ACF Culinary Youth Team USA competes on the world stage

heritage breed meat is roaming to a menu near you

a master sushi chef shares his secret to perfect sushi rice

food technology chefs bend the rules
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Deep-Poached Halibut with Green Goddess Dressing and Fennel-Apple Salad

Poach the fish to desired doneness in a court bouillon flavored with vinegar, cloves, orange, juniper and bay leaf.

Make a salad of thinly shaved apple, fennel and radishes. Dress with olive oil and toss with torn leaves of mint and parsley.

For the Green Goddess

Makes about 2 ½ cups

1 2-ounce can oil-packed anchovies
1 bunch watercress, trimmed
1 bunch tarragon, leaves only
½ bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves only
Juice of 1 lemon
1 cup aioli or mayonnaise
Salt to taste

Combine all ingredients except the aioli in a food processor and purée until smooth. Add aioli and pulse to combine. Season to taste.

Chefs are expected to offer meals that are delicious and memorable to an increasingly health conscious clientele. There is no better protein to fit that bill than seafood. Health experts recommend eating two servings of seafood per week and Americans are hungry for an expanded variety of seafood options. Did you know that seafood is among the very best environmental choices we can make? Health and environmentally conscious consumers are taking these messages to heart and picking up their forks.

Increasing the presence of seafood on your menus can attract younger diners for whom these principals are top priority, and re-engage existing customers through exciting new offerings. With the incredible diversity of seafood available to us, chefs can work with suppliers to discover new species that inspire creativity and offer dishes that sustain the health of your guests, the health of our environment, and your bottom line.

This recipe is a perfect way to use classic preparations to showcase a variety of seafood, whether it’s Alaska halibut or sablefish, pollock, or mackerel, this dish is equally charismatic and easily executed with a wide variety of species.

Looking for more inspiration? Find this recipe and others, including culinary descriptions and methods for preparing 75 different seafood species in Barton Seaver’s latest book TWO IF BY SEA.

For more information, visit: forcodandcountry.com | healthykitchens.org | dishonfish.com
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Cover: ACF Culinary Team USA’s pumpkin Bavarian dessert

WHAT IS THE CDM, CFPP CREDENTIAL?
The Certified Dietary Manager (CDM®) and Certified Food Protection Professional (CFPP®) are credentials held by over 13,000 foodservice professionals who work in long-term care, acute care, and other non-commercial environments. CDMs and CFPPs are nationally-recognized experts in foodservice management, menu planning, food preparation, application of nutrition principles, food safety, personal management, and much more! Culinary professionals are the largest growing segment of CDMs, CFPPs because of the huge demand in the healthcare sector for the dual expertise of culinary and foodservice management. Through their education and work experience, many chefs are already eligible to sit for the CDM Credentialing Exam. Visit www.CBDMonline.org to learn more!

3 REASONS A CHEF SHOULD BECOME A CDM, CFPP...
1. There is a high demand in healthcare dining for both CDM and culinary expertise.
2. Carrying these dual credentials is a highly competitive advantage, enabling professionals to use their culinary knowledge in combination with their management skills.
3. A shift to healthcare can result in a more manageable schedule and work/life balance.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US.
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“Coming from a background in restaurants and resorts across the Southwest, I always envisioned my career in that setting. It wasn’t until I took a position as an Executive Chef for a hospital that I realized the impact that I could make in the healthcare industry, and the impact the healthcare industry could make in my career. After obtaining my CDM, CFPP through ANFP, I realized two things: (1) The demands for chefs in healthcare will begin to rise very quickly, and (2) this career choice will prove to be one that I can continue to grow in for a lifetime.”

- Executive Chef Rocky Dunnam, CEC, CDM, CFPP

Amarillo, TX
Your Time to Shine
By Tom Macrina, CEC, CCA, AAC

Dear Students,

This has been a year of tremendous accomplishments for student chefs. Kudos to ACF members who challenged themselves to juggle the responsibilities of school, work and competing... and succeeded. Student chefs represented the best in the industry at Cook. Craft. Create. National Convention & Show. Enthusiastic crowds cheered as the Student Chef of the Year, Student Team of the Year and the Knowledge Bowl champions were recognized. I had the great pleasure of witnessing the ACF Culinary Youth Team USA compete in the international “culinary Olympics” in October. These individuals committed four years to intense culinary training and mental preparation, then demonstrated their expertise on a world stage. The youth team earned two silver medals, one in the hot-food kitchen and one in the new category of edible buffet. These are remarkable achievements.

In 2017, let’s keep the momentum going. Two regional conferences in February, ChefConnect: Chicago and ChefConnect: NYC provide the opportunity for you to attend educational sessions presented by leading chefs and industry professionals. Take advantage of the chance to learn new skills through hands-on workshops, such as sausage-making or gluten-free baking. I encourage you to be a passionate learner to increase your value to your current employer and prepare yourself for career advancement. Make sure to bring your resume to the on-site ACF Job Fairs and speak with recruiters who are hiring ACF-certified chefs.

Our membership numbers continue to grow and more chefs than ever are getting certified. What does this mean for you? ACF provides access to a growing network of professionals and mentors who can help you achieve your aspirations.

I hope this issue of Sizzle provides you with guidance and inspiration as you set your goals for the coming year. Seven chefs share their personal experience working and give advice to young culinarians who are interested in food technology. Meet farmers who are raising heritage breeds of animals that became nearly extinct and the chefs who value these breeds for their distinct flavor. The feature on green restaurant designs provides simple measures any chef or restaurant owner can take to be a better steward of our environment. ACF is more than a community, we are a family. Reach out to your chapter president and culinary instructors to help define your goals and career path. Call our national office and find out more about getting certified and how to prepare for exams. We are here to support you, to help you grow and succeed in this exciting, fulfilling profession.

Yours Truly,

Tom Macrina, CEC, CCA, AAC
National President
American Culinary Federation
Product Specialist Manager/Food Fanatics™ Chef
US Foods, Inc., Philadelphia

ACF SIGNATURE SERIES

ChefConnect:
Chicago
February 5-7, 2017
Hilton Chicago
EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE DEC. 27, 2016

ChefConnect: NYC
February 26-28, 2017
New York Hilton Midtown
EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE JAN. 15, 2017

Visit ACFChefs.org for more information or to register to attend.
News & Opportunities

Culinary Youth Team USA
ACF Culinary Youth Team USA competed in the 24th annual “culinary Olympics,” Oct. 22-25, Erfurt, Germany, earning two silver medals and placing seventh in the world overall.

Competing at this level is no small feat. For the past four years, team members have juggled work, school and other responsibilities to train in practice kitchens across the country.

In Erfurt, the team worked around the clock to prep ingredients for both the hot-food competition and the edible buffet. Led by youth team manager Stafford DeCambra, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC and team coach Shawn Culp, CEC, MBA, the team worked like a well-oiled machine in the hot-food competition to present a three-course seasonal menu showcasing American regional cuisine.

The silver-medal winning menu featured chilled sea trout with fennel essence and crispy cauliflower-smoked trout terrine, quinoa-crusted venison loin “poivrade,” and a pumpkin Bavarian dessert.

Before the team could celebrate their first silver medal, they had to prepare for the edible buffet. For the first time in the 116-year history of the “culinary Olympics,” the youth teams did not create a cold-food presentation. The team worked for five hours to prepare a menu for 12 people in a hot-food kitchen, then transported the food to a satellite kitchen for display and service.

“I’m feeling great and confident and we’re well-prepared for the competition,” said team captain Jesus Olmedo.

A turbot platter paired with salmon and king prawn sat atop a display inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater design concept. Finger foods, including crispy squab sausages and Wisconsin cheese mozzarella mousse balls were aligned symmetrically to present a glimmering buffet presentation. After nearly 72 hours of competition, the team came together for one last “One team, one dream!” cheer bringing a close to the competition of a lifetime.

See more of ACF Culinary Youth Team USA’s dishes on ACF’s Flickr page.

Beer and Food Course
The free, self-directed CraftBeer.com Beer & Food Course was designed specifically with the culinary student in mind. Students will learn about beer as a beverage, pairing beer with food and how to pour and present beer at the table. In addition to lectures, suggested readings and a two-part final exam, instructors will guide students through two tasting sessions of 10 beer styles and a food pairing session.

Events
You Won’t Want to Miss This
Register early to reserve your spot for ChefConnect: Chicago, Feb. 5-7, or ChefConnect: New York City, Feb. 26-28. Don’t forget to bring your resume to the job fair: recruiters who are looking to hire ACF Chefs will be onsite at both events.

Young Chefs Club
ACF Young Chefs Club is open to all 18- to 25-year-old ACF members at no additional charge. Email youngchefs@acfchefs.net to get the scoop on upcoming web-based and LIVE events and to stay informed about all of the exciting activities planned for ACF Young Chefs Club in 2017!
ChefConnect: Chicago
Casey Shiller, CEPC, CCE, AAC (pictured left), two-time winner of Food Network’s Cupcake Wars, will open the general session and also present sorbet mathematics. Hands-on workshops, including sausage making and gluten-free baking, will be held both onsite and at Kendall College.

ChefConnect: New York City
Kevin Spraga (pictured left), chef-owner of Shraga Dining, will demo a modern version of Lamb Dibi on the main stage during general session. Hands-on workshops have limited space, so reserve early. Other speakers include Christopher Hill, who will discuss being a leader in the kitchen, and Lamar Moore will demonstrate smoking meats 101.

Don’t miss this opportunity to learn new skills, earn CEHs and network. Winners of the regional culinary salons will be announced at the Vice Presidents’ Awards Gala for each event.

Global Young Chefs Challenge Finals
After two years of intense competition around the world, Victor Hugo Perez Ruiz (pictured left), 23, chef de partie, Pago Restaurant Group, Salt Lake City, Utah, will battle eight finalists for the glory of the Hans Bueschkens Trophy, Jan. 25, in Lyon, France. The competitors will have to prepare and present a three-course menu of six servings in three hours. Ruiz says his culinary philosophy is respect for local ingredients, well-executed techniques and bold flavors. Good luck, chef!

Try This
Shio kombu are thin sheets of kelp boiled in soy sauce, mirin and sugar, then dried and cut into small pieces; they will add hints of umami, brininess and sweetness to your dish. Often used in rice dishes and sold in Asian grocery stores, this super concentrated flavor can be used as a garnish for rice, crumbled over popcorn or even used in a dry BBQ rub.

Upcoming Competitions
Keep your knives sharp and your skills sharper! Participating in culinary competitions is great for your resume and will make you a better chef. See the entire competition calendar on our website.

Northeast
April 1-2
ACF Greater Cincinnati Chapter - Worldchefs Sanctioned

Show Site: Midwest Culinary Institute
at Cincinnati State, Cincinnati, Ohio
Show Chair: Betsy LeSorella, CEPC
Telephone: (513) 569-1568
Categories: A1-6, B1-4, C1-5, D1-4, F4-5, KC, KP1-2, SA-D, SK1-9, SP1-2
Lead Judge: Thomas Recinella, CCE, AAC

Southeast
January 24-26
ACF Myrtle Beach Chapter
Show Site: Hotel, Motel, Restaurant Supply Show of the SE, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
Show Chair: Eric Wagner
Telephone: (843) 448-9483
Categories: A1-6, B1-4, C1-4, D1, D3-4, FP1, H1, W, SD, SK1, SK9 - Worldchefs Sanctioned
Lead Judge: Daniel Hogelier, CMC

Central
March 25-26
Mad City ACF Chapter, Inc - Worldchefs Sanctioned
Show Site: Madison College, Madison, Wisconsin
Show Chair: John Johnson, CEC, CCE
Telephone: (608) 246-6707
Categories: A1-6, B1-4, C1-4, D4, F4-5, FP1-2, KC, KP1-2, SA, SB, SK1-9, SP1-2
Lead Judge: Derek Speedlove, CEPC, CCE, AAC

Western
Feb. 25
ACF Chefs de Cuisine Association of California
Show Site: Art Institute - Inland Empire, San Bernardino, California
Show Chair: Daniel Drumlake, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC

CONGRATULATIONS to culinary student Rebecca Alarcon of Houston Community College in Houston, TX. She won $5,000 for her delicious Butternut Squash Duck Lasagna recipe in Maple Leaf Farms 2016 Discover Duck Recipe Contest! Check out all the winning recipes at www.mapleleaffarms.com/chefcontest/
Nick Bailey

age
20

education
Enrolled in the culinary program at Northern Virginia Community College, Springfield, Virginia.

why I chose the apprenticeship program
I felt the best way for me to learn was to be hands-on and jump right into the industry to experience it firsthand.

apprenticeship
Since 2015, my apprenticeship is at Army Navy Country Club, Fairfax, Virginia. I am a line cook who bounces around from the grill to the fryer to pastries and anything else I can get into and learn. We serve 350 people on an average day, and during events we serve up to 600 people. We serve American food on the menu, but we host many events where I’ve cooked Asian, Cajun, Italian, French, Greek and many other cuisines. I work directly under Chef Steve Ryder, although I still watch and learn different techniques from every cook in the kitchen.

most interesting lesson
The most interesting thing I’ve learned is that there’s always a faster way to do something. What I’ve learned in class has taught me the proper way of doing things, and being in the field has helped me to become more creative in accomplishing certain tasks.

career plans
My future plans are to work at restaurants with different cuisines and gather a vast knowledge on all kinds of cooking. Afterwards, I would like to be chef at high-end restaurant or country club. I enjoy the clubs because you can develop a relationship with the people eating your food.

4:58 a.m.
I wake up 2 minutes before my alarm clock again…awesome. This is what happens when you get used to waking up early. I hop in the shower and then pack my uniform.

5:30 a.m.
I start my daily one-hour commute to the Army Navy Country Club in Fairfax, Virginia. While waging battle with traffic on the Beltway, I mentally prepare myself for the double I’m working today.

6:45 a.m.
In the kitchen I begin prep for service. Once I finish the oatmeal, grits, pancake batter, hollandaise, breakfast potatoes, bacon and sausage, I begin prep for the breakfast buffet with my action station, where I cook in front of the members!

7:30 a.m.
I set up my action station outside the kitchen to make omelets for the members, and it tends to be quite a show.

8:00 a.m.
The buffet opens and I’m ready; people are coming nonstop. I make omelets with no breaks, flipping them high in the air to impress the members.

2:00 p.m.
After six hours, the buffet’s service finally ends and I clean it up to begin prep for my next buffet at another action station.

2:30 p.m.
I head to the dish room to gather all the dishes I need for the pasta bar buffet. I’ve been working the pasta buffet for so long that I have the prep list memorized.

4:00 p.m.
The chafing dishes are all set and the ice is filled for the pasta bar buffet. I take my cold food outside to the station.

4:45 p.m.
I lay out the cold food along with utensils and now all I need is the hot food. Once that’s out, I’m ready to put on another show and make pasta dishes in front of the members.

5:00 p.m.
The members know exactly what time the buffet opens and they are never late. They rush in; I take their orders and make the dishes. While I sauté the vegetables, I pour in a glob of white wine and the skillet is engulfed in flames. The wine burns off to caramelize and flavor the vegetables and the members are delighted with their dishes.

8:00 p.m.
The buffet service ends and I begin the clean up. I bring everything inside and wrap, label and date all the food.

8:45 p.m.
As I begin my commute toward home I reflect on another successful day. It’s a good feeling to know that everyone enjoyed their food and had a great night, and that I had a hand in that. Once home, I mentally prepare myself for a day of culinary classes from noon to 10:30 p.m.
Bold flavor typically is not a characteristic associated with pot de crème, a French dessert custard, and Siddharth Mangalore, chef instructor, Kendall College, Chicago, and Gerardo Lopez Milan, teaching assistant, Kendall College, set out to challenge that notion.

“For a young culinarian, pot de crème is a deceptively easy dish,” says Mangalore, but he cautions that one needs a solid understanding of foundational baking techniques to successfully create the dessert. “Custard can separate if overbaked or be soupy if underbaked,” he says.

Milan agrees that a custard dessert is an ideal springboard for culinary students to learn core baking techniques. “Custards are very specific to temperature to keep it from curdling or breaking,” he notes.

Hot cream and sugar must carefully be tempered into an egg yolk mixture without curdling the eggs to create an anglaise. Poured over chocolate and whisked until smooth, the mixture is scaled into ramekins and baked in a hot water bath until set, then traditionally garnished with crème chantilly, fruit and chocolate shavings.

“The texture of traditional pot de crème is always a bit heavy without bringing in any texture or acidity to contrast it,” Mangalore explains. “The semi-sweet chocolate with a higher sugar content can also be greasy.”

The challenge in modernizing this classic dish, which dates back to 17th century France, is retaining the simple nuances of the chocolate and clean flavor of the cream and fruit. For Mangalore, a trip to an Ecuadorian cocoa plantation gave him the inspiration to modernize the dessert with 70% bittersweet chocolate, which he served at the 30th anniversary dinner of Kendall College’s culinary arts program.

For the modern version, Mangalore and Milan worked together to create a pot de crème with a bold, slightly bitter chocolate flavor and an organic, deconstructed plating. Mangalore notes that once a student understands the core principles of custard, the recipe is perfect to serve during the busy holiday season or to large crowds.
classical

Gerardo Lopez Milan, teaching assistant at Kendall College, Chicago, began baking as a teenager with his aunt, a cake decorator in Puebla City, Puebla, Mexico. “I remember helping my aunt prepare for a family Halloween party when I was 13,” he says. “She made me a mini cake to decorate and that was the first cake I baked.”

Puebla, located southeast of Mexico City, is most widely known for its mole poblano, an ancient dish that dates back to the Aztecs and contains nearly 20 ingredients, including chili peppers and chocolate. “Puebla has complex flavors and foods,” says Milan, who likes to experiment with bold flavors.

Milan came to Kendall College in 2014 after representatives from the college visited his high school. Having completed his associate of applied sciences degree, Milan is currently working toward his bachelor’s degree in hospitality management from Kendall College. As a teaching assistant, he does mostly culinary production classes. He is currently in the school’s student cafeteria to help culinary students stay on track, prepare food, expedite dishes and ensure proper plating techniques.

Milan previously studied under an executive pastry chef at the St. Regis Bal Harbor Resort in Miami where he learned modern plating techniques. In the future, Milan sees himself working in a hotel kitchen as a pastry chef. He wants to take a deeper dive into food and beverage management in the event he is able to own his own business one day.

Before coming to Kendall College, Milan was always interested in chocolate sculpting and cake decorating, but had never tempered chocolate, a key component to creating the pot de crème.

Milan says he loves the flavor and texture of the traditional pot de crème. He also enjoyed working with Mangalore to plate the modern dish to look organic and deconstructed. His advice to young culinarians is to not be afraid to play with your ideas. “Modify until you get it right,” he says.

Pot de Crème

Yield: 40 portions at 100 grams each

Chocolate pot de crème
Ingredients
1,200 g. heavy cream
1,200 g. milk
400 g. sugar
325 g. eggs
100 g. egg yolks
880 g. semi-sweet chocolate, cut into small pieces

Crème chantilly
Ingredients
60 g. granulated sugar
300 g. heavy cream
5 g. vanilla extract

Method:
1. Preheat oven to 300°F and prepare a baking dish to be used as a water bath.
2. Heat cream, milk and half the sugar until steam rises from the surface of the liquid while stirring.
3. In a separate bowl whisk eggs, yolks and remaining sugar.
4. Off the heat, temper the hot liquid into the egg yolk mixture to create an anglaise, then return to heat. Stir the bottom of the sauce pan with wooden spoon or heat resistant spatula to prevent eggs from coagulating.
5. Cook until nappe consistency, about 185°F
6. Immediately pour anglaise mixture over chocolate and whisk to a smooth emulsion.
7. Scale into ramekins and place into baking dish. Pour in enough hot water to reach halfway up the sides of the ramekins.
8. Bake in water bath at 300°F until set, approximately 20 minutes.
9. Refrigerate until cool.
10. Garnish with dollop of crème chantilly, fresh raspberries, chocolate shavings and mint sprig.
**Modern**

Siddharth Mangalore, chef instructor at Kendall College, began his professional culinary training in 1992 in Mumbai, India, but his biggest culinary influence was his grandmother, who loved to entertain, eat sweets and be in the kitchen. “Indian flavors have a bold profile and Indian food uses a lot of spices in desserts,” he says. His family has lived in Mumbai since the early part of the century, where he was raised on southern and western Indian cuisine, which includes coconuts, spicy foods and vegetarian influences.

While visiting the Ecuadorian cocoa plantations, Mangalore observed and tasted chocolate from a farm-to-table perspective. “The bitter notes of the 70 percent chocolate with the manjus fermentation and cocoa notes from the single origin of the chocolate makes it more appealing to the modern palate,” he says.

Mangalore substituted the traditional crème chantilly for a lighter diplomat cream. He notes that the modern version of the dessert adds more layers of flavor and textural differences. “The raspberry gumdrops are toothsome and the candied cocoa nibs lend a crunch and added punch of chocolate,” he says.

In his classes, Mangalore has his students create classical versions of dishes and then create a modern reinterpretation. “Students want to come up with extremely creative dishes, but they forget it’s all been done before,” he says. He reminds students to first understand the core flavor profile of the dish. “Tell the students to get inspired, but stay true to the custard itself. Although it’s Indian, it must taste like pot de crème.”

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**Chocolate Pot de Crème with Raspberry Agar Gumdrop**

Yield: 40 portions at 75 grams each

**Chocolate pot de crème Ingredients**
- 750 g. heavy cream
- 550 g. 70% bitterweet chocolate
- 250 g. eggs
- 200 g. water

**Method**
1. Preheat oven to 300ºF and prepare flexi molds.
2. Heat cream over medium heat to 223ºF.
3. Add chocolate and whisk to emulsify.
4. Whisk the agar and sugar mixture until smooth.
5. Mix raspberry puree to incorporate and cover with plastic wrap touching the surface. Refrigerate until cool.
6. Whisk or immersion blend until incorporated.
7. Chill mixture; add to blender approximately 2 minutes.
8. Remove from heat and pour into flexi molds.
9. Place plastic wrap on top of cake is spongy to touch.
10. Freeze 3 to 4 slits in the side of the ramekin. Heat cream over medium heat to 223ºF.
11. Add raspberry puree and bring to boil.
12. Remove from heat and pour into flexi molds.
13. Set at room temperature; place in acetate for service.

---

**Raspberry Agar Gumdrop**

**Ingredients**
- 10 g. agar
- 255 g. sugar
- 205 g. glucose

**Method**
1. Whisk agar, sugar, glucose and water in a saucepan over medium heat to 223ºF.
2. Add raspberry puree and bring to boil.
3. Remove from heat and pour into flexi molds.
4. Set of room temperature; place in acetate for service.

---

**Raspberry diplomat cream Ingredients**
- 40 g. egg yolks
- 45 g. raspberry puree
- 375 g. milk
- 80 g. sugar
- 200 g. raspberry puree
- 400 g. heavy cream

**Method**
1. Whisk egg yolks, vanilla bean paste and cornstarch to blend.
2. Bring milk and sugar to 223ºF.
3. Pour boiling milk into egg yolk mixture, whisking continuously.
4. Maintain a temperature of 185ºF to cook custard.
5. Mix raspberry puree to incorporate and cover with plastic wrap touching the surface. Refrigerate until cool.
6. Whisk or immersion blend to emulsify.
7. Fold in softly whipped heavy cream.
8. Fill container one-third full and fill container one-third full and freeze until cake is spongy to touch.
9. Place plastic wrap on top of container and invert to allow steam to release the cake; let cool.
10. For service, shred microwave cake around center.
11. Assemble mise en place for service.

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**Candied cocoa nibs**

**Ingredients**
- 100 g. sugar
- 160 g. water

**Method**
1. Bring sugar and water to boil.
2. Add cocoa nibs and stir until sugar crystallizes around cocoa nibs; add salt.
3. Spread on silpat and separate with wooden spoon or spatula.
4. Store in air-tight container until service.

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**Garnish**

Edible dianthus flower petals in small amount of ice water in refrigerator.

Fluid gel
- 25 g. sugar
- 1.5 g. agar
- 100 g. raspberry puree
- 20 g. water

**Method**
1. Combine sugar and agar.
2. Bring raspberry puree to a boil.
3. Whisk the agar and sugar mixture into the raspberry puree.
4. Add water bring back to boil; for approximately 2 minutes.
5. Chill mixture; add to blender until incorporated.
6. Reserve in squeeze bottle for service.

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**Assemble**

1. Assemble mise en place for service.
2. Place gum drop in center of pot de crème.
3. Spread candied cocoa nibs around center.
4. Pipe free始终 of diplomat cream followed by 7 to 9 slits of fluid gel of varied sizes.
5. Place microwave cake into spaces.
Environmentalism is having a revival in professional kitchens across America.

By Suzanne Hall
Creating and operating a sustainable restaurant and kitchen hasn’t always been high on a chef’s to-do list and going green hasn’t always been easy, affordable or even recognized as important. But today, chefs and restaurant owners are making strides in sustainable practices that earn kudos from customers, instill pride in employees and provide learning opportunities for students. Ultimately, it helps save money, too.

LEED the Way

Tarah Schroeder, principal, Ricca Design Studios, Greenwood Village, Colorado, has witnessed this change in restaurants. As director of sustainability for the firm, which provides design strategies and equipment purchase advice for chef-inspired restaurants, she holds LEED AP certification. This certification means that Schroeder is a professional with expertise in the design and construction of green buildings.

“When I started eight years ago, only one or two chefs brought up sustainability, usually because that’s how they wanted to brand themselves,” she says. “Today, it comes up in nearly every conversation.”

Helping chefs choose the right equipment and kitchen layout to meet their needs and sustainability initiatives are among the services Schroeder performs for her clients. She notes that the kitchen hood accounts for 25 percent of the restaurant’s energy use.

The type of hood and its placement determines how much energy is saved. “An island hood uses twice as much energy as a wall mounted one,” she says. What’s under the hood is important, too. “Induction cooking requires a lot less air movement than char-broiling,” she adds. The important thing she tells clients is that their selections should be based on the menu and experience they want to create.

Green is Good for Business

Many chefs and owners now recognize that sustainability is a good business practice that begins in the design stage and encompasses nearly every aspect of the restaurant’s operation. Clayton Chapman, chef/owner, The Grey Plume, Omaha, Nebraska, is one of those chefs. When he opened The Grey Plume, a fine dining restaurant, it was touted as the greenest restaurant in the country.

It’s been ranked first in many areas of sustainability and garnered numerous awards for its sustainable practices, including four stars from the Green Restaurant Association Sustainable buildout program. To achieve his goals, Chapman hired an architect and a team to help him source equipment.

“We wanted to go green right from the get-go,” Chapman explains. “It made common sense and was the right thing to do.” Because he planned to use local and sustainable ingredients, it needed to be authentic. “The space and all our practices had to adhere to that policy.”

Chapman’s first step was to source reclaimed or recycled products in the build out of his restaurant. This included using recycled or sustainable material for flooring, stairs and handrails, tabletops and countertops and other designs aspects. Even his bread plates are created out of recycled wine bottles.

Chapman also purchased energy- and water-saving equipment for the restaurant, including energy-efficient hand dryers for the restrooms, low-flow or touchless hand sinks and Energy Star appliances, among other equipment.

Going All In

Green Sage Café, a fast casual coffeehouse and restaurant with three certified green units in Asheville, North Carolina, serves a clientele of vegans, vegetarians and omnivores. Its mission is to serve nourishing food through sustainable practices.

“The idea behind Green Sage is green-mindedness and green wisdom,” says Randy Talley, co-owner of Green Sage Café. Talley embraced renewable energy by putting solar panels on the roofs of the cafes. This was a big commitment, as no tax credit exists for solar energy unless a business makes a profit. Talley also switched all the light bulbs in the cafes to LED.

“We became more of an authority on how to manage energy in a restaurant,” he says. Talley purchased Energy Star equipment and other equipment that he believes goes beyond Energy Star in conserving energy. An example is the refrigeration equipment. “We have no individual compressors,” he explains. Instead, one compressor at the back of the building pipes gas to each device. “The refrigeration systems still operate efficiently and they use less energy,” he says.

Saving Water

Water use is another area chefs should look at when striving for sustainability. Schroeder notes that dishwashers that recycle water can help in this area. So can the proper low-flow aerators in faucets, along with low-flow toilets and...
clockwise from top left: 1. Randy Talley, co-owner and president of Green Sage Café, outside of Green Sage Westgate. 2. The interior of Green Sage Café with 100% LED lighting. 3. Green Sage Café’s Bean Mountain BBQ Burger with housemade sweet potato chips on stainless steel plateware. opposite: Nardin Academy chef Julie Levin sources a majority of the food for the academy’s kitchen from local farms.

Talley notes that he found waterless urinals problematic and replaced them with low-flow urinals. Additionally, he uses rainwater in his landscaping. “We have giant planters of grape vines,” he says. “We water these and all our plants from three rain barrels.”

At The Grey Plume all hand sinks are set with touchless faucet aerators to adjust the flow rate to one-half gallon a minute and are also solar powered. Turning off dishwashers and disposals when not in use is another way The Grey Plume uses less water.

A Recipe for Success

Food waste is a topic Schroeder’s clients often discuss. It includes everything from reducing kitchen food waste to eliminating customer waste and disposing of used cooking oil. Talley does this at Green Sage by selling the used oil to a company that turns it into bio-fuel. “Food waste is more of a conversation at this point than conserving energy or water,” Schroeder says. “If part of your reason for going sustainable is to have a story to tell your customers, energy and water conservation do not make as good a story.”

Eliminating food waste is something that Chef Greg Christian stresses when he meets with clients. He’s a sustainable food service consultant and the owner of Beyond Green Food Partners, a Chicago-based company that also provides lunches for some Chicago area schools. Christian agrees that food waste is a concern for chefs, but they seem to do little about it. “Design is way less important than how you operate,” he says. Operating more sustainably means what he teaches his clients. For Christian, sustainability begins with efficiency, and to achieve that he stresses scratch cooking and monitoring and measuring both food and waste. Scratch cooking helps eliminate the tendency to overcook. Records of what is cooked and what isn’t provide information for the next time an item is prepared and eliminates waste. “Repurposing is a strong gene in cooks,” he notes. “If you make too much food you are wasting time and money. You can’t repurpose everything.”

Zero-Waste Basics

Creating zero-waste kitchens is another goal Christian encourages his clients to adopt. He recommends making chefs and cooks aware and responsible for the waste they create and believes that composting is a factor in a zero-waste kitchen.

Two very different schools in Buffalo, New York, adopted Christian’s scratch cooking policy after he conducted an audit of its foodservice operations and made recommendations. At Westminster Community Charter School, which provides food for students in kindergarten through eighth grade, Jason Mueckl is executive chef and foodservice director. Because all students are eligible for free meals, he feeds nearly 50 students every day.

Mueckl runs a fresh-food kitchen with little purchased processed food. He buys locally as much as he can and cuts up his own fruits, vegetables and meats except for chicken. “We keep production logs so we can buy and make the right amount of food,” he says. He also uses vegetables from the school’s learning garden to teach students about fresh produce.

The school’s kitchen has bins for food thrown away by the students. A local contractor carries the waste away for composting. To further cut down on waste, the school has abandoned the practice of giving students plastic water bottles at lunch. “We pour our own water,” he adds. He also uses leftover lemons and oranges, and sometimes strawberries, to make flavored water for the students. Sometimes he adds mint or lavender from the garden.

Across town at the Nardin Academy, a preschool through 12th-grade private school, Chef Julie Levin also has a learning garden. She works in the school’s kitchen with some outdated equipment, but her practices are very contemporary.

On average, about 375 of the 450 students buy and eat lunch in Nardin’s Sustainable Dining Hall each day. Students enjoy fresh produce, meats and dairy products from about 30 vendors within a 150-mile radius of the school.

“We not only scratch cook these fresh products, we cook a la minute,” she says. “We have four lunch periods and we cook throughout them.”

Levin keeps production logs and refers to them often to know what to buy and cook. The trash is weighed each day and goes into clear bins. “We recycle and give our juice packs to someone who turns them into messenger bags,” she explains.

Like many restaurant owners, Levin is interested in making the school’s kitchen and cooking sustainable. “I’m very passionate about it,” she says.

Suzanne Hall has been writing about restaurants, chefs, food and wine from her home in Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee, for more than 25 years.

green your lingo

Compost - A tank for storing water, especially one supplying water as part of a flushing toilet.

Greywater - All wastewater generated in households or office buildings from all streams except for the wastewater from toilets. Sources include sinks, showers, baths, clothes washing machines and dish washers.

LED light – Light Emitting Diode - A green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices.

LED lights - Light Emitting Diodes – LED lights use “directional” light sources, meaning it emits light in a specific direction, unlike incandescent and fluorescent bulbs, which emit light and heat in all directions. For this reason, LED lights are able to use less energy more efficiently.
Steeped in history and flavor, heritage breeds are roaming to a menu near you.

By Amelia Levin
Breed to Survive

According to The Livestock Conservancy, which works to protect livestock and poultry from extinction, the heritage breeds raised by our ancestors retained such essential attributes as increased longevity, foraging ability and increased resistance to disease and parasites. As a result of this regional breeding, heritage meat develops terroir, which chefs prefer for a unique, rich flavor versus the homogenous, muted taste of commodity meat.

While some heritage breeds have a long lineage, others are crossedbred to retain certain characteristics that develop with the environment. The best heritage breed farmers have traceability of origin. Heritage is also indicative of how the animal was raised, which typically means without hormones, daily antibiotics or other crutches that cover up inherent weaknesses.

Breeding for health also boosts the nutritional profile of his meat, Salatin says. Chefs prefer heritage meats for taste and sustainability, but also because they can charge a premium for it. But even beyond taste, Salatin believes it’s important to source heritage meat because it’s better for the environment.

Polyface Farms’ *pigrator* pork is cultivated to have a good fatback to withstand colder, outdoor temperatures. “In our opinion,” says Salatin, “heritage meat is all about letting the animal express its behavior.” The farm doesn’t ring the pigs’ noses so they can dig, which helps to aerate the farm’s compost piles.

Salatin says his beef tastes different because the fat is concentrated in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids with extra salt or condiments. His pork is rose in color, with less fatty gristle. His believes his eggs taste richer and his chickens taste juicier because they actually run around and get fresh air, exercise and sunshine.

Tastefully Different

Chefs should take note to cook heritage meat differently than commodity meat, says John Fleer, owner/executive chef, Rhubarb, Asheville, North Carolina. “There are individual characteristics across breeds, so you have to take that into account,” he says.

Chefs have introduced consumers to heritage breeds of pork like Berkshire, known for its higher fat content that withstands cold temperatures outdoors and high temperatures on the grill. Fleer prefers Ossabaw pork for its rich marbling and soft fat that elicits an emulsified mouth feel. He orders whole hogs from a local farm that he fabricates in-house for different uses, including heritage goat

Goats were among the first animals to be domesticated, and their hardiness makes them a part of subsistence agriculture almost everywhere, according to The Livestock Conservancy. The history of goats in North America began with the arrival of Spanish explorers and in the 1500s and continued with English settlers in the 1600s. Goat production in the U.S. changed in the mid-1800s to 1900s, with the importation of several European goat breeds, including the Toggenburg, Saanen, French Alpine, and Nubian, which were rapidly crossbred or replaced, prized for their mohair, cashmere, milk and meat. Some modern breeds, such as Anapawa and San Clemente are considered “critical” status by The Livestock Conservancy, in terms of the threat of extinction.

Nowadays, most goats in the U.S. are used for milk or companionship, but some small farms like Mint Creek Farm in Illinois pasture raise goat for meat. Customers include shoppers at consumers at Chicago’s Green City Market, and as the restaurant name suggests, chefs like Stephanie Bard of Girl and the Goat and Little Goat. “We have tried just about everything with goat, but a burger is an easy way to enjoy the meat, pure and simple,” she says.
Bison (American Buffalo)

Though bison is the more accurate, biological name, these grass-pastured animals are also known as the American Buffalo. The largest land mammal since the end of the Ice Age and native to North America, as many as 70 million head once roamed the continent before nearing extinction, according to Lindner Bison, a bison farm.

Thanks to farmers and conservation efforts, today there are over 500,000 bison in North America. As bison are grassfed and grass-finished, the meat has a rich, dark red color and a little marbling giving it its leanness. As a result, bison meat is more nutritionally dense than beef—high in beta-carotene, omega-3 fatty acids and other essential nutrients. “Sear on high, then low and slow” to prevent drying out, according to Lindner Bison suggests.

As a result, bison meat is more muscular with a softer texture and juiciness than commodity chicken. Neff always brines his birds and he prefers heritage chicken livers for mousse because it imparts a flavor that is both fresh and rich.

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Neff prefers a Mississippi heritage rabbit for its slightly sweet flavor and lean texture. To create rabbit rillettes, he slowly braises the rabbit with stock, wine, herbs and such aromatics as fennel, parsnips, leeks, celery root and carrots. He adds bacon at the end for a little smokiness. He then finishes this “Deviled Rabbit” with house-made buttermilk hot sauce made from local peppers. When making rabbit sausage, he adds pork fat to balance the leanness.

Fleer makes a rabbit roulade of sorts, stuffing the loin and saddles with wild mushrooms and a forcemeat made with the leg meat. He rolls the meat, quickly sears and then roasts it off at a lower temperature to keep it juicy and allow the flavors to meld.

Ryan says that heritage meats are forming the other puzzle piece to a food revolution in this country. “We’re going to start getting closer to a food system that doesn’t fight with Mother Nature, but rather, works with it when farmers put the right breed of animal in the right environment at the right time, and work to be better stewards of the land and of their animals.”

Amelia Levin is an award-winning food industry writer, certified chef and cookbook author. Her work has appeared in a variety of restaurant industry trade magazines as well as in the Chicago Tribune, Health and Cooking Light magazines.
CHEFS OF THE FUTURE

Food technology chefs bridge the gap between food science and culinary art.

By Rob Benes
The restaurant industry is the nation's second largest private-sector employer, and in terms of professional opportunities, the possibilities are growing. At the intersection of food science and culinary art is an emerging career opportunity as a food technology chef.

Similar to a research and development chef, a food technology chef goes a step further to produce food in a way that addresses environmental, social and health impacts. And while these food technology chefs may still wear their chef’s whites and arrange their mise en place, their creations are anything but conventional.

Seven food technology chefs and industry influencers from across the nation share their culinary career paths from the line to the laboratory, and the skill sets and education needed to be successful in this emerging field within the food industry.

Is there a demand for food technology chefs?

Friedrich: Yes! Here at The Good Food Institute in Washington, D.C., we’re laser focused on using markets and technology to transform agriculture away from the use of animals and more toward sustainability to achieve healthier, more humane alternatives. In order to create market demand, the foodservice industry needs chefs who will embrace these technologies. One example is Impossible Foods, which engages in projects using plants and synthetic biology to make the Impossible Burger. As these new companies grow, they’ll need to hire chefs to develop products and be spokespersons.

Corwell: There is definitely a demand. Chefs have an opportunity to educate customers on topics of sustainability, plant-based foods and other issues that benefit the environment. The industry needs more science-based chefs who can influence changes on how we grow and harvest food.

How did you change career paths from working in the kitchen to working in a food laboratory?

R. Rockwell: After graduating college with a business degree I moved to Louisiana to work as a licensed financial advisor, but before getting established I worked in a restaurant to earn money. That’s when the light bulb went off that I loved cooking more than being a financial advisor. I went on to earn a master’s degree in food technology from the University of Georgia in Athens. While in school, I was hired by poultry company Wayne Farms, Oakwood, Georgia, for four months. That short amount of time provided me with the opportunity to make industry connections that eventually landed my current position.

Wallace: After I graduated from the New England Culinary Institute, Burlington, Vermont, I worked in fine dining restaurants for 15 years. During that time I wrote a business plan to open my own restaurant, but started to question if I made the right career choice because owning a restaurant is more work than just working for one. A friend explained to me that I didn’t have to work in or own a restaurant to stay in culinary arts. After researching different career choices, I decided to develop and design environmentally friendly and healthy food products. Out of the blue, I received an e-mail from Hampton Creek for a research and development chef position.

Corwell: I worked with my dad, who was a car mechanic, but I didn’t want to come home smelling like engine oil every day. My professional cooking career started as an apprentice in several Atlanta restaurants in the 1980s. Years later, the U.S. Navy hired me to teach cooking to servicemen based in Japan. One day I went to the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo. The a-ha moment for me was seeing the amount of fish being auctioned off everyday. It was fascinating to see from a chef’s perspective, but from a sustainability lens it was a striking image of how big the world is to keep up with this demand. I felt there was no way to meet the demand and something needed to happen. And by something, I wanted to find a way to satisfy the tuna-loving taste buds of restaurant-goers without contributing to the ever-growing problem of overfishing.

R. Rockwell: For me, after working on the line at hotels and restaurants a friend who worked in higher education foodservice told me about his line of work, which sounded interesting. The next thing I know I’m moving to Lubbock, Texas, to be the executive chef at Texas Tech University (TTU), where I worked in the university sector for 18 years between TTU and Texas A&M University. I was introduced to the Alto-Shaam culinary team while I was at Texas A&M when they invited me to be a guest chef at the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago two years ago. They also happened to have a corporate chef job opening on their team. Before I knew it I moved to Wisconsin to work for Alto-Shaam.
What advice can you give to culinary students on exploring a career choice as a food technology chef?

R. Rockwell: Every chef position is about being organized, prioritizing your work and staying positive for yourself and those around you. Chefs coming up in the business need to stay current on technology and ways of communicating. Social media, e-mail and texts are all great, but don’t forget how to speak with people face to face, because we’re in the people business.

What are your job responsibilities and duties?

R. Rockwell: Every day is different. One day I might be in the test kitchen making samples, the next day I might be in a manufacturing plant scaling up a product I developed and another day I might be meeting with a customer to do a demonstration. The payoff to this type of work is developing a product, guiding it through the manufacturing side and then seeing it at a grocery store or served in a restaurant.

Wallace: At Hampton Creek, chefs are assigned to stations, called benches, to develop new food items. Currently I work on the egg bench with two other chefs and four food scientists developing a scrambled egg patty product that’s actually eggless and uses a plant-based protein. My specific responsibility is to develop different seasonings and flavors for the egg patty. When developing a new flavor, it may take me up to two months of testing, which involves mixing the formula, adding the seasonings, cooking and analyzing it. I also work with an engineering team to discuss equipment needs to produce the food item and review production packaging. Being a research and development chef allows me to work with people in various roles that I probably wouldn’t work with if I were on the line at a restaurant. One of the perks is that it’s basically a nine-to-five job, five days a week. There are those occasions when overtime is required, but it’s nothing like overtime in a restaurant.

R. Rockwell: At Alto-Shaam, my responsibilities are education, research and development, as well as customer support and training. I support the sales staff through menu creation and culinary testing, and I work with current and future customers. The great thing about my job is that I get to cook whenever I want! I explore, create, test and play. My job is like being an educator, but for people already in the industry. I get to show people ways to make their job more efficient so they get home to their loved ones faster.

Rob Benes is a Chicago-based hospitality industry writer. Contact him at robbenes@comcast.net.
Proper sushi rice is essential to a great sushi experience. One of the main components is a well-guarded secret among sushi chefs known as sushi-zu, which is an aged mixture of vinegar, sugar, salt and kelp. As sushi becomes more mainstream across the world, the Sushi Chef Institute wants to share this sushi secret with western chefs.

Sushi rice is made of medium/short or short-grain rice, but what makes sushi rice unique is the act of washing and rinsing the rice to remove excess starch prior to cooking. The moisture content of rice is determined by the amount of time from harvest and must be considered in the preparation.

Harvested late Oct. to Nov., new-crop rice has 15% moisture and retains its moisture content for four months. By late March, it is considered old-crop rice, which contains 12% moisture. The rice's moisture content determines the amount of liquid used to prepare the sushi rice. Rice meant for preparing sushi will be labeled as new-crop or old-crop rice on the bag.

Vinegar was originally used to ferment rice and to prevent fish from going bad. During the Edo period in Japan, between 1603 and 1868, people began to mix the vinegar with rice and various other ingredients, a practice that is still widely used today.

Using this age-old Japanese methodology of making sushi rice may seem complicated at first, but you will soon realize it is no more complicated than making regular rice. The key to properly prepared sushi rice is to exercise patience to thoroughly rinse the rice and then let it dry completely.

**Step 1**
Wash the rice for one to three minutes under cold, running water while gently raking your hands through the rice.

**Step 2**
Rinse the rice for 3-6 minutes, changing the water 5-6 times, until the water runs clear. Drain; allow to dry completely for 20-30 minutes.

**Step 3**
Cook the rice in an electric cooker. Use equal parts rice and water for old-crop rice or a half-cup less water for new-crop rice. Alternatively, cook the rice on the stove according to package directions.

**Step 4**
Pour sushi-zu over the rice in a hangiri (a wooden mixing bowl), or non-reactive mixing tub, using a miyajima (rice paddle), or plastic spatula. Distribute the sushi-zu evenly over the rice.

**Step 5**
Using a rapid slicing motion, mix the sushi-zu into the rice. Spread the rice to a depth of about two inches and let cool for five minutes. Flip the rice over and let cool for another 5 minutes.

**Step 6**
Roll rice into an oblong-formed rice ball about three-quarters the size of your palm and squeeze together until it forms a firm, log-sized rectangle. Join a neta (a piece of fish) with to create nigiri sushi.

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**sushi rice recipe**

**Ingredients:**
- 10 cups medium/short or short-grain rice
- 2 cups sushi-zu

**sushi-zu recipe**

**Ingredients**
- 7 parts vinegar
- 5 parts sugar
- 1½ – 2 parts sea salt
- 1 5x5 sheet konbu kelp

**Method**
Mix all ingredients in a storage container and age for at least two weeks, no refrigeration needed. Sushi-zu can be kept for up to one year.

**Equipment**
- Electric rice cooker
- Hangiri, or large mixing bowl
- Miyajima, or rubber spatula

**Helpful Hints**
- 10 cups of old-crop rice requires 10 cups of water, whereas 10 cups of new-crop rice requires 9½ cups of water.
- Always dampen your hangiri before using to prevent sticking.

**definitions**
- Sushi-zu: aged vinegar
- Hangiri: wooden mixing tub
- Miyajima: rice paddle
- Neta: a topping applied over sushi, typically fish such as salmon, tuna or other seafood
- Konbu kelp: dried, edible seaweed that provides umami flavor to dishes

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**see the video**
Mixing Sushi Rice with Andy Matsuda, Sushi Chef Institute

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BY DEGREES proper sushi rice

**Proper Sushi Rice**

Article by Andy Matsuda, CEO/Chief Instructor, Sushi Chef Institute

Photography by Sushi Chef Institute
Food Truck Trending
A food truck practicum equips students with real-world culinary and business skills.
By Brian M. Romano, CEC, MFP

At Flint Hills Technical College (FHTC), Emporia, Kansas, senior students arrive for the first day of the food truck practicum class. Anxious and excited, their experience mostly includes working in local brick-and-mortar restaurants; nothing to this extent where they’ll be bringing the food they create to the community. As the Culinary Wranglers Fusion Food Truck pulls up, newly wrapped in the school’s signature blue and yellow colors, the students tour the trailer that will be their hands-on learning lab for the next eight weeks.

A Dream is Born
A few years ago, graduating students from the FHTC Hospitality and Culinary Arts Program gave feedback on what they learned throughout the two-year program and opportunities for improvement. Students overwhelmingly suggested a senior-level class to learn how to operate and manage a food truck. The leadership listened and a food truck practicum was added to the newly designed 2016 fall curriculum. As the leadership prepared for the class, they faced two great challenges—finding the finances to fund the project and buying the right vehicle to fit the instructor’s and students’ needs: large enough to accommodate the students, equipment ready and appropriate for the higher education learning experience where food production isn’t limited to the standard fare of heat-and-serve foods. The curriculum menus would be designed for fun, creative gourmet items.

Funding came together and although the search took over a year, the school found a 26-foot pull-behind trailer that is the ideal laboratory for preparing any type of cuisine, with a short-order cooking and a catering on-wheels option to boot. The trailer is loaded with a four burner stove, a 24-inch charbroiler with convertible flat top option, two-basket deep fryer, 24-inch salad station, two separate prep stations, three-compartment sink, handwashing station, standing refrigerator and deep freezer, security system and cashier station with a corner window set up.

Hands-on Experience
For educational institutions wondering whether a food truck practicum is beneficial, Steve Loewen, vice president of instructional services at FHTC, gives a resounding yes. “The food truck practicum is the perfect example of technical training that colleges do across the nation,” he says. “Students have the opportunity to learn both the knowledge and theory of their craft, and then put it to use through practical applications under the tutelage of an occupational expert/instructor. It is hands-on education and learning at its highest level.”

And for the student, it just makes sense. Many are curious whether operating a food truck is a career choice they would enjoy and if they have the skill set to be successful. And as the students find out, operating and working in a food truck is completely different than a restaurant. Providing students with this opportunity to work in a learning environment where they can succeed or fail without a major financial investment gives students the skills to confidently jump toward a great business opportunity.

Many chefs who own a restaurant know that experience is the game-changer for increased and added success, and a food truck is no different. Hands-on experience is the only way to learn in a food truck. Students find that running the food truck takes organization, detail-mindedness and a knack for...
“With the versatility of a truck or trailer operation, it’s made me question opening a brick-and-mortar location. Instead, I have thought about the possibility of opening a food truck.”

- Caleb Hoover, FHTC Hospitality/Culinary Arts student

Above: Culinary arts student Alberto Navarro-Tijikio prepares a customer’s order. Opposite: Brian Romano, lead culinary chef-instructor at FHTC, prepares spaetzle for the Octoberfest menu. Photos by Alicia Rangel

Menú development, as well as being mindful of the mechanical parts of the truck, such as filling up water, gas and propane tanks; knowing how to drive and maneuver the vehicle; parking and licensing issues; and more.

Other challenging issues that arise are logistical: limited storage space within the truck and proximity to a store when a menu item is forgotten or sold out. FHTC designs the curriculum so students encounter and overcome these logistical scenarios to set them up for success in the real world.

Food Truck Practicum Curriculum

The curriculum combines the business side of owning and operating a food truck while gaining practical application serving food and beverage at local events and festivals. The hands-on class explores such aspects of food truck management as equipment needs and uses, food costing, menu planning, proper staffing, product development, marketing and the use of social media; as well as obtaining permits, licenses and comprehension of the legalities involved. The students manage all aspects of the food truck from planning to cleaning and closing down the truck at the end of each event with instructor supervision.

Throughout the eight-week class, students set up for multiple events executed from the food truck. Past events included a welcome back student block party, serving on the FHTC campus to students and faculty, a community festival, farmers market, disc golf tournament, catering a farm-to-table dinner and serving an Oktoberfest menu.

As a team, students design menus for ease of service with cost analysis for profit. All menus are designed to display the uniqueness of the education experience for the student.

“I have learned that running a food truck is more difficult than expected,” says Jordan Chambers, FHTC Hospitality/Culinary Arts student. “I didn’t realize the extra things you had to do to get the food truck running. I’m confident I know what it takes to run a truck and that I can apply all I’ve learned at FHTC to turn this into a business.”

While many food truck operations work with a set menu, the food truck practicum menus are designed to change to give students multiple scenarios in which to create logistical solutions. A changing menu has students address the challenge of setting up each station to fit the needs of a short-order/quick-service operation. Other challenges include quick adaptation to the menu to help students improve their organizational and mise en place skills and station set up. Students become quick thinkers, adapting to the environment and learning skills that are difficult to teach in a normal culinary lab.

For the final exam, students design a business model of their own food truck to present to their peers. All students are part of the grading process and evaluate the effectiveness of the potential business. Time is given for feedback and group discussion. With the experience and lessons learned, the FHTC leadership feels that the practicum lays the groundwork for students to implement a food truck business. Additionally, it inspires students to continue the conversation as they pursue their dreams.

A Growing, Niche Industry

Today, food trucks are everywhere. It’s now standard for major cities to have food truck parks that serve customers daily, along with business garnered from events. In Kansas, it’s no exception. All the major cities surrounding FHTC, including Topeka, Wichita and Kansas City, have become foodie hot spots for mobile cuisine. Even smaller towns are beginning to get on the band wagon as food trucks gain in popularity.

With a projected revenue growth of $2.7 billion in 2017, it’s clear that food trucks have moved from an industry trend to a steady business model, and the numbers don’t lie: the average food truck generates a yearly revenue of $390,836. This growing market provides a unique opportunity for graduating culinary students and adding this type of curriculum to an institution’s culinary arts program not only makes sense, but sets students up for real-world success.

Steve Loewen, vice-president of Instructional Services at FHTC

“The Food Truck Practicum highlights what FHTC is about. We train students to become knowledgeable and competent practitioners in their respective fields. As a program, it highlights the uniqueness of what we offer and the willingness of Chef Romano to respond to the industry trends. It also provides a place for our students to be well-trained in all aspects of food truck operation before having to make a career decision or financial investment for going into this type of business.”

Have a question for Chef Brian Romano? Drop him a line at BRomano@fhtc.edu.
Ruth Gresser
By Ethel Hammer

born
Baltimore, Maryland

resides
Silver Spring, Maryland

learned the trade

career path

select awards and achievements

When she was a little girl, Ruth Gresser, chef/owner of Pizzeria Paradiso and Veloce, Washington, D.C., used to crawl out her parents’ window, sit on the roof, look into the trees and read books. “I loved being in my own world,” she says. “My grandmother told me I was a favorite grandchild because I was very content, didn’t cry and was happy to be held,” she says. “My mother said I was born 32.” She confesses that this inner contentment is fundamental to who she is. “It must be present for me to deal with the chaos in the restaurant world,” she says.

Gresser impresses one as a dedicated woman who laughs easily, takes quiet control, sees life’s absurdities and is a solid businesswoman. Her career in the kitchen began at McDonald’s when women were relegated to operating the counter, frying fries and making milkshakes. True to form, she became the first woman allowed to work the grill. Later, she cut onions in a barbecue joint in San Francisco and subsequently studied with Madeleine Kamman to ground herself in classical French technique.

While working in an Italian restaurant in D.C., Gresser became enchanted by the smell of Italian bread; no small issue for a woman who abandoned her chemistry major at Grennell College because she didn’t like how the chemicals smelled. At 32, she opened her first Pizzeria Paradiso in a small, second-floor space in Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C., betting that Washingtonians would respond to Neapolitan-style pizza cooked in a wood-burning oven; an unknown commodity in D.C. at the time. Unafraid to step out and willing to take a risk, Gresser was an early pioneer in the revival of artisanal and craft beer through her Birreria Paradiso program at a time when most people were drinking Miller and Bud.

Crowning her mini empire of three Pizzeria Paradiso locations and Veloce, a fast-food pizza venue, her pizzas arrive like mini paintings. The opened-mouthed mussels topping the Di Mare pizza sing to the diner: savor me and my tomato sauce, minced garlic, parsley and parmesan. Composing a symphony of sweet red peppers, red onion, eggplant, zucchini, capers, mozzarella and pecorino, the Siciliana pizza glows with magical reds when topped with semi-transparent slices of prosciutto.

Her mother taught her to cook and her father taught her business, advising her to apply for bank credit early and pay it off on time, way before she was plagued by necessity, like most fledgling entrepreneurs. “Banks only give money to people who don’t need it,” her father advised. He also told her that if women don’t ask, they’ll never get anything, including loans and raises. “To advance our industry,” she says, “women chefs and restaurateurs must learn about power and business.”
You opened the first Neapolitan-style pizzeria in D.C., revived D.C.’s craft beer program and provided benefits to your staff before anyone else even thought about these things. Do you consider yourself a pioneer?

rg: I never did anything with the intention of pioneering new ground. I gave health insurance and 401(k)s to my employees because it seemed like the right thing to do. When I started Pizzeria Paradiso, I wanted it to be a good place to work and thought that there should be no difference between how the business treated the employees and me.

I also never wanted to overwork staff. In the late ’80s I worked at a place in D.C. called Obelisk, where I made bread, including focaccia, and I always loved bread. We would have pizza for family meals. I wanted to open a restaurant that was less formal than Obelisk, where I made bread, including focaccia, and I always loved bread. We would have pizza for family meals. I wanted to open a restaurant that was less formal than Obelisk.

The Bottarga is Neapolitan pizzas.

The dough for her iconic Virginia. in Old Town Alexandria, interior of Pizzeria Paradiso above from top: 1. The Bottarga is Neapolitan pizzas.

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Did you read all the articles in this issue?
Take the Sizzle Quiz to test your knowledge.

1. What is Sushi ru?  
   a. Fermented cabbage  
   b. An alcoholic drink  
   c. A special sushi roll  
   d. Aged vinegar

2. What is hypertrophy?  
   a. Water from sinks, dish washers and other clean sources  
   b. Water from streams and rivers  
   c. Water from toilets  
   d. Polluted water

3. Why are LED lights more efficient than traditional light bulbs?  
   a. LED lights emit light in all directions  
   b. LEDs are not more efficient than traditional light bulbs  
   c. LED lights emit light in a specific direction  
   d. LED lights only produce blue light

4. What is an advantage to heritage breed livestock over commodity breeds?  
   a. Increased longevity  
   b. Better foraging ability  
   c. Increased resistance to disease and parasites  
   d. All of the above

5. Why should chefs cook heritage meat differently?  
   a. There are individual characteristics across breeds that affect flavor  
   b. Heritage breeds are more expensive than commodity breeds  
   c. Heritage breeds are not as flavorful as commodity breeds  
   d. None of the above

6. How is single origin chocolate different than semi-sweet chocolate?  
   a. Single origin is sweeter than semi-sweet  
   b. Single origin is more bitter than semi-sweet  
   c. Single origin is no different than semi-sweet  
   d. Single origin takes longer to melt

7. For what dish is Puebla, Mexico, best known?  
   a. Tacos  
   b. Enchiladas  
   c. Mole poblano  
   d. Flan

8. What medals did ACF Youth Culinary Team USA earn at the "culinary Olympics"?  
   a. A gold medal  
   b. A silver medal  
   c. No medals  
   d. Two silver medals

9. What is the key to properly prepared sushi rice?  
   a. Steaming the rice  
   b. Rinsing the rice and letting it dry  
   c. Adding extra water to the rice  
   d. Adding less water to the rice

10. What kind of skills does it take to run a food truck?  
    a. Menu development  
    b. Detail-mindedness  
    c. Organization  
    d. All of the above

11. Where was Ruth Graesser's first job?  
    a. McDonald's  
    b. Chili's  
    c. Subway  
    d. Burger King

12. Classical pot de crème traditionally includes what garnishes?  
    a. Nuts and dried fruit  
    b. Edible flowers  
    c. No garnish  
    d. Chocolate shavings, cream and fruit

13. It is best to take pictures of food with the flash on.  
    a. True  
    b. False

14. According to Michael Wallace, how many years should aspiring students dedicate to working different jobs after school?  
    a. Three years  
    b. Four years  
    c. Five years  
    d. Six years

15. Who can take the food truck practicum at Flint Hills Technical College?  
    a. Freshmen  
    b. Sophomores  
    c. Juniors  
    d. Seniors

16. What is Sushi-zu?  
    a. Aged vinegar  
    b. Fermented cabbage  
    c. A food trend that is popular in 2017  
    d. A Japanese dish

17. What food trends do you think will be popular in 2017?  
    a. Burger King  
    b. McDonald's  
    c. Enchiladas  
    d. Tacos

18. What is single origin chocolate different than semi-sweet chocolate?  
    a. Single origin is no different than semi-sweet  
    b. Single origin is sweeter than semi-sweet  
    c. Single origin is the same as we do here  
    d. Single origin is as flavorful as commodity breeds

19. What is an advantage to cooking with heritage breeds over commodity breeds?  
    a. Increased longevity  
    b. Better foraging ability  
    c. Increased resistance to disease and parasites  
    d. All of the above

20. Which is a true statement regarding LED lights?  
    a. LED lights are not more efficient than traditional light bulbs  
    b. LED lights are more efficient than traditional light bulbs  
    c. LED lights emit light in all directions  
    d. LED lights only produce blue light

ANSWERS


The quiz

Ryan Parker

What was your inspiration for your podcast, The Food Craftsman?  
RP: In my first podcast, I talked about great food and focused on the craftsmanship of being a chef. It struck me as a great concept, so I developed the second podcast to focus on people who create food for a living. It’s evolved over the years to include in-depth episodes about ingredients or cooking techniques. I also share history, origins of ingredients and processes.

Any advice for starting a podcast?  
RP: Just do it. Start small and look for people who will be able to help you understand how to do it. The hardest part is believing enough in yourself to think, “I have something to say or share and people will enjoy hearing about it.” The most rewarding aspect is meeting new people and it has even been a great resume booster.

Any advice for potential entrepreneurs?  
RP: The best piece of advice I can give to someone who wants to start a business is to find others in the world who have traveled the path before them. Ask them questions. Get to know as much as you can before you spend money.

What are some basic tips for photographing food?  
RP: Stop taking pictures of food from directly above the plate. It flattens the food and it is devoid of any shape or soul. Also, find the best light. A flash will kill your pictures; I recommend photographing near a window.

You taught culinary arts in China, how is it different than the U.S.?  
RP: I loved having had the opportunity to teach in China for FIU and I learned a great deal about myself there. The Chinese use food as we do here, as a way to connect to one another, a way to celebrate or mourn, the same as we do here.

You focus on healthy eating, why is this important to you?  
RP: I have dabbled in healthy cooking over the years, but more recently it has become important since being diagnosed with non-diabetic hypoglycemia. The way I feel my body has become more important than ever. I still cannot give up good donuts though.

Do you have a personal food philosophy?  
RP: I tell my students to keep it simple. I use a quote in class, “You will become a better cook when you stop asking yourself, “what can I add to this?” and start asking yourself, “what can I take away to make this better?” Be simple. Simple is not easy.

What is one kitchen item you can’t live without?  
RP: A good pair of locking tongs. Tongs are so handy in the kitchen, you can grab hot pans, stir items and flip food with them.

What food trends do you think will be popular in 2017?  
RP: God, I hope it’s donuts. I have spent the last four weekends working on donuts. But, I think you’re going to hear a lot more about kale.
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