish Rívola. Accent marks, as in cuvée, were totally absent.

Spelling counts: Sonoma was spelled Sonama and Senoma. Cassonova di Nero should be Casanova. Mucsat should be Muscat. Taylor Fladgate twany port should be tawny. Phillippe Rosignal should be Philippe. Bourgongne should be Bourgogne. Stags Leap should be Stags’. Cabrenet should be Cabernet. Arrowwood also spelled Arrowood, should be Arrowood, the misspelling has the attraction, like Mississippi, of containing three double letters. Centenial should be Centennial. Caneros should be Carneros. Arcacia should be Acacia. Sonoma Cutier should be Cutrer. Marlborough should be Marlborough. New Zeland should be New Zealand. George DeBubluef should be DuBouef. Beaujolias should be Beaujolais. *Is this wine menu a candidate for the beer brewers’ Guinness Book of Records?*



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WHY FRANCE?

by John Finocchiaro

I recently ran into a friend of mine and our conversation turned to the topic of wine. He told me of his new wine cellar and how he and his wife often enjoyed spending evenings together sharing a bottle. He had become a true wine aficionado. And when asked what kind of wines he was stocking in his cellar, he proudly stated that his supply was exclusively American Cabernet and Pinot Noir.

Now, there is nothing wrong with knowing what you like and enjoying what you know. However, in order to move beyond simple enjoyment one must frequently move out of their comfort zone. An admirer of fine architecture is missing out if he has no knowledge of the structures of ancient Rome or Greece. A music lover may certainly enjoy the hits of his era, but could discover much more by venturing a bit further. And if you really want to know wine, you must go to France.

“Fine French wines can possess an elegance, acidity and minerality that is all their own.”

Nearly all today's popular grape types originated in France. Cabernet is from the left bank of Bordeaux, and Merlot is from the right bank. Sauvignon Blanc also comes from Bordeaux. Chardonnay and Pinot noir trace their origins to Burgundy. Chenin Blanc is a Loire valley varietal. Even Shiraz, which is often assumed to be indigenous to Australia, and the increasingly popular Malbec from Argentina trace their roots directly to France. Want more? Grenache, Mourvedre, Gewurtztraminer, Cabernet franc.....all French. And these French wines were the original benchmarks by which the rest of the world's wines have been compared.

In 1976 there was a famous and historic wine tasting which took place in Paris in which two Napa valley wines - Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 1973 Cabernet Sauvignon and Chateau Montelena 1973 Chardonnay - beat the finest of France in a blind tasting. In the wine world this was the equivalent of the U.S. beating Russia in hockey in the 1980 Olympic Games. Why? Because the wines of France were the most renowned and the standard by which all others were measured. Google “1976 Paris Wine Tasting”; It's a great story.

Now if geography and history lessons don't get your pulse racing with excitement, there is a much bigger reason to venture into the world of French wines. They taste different. Surprised? Don't be. Granted, cheap wines from France are usually no better than

cheap wines from the U.S., or anywhere else for that matter. But the good stuff is unique. While it is difficult to generalize about all such wines, it is safe to say that fine French whites can possess an elegance, acidity, and minerality that is all their own. Fine French chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc typically offer a taste profile that differs from their American counterparts. They can compliment fish, cheese, and buttery dishes beautifully, often with a less cloying mouthfeel, higher acidity, less sweetness competing with the flavors of the food, and beautiful lingering finishes.

“The good stuff is often of a completely different style than the American, new world wines to which so many of us have grown accustomed.”

Likewise, the best French reds can possess a quintessential 'old world' style. With less bright fruit and more dark fruit flavors, they may possess a richness and complexity that is revealed over a long, lingering finish. The characteristic barnyard, earthy, sometimes musty aromas are quite atypical of most 'new world' wines. One immediately senses that these wines are truly indicative of the land from which the grapes grew and not simply a manufactured, artificially manipulated product. Any discussion of the world's finest Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot would devote serious attention to Bordeaux. And any serious producer of Pinot noir will tell you that those from Burgundy are the finest in the world.

If you love good wine and have yet to discover those of France, give them a shot. But be prepared. The good stuff is often of a completely different style than the American, new world wines to which so many of us have grown accustomed. And a randomly pulled ten dollar wine from the French section of your grocery store wine department probably won't knock your socks off. Quality is going to cost you. Also note that the labels of fine French wines can be very difficult to decipher, so get some guidance from a knowledgeable proprietor.

You see, the French know that they make wonderful wines. Their best are unmatched anywhere else in the world. Perhaps that is why they feel no need to make simplify their labels or compete aggressively price wise for their good stuff. But make no mistake about it - the good stuff is worth experiencing.



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LIBATION CONVERSATION: PIMM'S N° 1

by Dan Crowell



oyster bar in the 1820's. Pimm concocted a mixture of gin, quinine, bitters and a mash of herbs that had become a very popular digestive tonic among his customers. In fact, fashionable London society had adopted this drink by the latter half of the 19th century at least in part because, at a moderate 50 proof, it was a drink that could be enjoyed all afternoon without losing entirely one's capacity to maintain the required level of decorum. It was due to this level of popularity that Pimm began, in 1859, to market his elixir in a pre-mixed form, eventually expanding to six offerings based on different base spirits, including vodka (No. 6) and brandy (No. 3). Pimm's No. 1 and Pimm's No. 3, also known as Pimm's 'Winter Cup' are still in production today, and although No. 3 is not exported to the US, it can still be procured online, if you don't mind paying quite a bit more for shipping than for the product itself. The 'cup' is a reference to the tankard in which it was served at Pimm's original oyster bar.

As with many of the 'hidden gems' in the world of distilled spirits, the recipe for Pimm's is a closely guarded secret. In fact, the proprietary recipe is known to only six people. Fittingly, these lucky few are known within the company as 'The Secret Six'.

"Vodka (No. 6) and brandy (No. 3) are still in production today, and although it is not exported to the US, it can still be procured online."

In America, we're no strangers to the idea of combining cocktails and sporting events. What would the Kentucky Derby be without the Mint Julep? Horses running around in the dirt – that's what it would be. The British are no different, and being a fundamentally British invention itself, it comes as no surprise that Pimm's is the drink of choice at another iconic British institution, Wimbledon. During the Wimbledon fortnight, some 80,000 half-pints of Pimm's No 1 Cup are consumed in and around the All England Club. Not such a hidden gem after all.

Unless you're already aware its inherent deliciousness, by now you may be wondering what Pimm's tastes like. I've included the official tasting notes from Pimm's No.1 for your consideration. (Note: If you want to take a swig of my bottle of Pimm's No. 3, we'll have to become much better friends first.)

If you've been to enough bars, you've noticed them. They're the bottles seemingly all bars have, but few seem to know what they are or what to do with them. On the surface this seems sort of steeped in tradition or a quirk of the business that somehow adds character, like, "yeah we've had that same bottle of Galliano for 17 years and nobody's touched it... heh heh heh", and so on. A victimless crime.

In reality, we are all victims. The number of delicious potations out there that go unshared with

"As with many of the 'hidden gems' in the world of distilled spirits, the recipe for Pimm's is a closely guarded secret. "

the drinking public every day because of a communal ignorance of their unique and exquisite properties is indeed a tragedy. However, the sharing of insights and information into these 'hidden in plain sight' gems is like a bright beacon casting out the shadows of the unknown which shroud the fertile soils of our minds. Let's start with one of my favorite under-appreciated libations, the quintessentially British Pimm's No. 1.

Pimm's No 1 is a gin-based liqueur, originally formulated by James Pimm, proprietor of a London

TASTING NOTES – PIMM’S NO. 1

Front of Mouth: Cool, spice and grassy herbs buoyed by tropical fruits and pulpy citrus. A firm but not aggressive attack.

Mid-Mouth: Clean and palate-cleansing, citric without a hint of syrupiness. A clean herbal punchiness not unlike a good tabouli.

Back of Mouth: Long and firm with lingering herbal and floral notes.

“Clean and refreshing... a perfect cocktail option for summertime entertaining.”

Notice that even though it is classified as a liqueur, there is no reference to sweetness in the tasting notes for Pimm’s. It is not a particularly sweet liqueur, and although a level of sweetness exists on the palate, the overall impression is a clean, refreshing, almost savory herbal complexity that marries well with citrus-based mixers (particularly lemonade), soda, tonic, iced tea, or on its own over ice with an orange or cucumber slice – a perfect cocktail option for summertime entertaining, outdoor parties, or even after a rousing game of badminton on the south lawn.

If you’re looking for the ideal setting for your jigger of Pimm’s No. 1, look no further than this recipe; the official Pimm’s Cup recipe served at Wimbledon.

PIMM’S CUP

(Official Wimbledon Recipe)

- Fill a Collins glass with ice.
- Mix 1 part Pimm’s Cup No. 1 with 2 parts lemonade.
- Stir or shake.
- Top off with club soda, or lemon-lime soda for a sweeter drink.
- Stir lightly, do NOT shake again.
- Garnish with a slice of Kirby cucumber and lemon wedge (optional).

OPTIONS

- If no lemonade is at hand, use Sprite or 7-Up.
- To make with ginger ale, use plenty of lemons.
- Add mint, apple or orange.
- For the coup de grace, use borage leaves.

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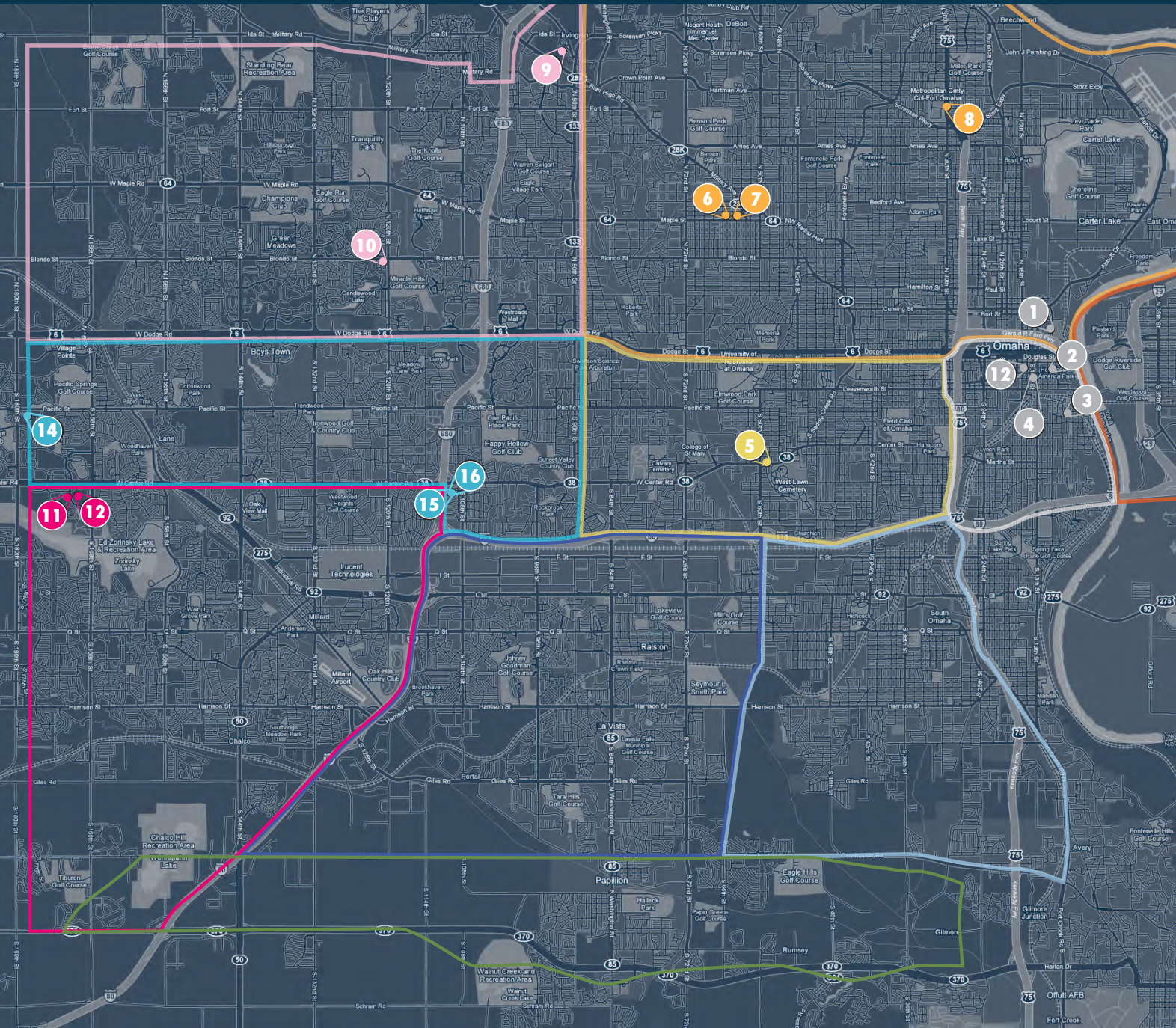
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SELECTED OMAHA RESTAURANTS, BARS & LOUNGES

- Downtown
- Central Omaha
- North Omaha
- Northwest Omaha
- South Omaha
- South Central Omaha
- Bellevue
- South West Omaha
- West Omaha



1 Liberty Tavern

402-998-4321
1001 Cass St



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 going to the Qwest Center or just looking for a relaxing dining experience, the Liberty Tavern offers complimentary parking at the Hilton.

2 M's Pub

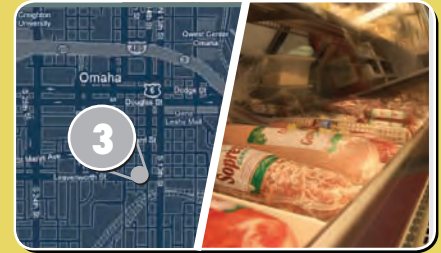
402-342-2050
1110 Howard St



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...

3 Orsi's Italian Bakery

402-345-3438
621 Pacific St



Orsi's Italian Bakery in the heart of Omaha's Little Italy has been family run since 1919 and in the same location since 1934. Famous for their pizza and bread products, Orsi's now features an Italian deli including Italian cheeses and meats, homemade Italian sausage and imported olives. Hours: Tues - Thurs, 8:30 am to 8 pm, Fri 8:30 am to 9 pm, Sat 7:30 am to 8 pm, Sun 7:30 am - 6 pm. Closed Mondays.

4 Vivace

402-342-2050
1110 Howard St



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

5 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.

6 España

402-934-9633
6206 Maple Street



España Tapas Bar is Omaha's only authentic Spanish/Mediterranean restaurant, bar and club. With over 60 tapas to choose from, the quality and integrity of the food rivals other tapas restaurants throughout the country. Tapas, or "small plates" as they are known, are many delicious dishes that can be enjoyed in a communal style. España often has flamenco guitarists, Latin jazz shows and flamenco/salsa dance performers for your dining pleasure.

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MR TOAD	402-345-4488
MYTH	402-884-6985
NOMAD LOUNGE	402-884-1231
ROSE & CROWN	402-346-8242
THE MAX	402-346-4110
WELCOME INN	402-341-4473
11-WORTH CAFE	402-346-6924
ETHNIC SANDWICH SHOP	402-422-1040
NICOLA'S	402-345-8466
ORSI'S PIZZA	402-345-3438
THE DINER	402-341-9870
URBAN WINE COMPANY	402-934-0005

Central - BARS & RESTAURANTS

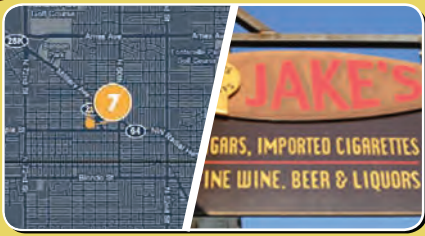
BROTHER'S LOUNGE	402-553-5822
THE 49 R	402-554-5841
THE DOWNUNDER	402-342-3806
THE ELBOW ROOM	402-556-0867
CANIGLIA'S VENICE INN	402-556-3111
GERDA'S BAKERY	402-553-6774
GOLDBERGS	402-556-2006
GORAT'S STEAK HOUSE	402-551-3733
HARKERT'S BAR-B-Q	402-554-0102
JONESY'S TACO HOUSE	402-551-6088
LA CASA PIZZARIA	402-556-6464
LITHUANIAN BAKERY & KAFE	402-391-3503
MCKENNA'S	402-393-7427
SPEZIA	402-391-2950

North - BARS & RESTAURANTS

FULL HOUSE BAR	402-558-3133
HOMY INN	402-554-5815
MICK'S MUSIC & BAR	402-502-2503
MUSETTE BAR	402-554-5830
NIFTY BAR & GRILL	402-933-9300
ALPINE INN	402-451-9988
CAMILLE'S SIDEWALK CAFÉ	402-731-9727
ESPAÑA	402-505-9917
HAPPY FAMILY RESTAURANT	402-934-5288
JIM'S RIB HAVEN	402-451-8061
JOE'S CAFÉ	402-556-9428
LEO'S DINER	402-553-2280
LISA'S RADIAL CAFÉ	402-551-2176
RAZZY'S SANDWICH SHOPPE	402-397-2131

7 Jake's Cigars & Spirits

402-934-9633
6206 Maple Street



Jake's is an upscale, unpretentious smoke shop and liquor store. Smokers are met by a walk-in humidor as well as the most extensive line of import and premium cigarettes in Omaha. If spirits is more of what suits your fancy, peruse our stock of eclectic and hard to find wines, liquors and beers. Enjoy a cocktail in our stylish, intimate lounge: you'll feel right at home whether you're drinking a cosmo, a Cabernet, or a Corona.

8 Sage Student Bistro

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. www.mccneb.edu/bistro
Bistro Hours - Mon. - Thurs. 6 - 8:30 p.m.

9 Mangia Italiana

402-614-0600
6516 Irvington Rd



In our kitchen, recipes today taste much as they did "in the old days." Long held customs prevail here in the style, taste and presentation of traditional Sicilian cooking. Come see us for everyday takeout, office, weddings, graduation parties or family reunions. Bring home an old-style Italian dinner: Pasta, Sugo, and Meatballs or our award-winning pizza. Located one block north of Sorenson Parkway on Irvington Road.

10 Taxi's

402-898-1882
1822 North 120th St.



Taxi's Grille is a neighborhood spot. Developed by Mac Thompsen and Bill Johnette, owners of The Neon Goose, the atmosphere and menu are contemporary casual. The large menu features soups, specialty salads, sandwiches, comfort foods, fresh seafood and steaks. Prixe Fixe items available nightly. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are half price bottle wines. Brunch is always popular with Egg Benedict dishes, omelettes, quiches and more. Call ahead to put your name in.

11 Dante Pizzeria

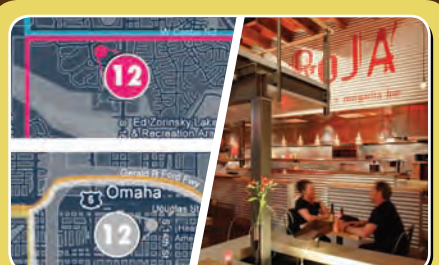
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Dante Pizzeria is Omaha's first certified Neopolitan Pizzeria. Dante's pizzas are prepared in the same way they were a century ago in Italy: the dough is stretched by hand and the pizzas are baked in an 800-degree Mugnaini wood-fired oven. Chef-owner Nick Strawhecker is committed to using produce from the area's many talented farmers. Open for lunch and dinner, Tuesday-Sunday.

12 Roja Mexican Grill

402-333-7652 402-346-9190
17010 Wright Plaza 1212 Harney Street



Traditional Tex-Mex fare with homemade flour tortillas, corn chips and salsa made fresh daily. New mouth-watering combo plates and gluten-free menu available. Voted best margarita 4 years running, made with real lime juice and a choice of more than 80 tequilas. Happy hour specials include 1/2 price appetizers, \$2.50 Dos Equis drafts, \$1.49 tacos and more. Mariachi band performs every 1st Sunday of the month.

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DON CARMELO'S PIZZERIA	402-289-9800
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HONG KONG CAFE	402-493-8383
LE PEEP	402-408-1728
LE VOLTAIRE	402-934-9374
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RED ZONE BBQ	402-431-9663
VINCENZO'S RISTORANTE	402-498-3889

South - BARS & RESTAURANTS

BG'S UNDER THE BRIDGE	402-734-9068
BROWN DERBY BAR	402-734-6198
DARBY'S TAVERN	402-733-9696
DONOHUE'S PUB	402-738-9780
JOHNNY Z'S	402-733-9602
HOMESTEAD CAFÉ	402-738-9989
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TAQUERIA TIAJUANA	402-731-1281
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Bellevue - BARS & RESTAURANTS

DOUG'S TOWN TAVERN	402-291-5155
HAM'S BELLEVUE BAR	402-291-9941
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PAT AND WALLY'S	402-291-9215
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VIDLAK'S FAMILY RESTAURANT	402-884-5111

13 Soaring Wings Vineyard

402-253-2479
1711 South 138th St Springfield, NE



Soaring Wings is one of the region's ultimate getaways. Just 10 minutes south of Omaha and overlooking the Platte river valley, the view is often compared to Napa and Sonoma. Facilities include covered decks, outdoor seating for 3000, indoor seating for 120, and a covered stage for events and performances by your favorite local and national bands. Come on out and "Toast the Good Life" that is Soaring Wings.

14 94/95 Sports Grille

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15 Corkscrew Wine & Cheese

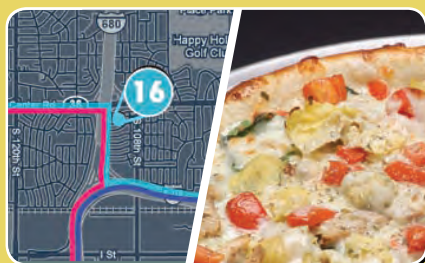
402-991-2927
10924 Prairie Brook Rd



Corkscrew Wine & Cheese is a wine bar and retail wine shop all under one roof. With 700 wines, we offer everything from California to Chianti; from \$8 to \$300. For your next wine purchase, visit us and we'll deliver a better bottle within your budget. Our wine bar is a great alternative to the bar scene, serving 20 wines by the glass along with artisanal cheeses and charcuterie. Stop by and enjoy a glass and some cheese on our outdoor patio.

16 Don Carmelo's Pizzeria

402-933-3190 402-289-9800
10821 Prairie Brook Rd 1024 N. 204th Ave



Founded in 1958 by the Magistro Family, Don Carmelo's Pizzeria serves top-notch Italian food and beverages: Omaha's First NY Style Pizza, Stromboli, Calzone, Oven-Toasted Hoagies, Philly Cheese Steaks, Pasta, Salads, Gelato, Beer & Wine. Conveniently located at 108th & Center and 204th & Dodge. We also feature take-out, delivery and catering for special events large or small. Daily lunch specials 11am - 2pm. Tradition - Excellence - Value

Want to see your bar or restaurant listed?

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RALSTON KENO	402-592-3008
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STROKER'S	402-331-9900
SUGAR CREEK	402-331-4579
SUNDOWNER BAR	402-733-9225
ANTHONY'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE	402-331-7575
GRANDMOTHER'S	402-339-6633
JOHNNY SORTINO'S PIZZA	402-339-5050
RAZZY'S DELI	402-537-9600
ROMAN COIN PIZZA	402-339-1944
VACANTIS RESTAURANT	402-331-4999
VARSITY SPORTS CAFE	402-339-7003

Southwest - BARS & RESTAURANTS

PAT'S PUB	402-934-4242
PICCOLO'S BAR	402-895-9988
RATIGANS	402-895-3311
THE BEST PUB	402-891-9888
WHY-NOT LOUNGE	402-895-9990
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

West - BARS & RESTAURANTS

MIC'S KARAOKE BAR	402-934-8640
NO WHERE BAR	402-502-5656
OBSERVATORY LOUNGE	402-334-9996
REDNECK SALOON	402-733-6365
SHARK CLUB	402-397-4275
THE REEL MARTINI BAR	402-884-7885
THE DRAFT HOUSE	402-884-2845
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

The Dumpster: Un-American Food

by Michael Campbell

We have been invaded. The Europeans snuck in and now all our signature foods are named after their home towns. Hamburger. Frankfurter. We call the latter a hot dog, but in our hearts we know the truth. A hot dog is never very hot, and God willing, does not contain much dog.

American pizza originated in Italy. It evolved from the Roman concoction of flat bread topped with cheese, honey, and bay leaves. The word pizza comes from the Roman word placenta.

There are French fries on the side. In a fit of posey patriotism we tried calling them freedom fries, in honor of us invading another country. Even Dick Cheney gave up on that name. We concede that nobody makes

“Germans don’t throw food away like we do. They grind up all sorts of leftover animal parts and people line up for it.”

a french fry as good as the French, so they won at least one war. (As I type the word French, it looks like a German word. Who named them French? Shouldn’t they be called Froisebleaux, or something?)

The only food I can think of that even sounds American is the Philly sandwich. But even the Historical Society of Philadelphia admits it was invented at a frankfurter stand in an Italian market. Really, it’s just a French dip sandwich non au jus.

Ice cream? Persia, 400 B.C. But we did invent the ice cream cone. No one knows why we didn’t give it a clever American name, leaving it as literal as if you called a hamburger a lips and tendons purée sandwich.

It is distinctly American that we don’t trust chefs (cheves?) to make a hamburger properly. Bobby Flay himself could make you a \$50 hamburger, and without tasting it first you’d pry open the sandwich and dump salt and ketchup on it.

So why don’t chefs put the salt and ketchup on it for you in the first place? Because they know you’d open the bun, discover it is already complete, and not know what to do next.

How did ketchup get to be an American staple? Ketchup sounds distinctly German. (Catsup, a word used on some ketchup bottles and otherwise only by a remote tribe of Appalachians, sounds like an anagram. Indeed, I was alarmed to rearrange the letters and discover cat pus.) You can’t get five Americans to eat a raw tomato, but every refrigerator sold in the United States comes with a bottle of ketchup in the door.

Why? Because it’s mixed with vinegar and salt. Nobody eats cucumbers, but everybody eats pickles. Go to any neighborhood bar and you’ll see a jar of pickled whole eggs on the counter.

Try to sell a regular egg at the bar and it’ll hatch into a dinosaur before anybody buys it.

You’ll see Slim Jims for sale at the bar too. Although the name sounds Western, they are nothing more than dried up frankfurters. Sort of a hot dog raisin.

Notice what our German-inspired foods have in common: they are made from ground up things.

It’s not that Germans are too lazy to chew. God knows Russia would be named Hitlersburg right now if there had been a hamburger stand outside Leningrad to save the invaders from starvation. It’s that

the Germans don’t throw food away like we do. They grind up all sorts of leftover animal parts into hamburger and sausage, and people line up for it. Why not serve those parts separately? Just try to get anyone to eat an ear and sphincter sandwich.

When I was a little kid they passed a law preventing anyone from calling something a hamburger if it didn’t contain beef. I was surprised because I presumed hamburgers were made of ham. I was further troubled when the flashing sign over the Koo-Koo fast-food joint down the street was shortened from “Hamburgers” to “Burgers.”

You can see why as an adult I pay attention to nomenclature.

The truth is this: In spite of all our border guards and flag-waving jingoism and Jan Brewer immigration laws, we cherish our foreign hamburgers, French fries and frankfurters precisely because they are what all Americans are: made somewhere else.



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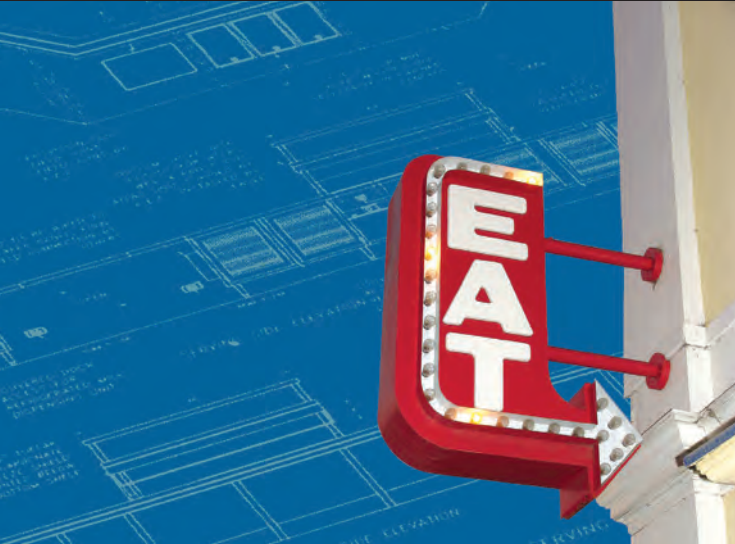
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