

The Las Vegas FOOD & BEVERAGE P R O F E S S I O N A L

Issue 2 Volume 20
US \$3.95

Frey Ranch Distillery

From Ground to Glass,
Made in Nevada

NEW! PICK UP CURRENT ISSUES AT
LEE'S DISCOUNT LIQUOR



beautiful

inside and out

a frank gehry design

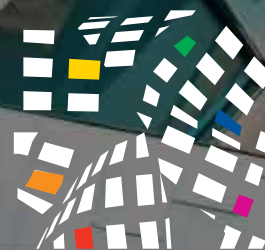


702.263.9797

eventcenter@keepmemoryalive.org

kmaeventcenterlasvegas.com

888 w. bonnevillle ave. las vegas, nv 89106



KEEP MEMORY ALIVE
EVENT CENTER

make your next event a beautiful experience

Designed by legendary architect Frank Gehry, the Keep Memory Alive Event Center is one of the premier event venues in Las Vegas. This extraordinary center provides the flexibility your event needs: indoors or outdoors, it is sure to be beautiful and unforgettable.

By hosting your next memorable celebration at the Keep Memory Alive Event Center, you help us to preserve memory of others. Event proceeds benefit Keep Memory Alive supporting the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health.

corporate events • meetings • galas
weddings • birthdays • receptions
retirements • bar/bat mitzvahs • launches
trade shows • presentations • reunions



CONTENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLISHER MIKE FRYER



WELCOME BACK TO OUR FEBRUARY 2020 ISSUE OF THE LAS VEGAS FOOD & BEVERAGE PROFESSIONAL where we wish a final farewell to the Hard Rock Hotel closing its doors in Las Vegas, but only to be reborn as Virgin Hotel. That's the story of Las Vegas and that's what makes Vegas, always reinventing itself. That's one of the reasons that 18 years ago, when I returned from school, and after living and working for 30 years in Southeast Asia, I choose to make Las Vegas my new home and have been grateful ever since. Once the holiday season is over, Las Vegas gets back to work on the Food & Beverage scene with all the shows, expos and events starting now. Check out the upcoming events on our events page and start planning your F&B Professional schedule.

Cover

COVER FEATURE FOR FEBRUARY 2020 IS DEDICATED TO OUR FRIENDS AT FREY DISTILLERY AND FROM GROUND TO GLASS STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY MADE IN NEVADA, compiled by our very own Editorial Director Bob Barnes, who also is born and raised in Nevada. Bob has a firsthand knowledge of the Frey family and their operations in Northern Nevada, as he has met and interviewed Ashley and Colby Frey on a few occasions, so you can expect a special look at the family and their unique product.

- 11** ALICE SWIFT, ALSO OUR NEWEST ASSISTANT EDITOR (CONGRATULATIONS ALICE!) AND CREATOR OF WINE TALK, TALKS ABOUT ROSE' and covers some that you may not know, including JNSQ Rosé Cru, Fleurs de Prairie Côtes de Provence Rosé, Gérard Bertrand's Côte des Roses and Francis Ford Coppola Sofia Rosé.
- 14** TWINKLE TOAST BY ERIN COOPER AND CHRISTINE VANOVER TELLS US ALL ABOUT RIEDEL GLASSWARE in their article titled "Newsflash! Shape and Size DOES Matter." Erin and Christine recently had the opportunity to meet and interview Chris Hillin, Regional Sales Manager for Riedel Crystal and have a Q&A with him on what makes Riedel such an important glassware line.
- 28** A NOTE FROM THE NRA (NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION, NOT NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION) GIVES ITS PREDICTIONS FOR THE NEXT DECADE. With the ever-changing restaurant industry, the report examines the key indicators shaping the future, identifying the most and least likely developments over the upcoming decade and considers possible disrupters outside the industry that could transform it. Read on for an overview of key projections for the Restaurant Industry.
- 29** MAX SOLANO BRINGS US HIS SPIRITS CONFIDENTIAL AND NATIONAL MARGARITA DAY which, you might ask, is February 22. But who needs a special day to have a margarita? Max takes us through the inception and make-up of the margarita, through its history and typical presentations.

CHEERS!

MIKE FRYER SR. EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Page 4
Hot off the Grill!

Page 5
Front & Back of the House
Wild Roots –
The Roots of Success

Page 6
What's Cooking

Page 8
Brett's Vegas View

Page 10
The Bottom Line
Elite Restaurant Group's Dave
Eldredge Discusses Franchise
Marketing Strategy

Page 11
Wine Talk with Alice Swift
Swap the Roses for Rosés this
Valentine's Day

Page 12
What's Brewing

Page 13
Product Review

Page 14
Twinkle Toast
Newsflash! Shape and
Size DOES Matter

Page 15
UNLV Epicurean Society

Page 16
COVER FEATURE
Frey Distillery
From Ground to Glass,
Made in Nevada

Page 18
Chef Spotlight
William DeMarco

Page 19
USBG Las Vegas

Page 20
The Restaurant Expert
What Successful
Restaurant Owners Have

Page 21
Chef Talk
The Versatile Empanada

Page 22
Farmtable Kitchen + Spirits
Warms Your Palate
as Well as Your Heart

Page 23
Human Resources Insights
Keeping Your Workforce Healthy

Page 24
May I Recommend...
Ferraro's Italian Restaurant

Page 26
Best of the Best

Page 28
Nevada Restaurant Association
Plan for the Future with the New
Restaurant Industry 2030 Report

Page 29
Spirits Confidential
with Max Solano
Celebrating National
Margarita Day

Page 30
Events

Ad Index

HOT OFF THE GRILL!



Mike Fryer
Sr. Editor/Publisher

Thank you for joining us in this issue of The Las Vegas Food & Beverage Professional.

For any questions or comments please email mike@lvfnb.com



Bob Barnes
Editorial Director
bob@lvfnb.com



Renowned Chef Michael Mina and restaurateur/chef/bestselling author/EllenTube Empire host Ayesha Curry have brought their International Smoke concept to Las Vegas. Here Editorial Director Bob Barnes congratulates Chef Mina on the opening at the media preview. To find out more about the menu and concept, see Bob's What's Cooking column on page 6.



Juanita Fryer
Assistant To Sr. Editor
ACF Chefs Liasion/Journalist
juanita.fryer@lvfnb.com



Alice Swift
Assistant Editor
alice@lvfnb.com



If you ever wanted to check out what vegan cuisine is all about, VegeNation is the ideal place to do so, and that's just what Bob Barnes did, seen here with GM Travis Schwantes. Read all about the vegan experience on page 6.



Juanita Aiello
Creative Director
juanita@lvfnb.com



Our Senior Editor/Publisher Mike Fryer recently attended the Shin Nin Kai (Japanese New Year's Cocktail Reception) for the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco Vice Consul Hiroyuki Nomura and the Honorary Counsel in Las Vegas Kathleen Blakely, held at the Gold Coast Hotel & Casino. Mike, Hiroyuki and Kathleen discussed plans for this year's Japanese Festival being held in Las Vegas.

Advertising
sales@lvfnb.com

Website
webmaster@lvfnb.com

Article Submissions/Suggestions
articles@lvfnb.com

Press Release Submissions
news@lvfnb.com

Calendar Submissions
calendar@lvfnb.com

General Information
info@lvfnb.com

twitter
[@lvfnb](https://twitter.com/lvfnb)

Find us on Facebook
The Las Vegas
Food & Beverage Professional

CONTRIBUTING STAFF



Journalist
USBG
Adam Rains



Journalist
The Bottom Line
Ben Brown



Accounting Manager
Michelle San Juan



Journalist
Brett's Vegas View
Jackie Brett



Journalist
Best of the Best
Shelley Stepanek



Journalist
UNLV Epicurean Society
Savannah Reeves



Journalist
May I Recommend...
Blake Myers



Journalist
The Restaurant Expert
David Scott Peters



Journalist
USBG Las Vegas
Terry Clark



Journalist
Front & Back of the House
Gael Hees



Photographer
Audrey Dempsey



Journalist
Chef Talk
Allen Asch



Journalist
Don Chareunsky



Journalist
Dishing It
Sk Delp



Journalist
Spirits Confidential
Max Solano



Photographer
Bill Bokelmann



Journalist
Pat Evans



Photographer
Joe Urcioli



Journalists
Twinkle Toast
Erin Cooper &
Christine Vanover



Journalists
Elaine and Scott Harris



Journalist
HR Insights
Linda Bernstein

Front & Back of the House

Wild Roots The Roots of Success

By Gael Hees

Gael Hees is a Las Vegas freelancer, and founder of the blog, *The Steamy Side of Vegas*, *Living the Spa Life*. She writes for national publications and has won numerous awards for printed materials and videos. Follow her at steamysideofvegas.com or email, gael.hees@icloud.com with questions, suggestions or comments.



Photo credit: Wild Roots

Sometimes, naivete pays off! When Chris Joseph was first “marketing” his natural infused vodkas and seeking startup funds, he made some good mistakes. Having finally secured an appointment to meet with several influencers, he drove several hours to get there, pulled sample bottles out of his car and started pouring tastes as he wandered around the building. He met a group of guys that were enthusiastic about the product and enjoyed a taste or two.

That was the early days of Wild Roots spirits, founded in 2012 with the first product available for sale in July of 2013. Apparently, Joseph made an impression that day on many people, with one outcome that those guys he met have served as the company’s attorneys ever since. However, at one point, they did let him know that “he had broken a lot of laws that day serving alcohol out of the back of his car with no licenses of any kind,” and he should just be grateful that he now has them around to protect him from himself.

The Roots of the Company

Originally a business and finance major, Joseph started the company while he was still in college. His unique hobby—distilling small-batch spirits—led him to realize that he liked the crafting side of the spirit business.

“I was at an age where I couldn’t legally buy alcohol, but I could make it,” said Joseph. “I decided to go the route of making my own sprits to give to my friends and family while having access to it myself.”

At the same time, he recognized what he

considered to be a hole in the spirits market.

He looked around and didn’t find an infused vodka with all-natural ingredients and thought consumers were being deprived of that option.

According to Joseph, “When you look at the infused market at the time, it was full of whipped vodka, cupcake vodka, and I think I even saw salmon and bacon vodkas. There were all of these vodkas out there that you knew weren’t real, it was just flavoring.”

Joseph wanted an infused vodka crafted with natural ingredients.

Lacking a chemistry, F&B or hospitality background, Joseph naively envisioned raspberry vodka made with real raspberries. In his head and later in reality, he decided that he was going to make raspberry infused vodka with real raspberries in the production process. No chemicals, flavoring or additives would be included.

“So some of that foolishness and me being naive as to what was available on the market, helped to create our products and led me to the philosophy of our company—be true to the fruit,” he said. “I don’t believe in creating flavors, whether it is raspberry, pear or peach, when the fruit itself is perfect.”

Joseph sees this as making his job a lot easier. “When I get ready to create a new product or new flavor, all I have to do is let the fruit do all of the work for me.”

Sourcing Ingredients and Infusing Vodka

Wild Roots purchases vodka from sources in Northern California and Oregon. The fruit comes from farms throughout the Pacific Northwest. The cranberries, for example, come from Johnson Creek Farm in Bandon, Oregon. This family-owned farm is about ninety percent organic and will be fully

organic for the next growing season.

According to Joseph, there is almost a pound or more of fruit used to infuse each bottle!

The infusion process takes place after distillation to ensure that the fruit is not stripped of much of the flavor and color. Fruits and berries are pureed, added to the batch, and allowed to rest. Small batches of no more than 100 12-pack cases are blended at a time, giving Wild Roots the opportunity to finesse the flavor, color and fragrance of the final product and ensure consistency.

Wild Root’s products are best consumed within a year of opening, and recommended to be kept in a refrigerator or freezer. “Since our products are natural and contain real fruit, there is a shelf life for our products,” said Joseph. “That is one thing that I really like about our product. If it’s real, it should have a shelf life.”

The Taste of Roots

One of Joseph’s goals was to tie the company to his roots in the Pacific Northwest, and this has morphed into one of the strengths of the company. “I’m very familiar with what the fruits and berries we use should and do taste like,” he said. “When we create those products with marionberry, pear or cranberry, I know when we’ve gotten the flavor right: when it’s that homegrown familiar taste that I grew up with.”

Wild Roots’ products are available in Las Vegas at Total Wine stores for approximately \$25 for a 750 ml bottle.

Wild Roots

www.wildrootsspirits.com

77 NE Grand Ave. Suite F

Portland, OR 97232

971-254-4617



What's Cooking

By Bob Barnes

Bob Barnes is a native Las Vegas, editorial director of The Las Vegas Food & Beverage Professional, regional correspondent for Celebrator Beer News and covers the LV restaurant scene for Gayot.com.

He welcomes your inquiries.
Email: bob@lvfnb.com



Photo credit: Lally Barnes



VegeNation Making Food So Good Anyone Can Enjoy Going Vegan

The article title above says it all. Anyone who is leery of vegan cuisine owes it to themselves to give it a try and VegeNation may just be the perfect place to do so. Although vegan food isn't new to me, my visit to VegeNation was the first time I'd dined at a restaurant that is 100% vegan.

The Downtown location at 616 E. Carson opened in 2015 and the Henderson location at 10075 Eastern which I visited followed in October, 2017. The décor is what I'd call earthy, and I mean that in the best way possible. Tables and chairs are fashioned from rustic wood, two walls are filled with live plants, as well as several hanging from the ceiling; and a sizeable outdoor dining area is brightened up with vines, more hanging plants and a colorful mural. A nice touch in the dining room is a counter equipped with electrical outlets and USB ports for customer use.

Although the menu has words such as cheese, chicken, meatball, sausage and tuna, everything is actually 100% plant based, and diners are informed of this as soon as they are handed the menu. I must confess, if I hadn't known or had been blindfolded, I wouldn't have been able to tell that the "chicken" I was eating had not come from an animal.

Some of my favorites included the My Little Dumpling—steamed shiitake, tofu and spinach dumplings with a delicious dipping sauce; Buffalo Cauliflower Wings with a side of vegan ranch dressing; and Food Not Bombs Bowl—a huge portion of house-spiced tofu, black bean chili, breakfast potatoes, cheese, avocado and chipotle cream served with corn tortillas. The Save the Tuna is well named, as it is hand rolled made with seasonal vegetable and forbidden rice. Two unique pizzas are the Mac N Cheese with creamy mac n cheese and Chipotle Ranch and Blaze Doritos and Spicy Picante Pineapple with fresh pineapple, jalapenos and Italian sausage crumbles. Burger fans should be satisfied with the Mac Daddy Burger loaded with a plant-based burger topped with mac n cheese, collard greens, BBQ sauce and a secret burger sauce; and Downtown Tony—Portobello mushroom sliders with vegetable slaw and sriracha aioli. Desserts include a Baked Alaska layered with cake, locally-made coconut/almond ice cream and toasted meringue.

GM Travis Schwantes is a wonderful ambassador of the restaurant's mission to lead a food revolution and appreciate the positive impact plant-based cooking makes on our planet, animals, our health and local community vegan lifestyle, which his family and the majority of his staff adheres to. I was also impressed when after informing Travis of a food allergy my wife has, he returned with the "Food Bible," a notebook filled

with notes regarding various allergies and all of the ingredients used in each dish.

In addition to the plant-based cuisine, VegeNation sources its ingredients from local farms and small businesses as much as possible and beers served are Resonate IPA and Evocation Saison from CraftHaus Brewery, brewed just a few miles away. A colorful chalkboard in the hall near the restrooms proudly lists the various providers.

If you enjoy brunch, show up between 9-3 on Saturday or Sunday, when a special menu is served. Otherwise, the Henderson location is open daily for lunch and dinner and the Downtown location is open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. For more info and to view the complete menus, visit vegenationlv.com.

T.A.B.L.E. Dinner Spotlights Australian-Raised Proteins

Last month I had the extreme pleasure to take part in an exclusive pop-up T.A.B.L.E. dinner. The acronym stands for True Aussie Beef and Lamb Experience and a delightful experience it was. T.A.B.L.E. has previously held dinner experiences in Washington DC and NYC and our five-course meal, prepared by Chef Roy Villacrusis, was a showcase of proteins raised in Australia: wagyu, lamb, goat and grass-fed beef. Chef Roy is the group's main chef for the popup dinners, and has a past in Las Vegas, having worked as Master Sushi Chef for Shibuya at MGM Grand and as a consulting chef at Andiron.

The purpose of the dinners is to expose chefs to what can be done with Aussie meats; I was one of only five non-chefs to participate, as the room was filled with more than a dozen local chefs. Chef Roy called on his Filipino background for this dinner, as each dish had an Asian flair. We began with kilawin Wagyu beef and kinilaw prawns with crab fat, coconut vinaigrette, labuyo pepper and chicharon flakes that chef described as a Filipino version of ceviche. Next up was kalbi of shaved lamb loin in dolot, a play on bibimap with lamb instead of beef. We all got a rare and welcome chance to enjoy goat with Chef's kaldereta of goat with root vegetables and steamed pandan rice. Grass-fed beef was spotlighted in binchotan grilled grass-fed beef kushiyaki with creamed cauliflower, maitake and honshimeji mushrooms in Wagyu fat and truffled soy butter. The final course featured creations all made with rice and coconut milk, such as rice mochi, cassava cake and purple rice cake. Each course was paired with wine, with the likes of Clarevale 2018 Riesling and 19 Crimes Pinot Noir.



At the conclusion of the dinner Chef Roy came out and received a well-deserved rousing round of applause. The presentation of each dish was beautiful and the flavors were superb, putting this tasting of Australia in the best light possible.

The dinner was held at Every Grain at 1430 E. Charleston. The new eatery is by Sheridan Su and Jenny Wong, who have garnered much acclaim for their Fat Choy and Flock & Fowl restaurants. Both were present at the dinner, with Jenny helping out with service. For now, Every Grain is in its soft opening phase and open Tue.-Sat. from 10:30-2:30, but Jenny says the hours will expand and they are in the process of obtaining a liquor license (they got a special permit to serve wine at this special event).

It's possible that we'll be seeing more of Chef Roy. He shared he is planning on opening his own restaurant called Gaijin Asiatic Cuisine, a studio-like space for 8-10 diners serving an Omakase-style tasting menu with a new approach on sushi and other Asian ingredients. After enjoying his Aussome (not a typo, pun intended) cooking at this dinner, I highly recommend checking out his cuisine for yourself once it opens.

Worth noting is that Aussie beef, lamb and goat producers raise much of their livestock on pasture and natural grasslands; in the past 30 years the water use has been decreased by 68%; greenhouse gas emissions have declined by 56% over the last 14 years; and the nation/continent is committed to be carbon neutral by 2030.

For more info on Aussie meat and menus visit www.trueaussiebeefandlamb.com, if interested in being a True Aussie Chef or hosting/attending one of the T.A.B.L.E. events email mlteam@summitmg.com and to check out Every Grain, go to www.eateverygrain.com.

Michael Mina and Ayesha Curry Bring the Heat to MGM Grand with Their Vegas Location of International Smoke

Renowned Chef Michael Mina and restaurateur/chef/bestselling author/ElleTube *Fempire* host Ayesha Curry have expanded their International Smoke concept to Las Vegas, opening at the MGM Grand in the same space as Mina's former Pub 1842 in the MGM's The District. The décor is mostly unchanged, and there are still three seating areas: main dining, patio and bar with large round tables and comfortable booths throughout.

The concept debuted in San Francisco in 2016 as a pop-up in the MINA Test Kitchen and now has permanent locations in S.F., Miami, San Diego and now Las Vegas, and stemmed from both Mina and Curry's personal travels around the world and shared love of international cooking techniques. As suggested by the name, a smoker is in use for the BBQ meats, as well as a wood-fired grill for the steaks and seafood.

During a media preview dinner last month we were treated to an extensive tasting of the menu, which included Roasted Shellfish Platter containing crab, lobster, oysters and shrimp; Crab & Thai Coconut Soup Shooter with Ayesha's cornbread; Citrus Beets; Mama Mina's Falafel (a Mina family recipe); Truffle Caesar Salad; Tokyo Fried

Chicken; Jerk Duck Spring Rolls with spicy mango chutney; Shaking Beef (seared tableside and topped with Maggie sauce); Verlasso Salmon; Mediterranean Branzino; Pacific Swordfish; Trio of St. Louis Pork Ribs, Braised Jamaican Oxtail and Smoked Korean Short Rib; Sweet & Sour Brussels Sprouts; and desserts of Sugar & Scribe Key Lime Pie, Valrhona Chocolate Molten Cake and Palette of Pudding Trio of vanilla bean crème brûlée, raspberries Black Forest chocolate custard and maraschino cherries butterscotch pudding. Needless to say, we needed to be hauled out in a wheelbarrow after such a feast.

Chef Michael Mina and Ayesha Curry visited with each table answering questions. When I asked Chef Mina about closing Pub 1842 he commented, "The Pub did well, but after we opened International Smoke, we brought the idea to MGM for this location. One of the things we have planned is to focus on one country a month and do specials featuring that country." Ayesha added, "This restaurant is very collaborative and some of the best menu items have come from recipes of family, such as the corn bread with coconut curry, reflecting a Jamaican influence." She also shared that a menu item unique to the Las Vegas location is the Jerk Duck Spring Rolls, which happened to be one of my favorite dishes we enjoyed during the tasting.

Of course, being a beer guy, I was very happy to see a well-rounded beer list with 35 taps pouring a range of beer styles and local representation, including Able Baker Atomic Duck IPA; Big Dog's Tailwagger Hefeweizen; Lovelady Golden Nites Golden Lager, Love Triangle Amber and Love Juice IPA; and Tenaya Creek Bonanza Brown and Hop Ride IPA. I was also thrilled to find some of my all-time favorites: Dogfish Head 120 IPA (which is actually a barleywine), Delirium Tremens and New Holland Dragon's Milk Bourbon Stout.

International Smoke

Open daily from 5-10:30 p.m.

mgmgrand.mgmresorts.com/en/restaurants/international-smoke.html

Brett's VEGAS VIEW

By Jackie Brett

Jackie is a freelance public relations specialist and writer specializing in the Las Vegas entertainment and travel scene. Her writings have appeared in magazines and newspapers nationwide and on numerous websites.

Email: jackiebrett@cox.net



ENTERTAINMENT

Bill Burr, actor, comedian and podcast host, has a 2020-2021 residency at The Chelsea in The Cosmopolitan beginning with Saturday dates March 21 and June 20.



ZZ Top with three original band members—Billy Gibbons, Dusty Hill and Frank Beard—together through five decades returns to The Venetian for five shows March 20-21, 25, and 27-28 in 2020.

Kesha's "The High Road Tour" will stop at the Palms Friday, May 1. The tour includes Big Freedia and follows the Jan. 31 release of Kesha's album "High Road."

Legendary musician **Don Felder**, formerly of the Eagles for 27 years, will make a return performance inside the Grand Events Center at Green Valley Ranch Saturday, May 23.

"Elvis Presley's Heartbreak Hotel In Concert" closed Dec. 29 at Harrah's Showroom and the **Bronx Wanderers** are moving there from The LINQ Hotel next door.

Comic, singer and impressionist **Gordie Brown** returns to the Golden Nugget's showroom, where he once was a seven-year headliner, in a limited run and all new show "Lasting Impressions" beginning Tuesday, Feb. 11.

Nick Cannon's "MTV Wild 'N Out Live" tour will visit Mandalay Bay Events Center Saturday, April 4. Tour lineup varying by city will feature stand-up routines by Wild 'N Out cast members and live music from today's hottest artists.

Ivory Star Productions' shows at the D Las Vegas, "Marriage Can Be Murder," Adam London's "Laughternoon," "Friends! The Musical Parody," "Defending the Caveman" and "Jokesters Comedy Club" all closed there permanently because the second floor will undergo a major redesign.

New show **"The Jets 80's & 90's Experience"** opened at the V Theater at the Miracle Mile Shops at Planet Hollywood featuring the Grammy-nominated band Tuesday-Saturday.

Clint Carvalho, the exotic bird specialist who was an "America's Got Talent" YouTube finalist, has his "Extreme Parrots" show at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. every weekend and major holidays through Feb. 17.

Rock 'n' roll themed **"Cherry Boom Boom"** at OYO, formerly Hooters, returned to the Night Owl Showroom with new dancers and moves and is now extended with 11 p.m. shows Thursday through Saturday.

Drag Diva Brunch in its fourth year at the House of Blues Restaurant & Bar in Mandalay Bay is every Saturday through April 4 with an all-star cast of queens and a buffet.

The all-new show **"Disney Dance Upon a Dream,"** starring singer, actress and dancer Mackenzie Ziegler, will visit Orleans Arena Tuesday, April 21.

"The Dennis Bono Show," a live one-hour interview-performance show at South Point, is extended through 2020 and celebrates 20 years of continuous weekly Las Vegas broadcasts.



The original tribute to the Eagles touring since 1986, **Hotel California**, will headline the M Resort Saturday, March 14 in the M Pavilion.

The fourth installment of **Art of The Wild**, a three-day music and cultural experience with acclaimed artists in techno and house, will return March 13-15 at Wynn Nightlife venues.

Downtown Las Vegas Events Center will host the all-new **Reggae Rise Up Vegas (RRU VEGAS)** festival April 18-19 featuring headlining performances from SoCal reggae-rock stars Slightly Stoopid and Dirty Heads.

DINING

The new \$10 million vintage **Bugsy & Meyer's Steakhouse** opens soon at the Flamingo paying homage to the resort's 70 plus-year history featuring the main bar, patio dining, main dining room, three private dining rooms and raw bar.

Chef/restaurant and four-time James Beard Award winner, **Chef Todd English**, will be creating a new culinary theatrical dining experience exclusively for AREA15's food hall.

Off the Chelsea Tower's main lobby, The Cosmopolitan reintroduced the newly designed 24-hour **Vesper Bar** named after the legendary cocktail in the James Bond novel Casino Royale.

The Las Vegas Farmers Market is held every Sunday on The Green at the Silverton from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. with more than 30 vendors.

The Promenade Café at JW Marriott and Rampart Casino is closed for renovation while the Clubhouse Deli is open 24 hours daily during construction.

ABOUT TOWN

Fremont Street Experience (FSE) revealed the Viva Vision Canopy's \$32 million renovation featuring a new collection of visuals and 3D graphics and multi-sensory signature show "MIXology." The five-city-block canopy is now seven times brighter and can be seen 24 hours a day.

The **"Lost Vegas: Tim Burton @ The Neon Museum"** has been extended through April 12 showcasing sculptural and digital installations celebrating the artist's links to Las Vegas and its historical neon heritage.

"Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition" at the Luxor has introduced 108 new artifacts including 20 never seen before. New technologies and a photo station for visitors to pose with prop lifejackets from the Oscar-winning 1997 movie are also added.

The new traveling exhibit through Sunday, May 3 at the Discovery Children's Museum is **Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures In Action** with collaborative and hands-on activities focusing on the benefits of physical activity and healthy lifestyle.



The **16th Annual Dam Short Film Festival** will have 23 programs and screen 146 short films Feb. 13-16 in the historic 400-seat Boulder Theatre in Boulder City.

The Burlesque Hall of Fame on Main Street has started burlesque classes for all levels presented as part of the museum's "School of Striptease" program with one-time drop-in classes and eight-week intensive courses.

Las Vegas' first professional tennis team, **Vegas Rollers**, is returning after its inaugural year for the 2020 World TeamTennis (WTT) season with 41-year-old twins Mike and Bob Bryan on their farewell tour.

CUSTOM BLENDED HERBS and SPICES MADE LOCALLY IN LAS VEGAS



- Wholesale distributor of exceptional quality dried spices and specialty foods to the finest hotels and restaurants
- Owned and operated by a former chef with over 20 years of experience
- Custom packed Herbs and Spices
- Custom Spice Blends
- Private labeling
- Now Certified Kosher



6960 W Warm Springs Road #130 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89113

(1/2 block west of Rainbow Blvd)

702-642-1100

The Bottom Line

Elite Restaurant Group's Dave Eldredge Discusses Franchise Marketing Strategy

By Ben Brown

Benjamin Brown, MBA is Restaurant Editor of The SoCal Food & Beverage Professional. A seasoned writer and consultant, Ben works with Fortune 500 companies and mom & pop shops alike in Marketing, Analytics, Consumer Insights, PR and Business Development. Contact Ben at Ben@lvfnb.com or follow him @Foodie_Biz.



Dave Eldredge serves as the Director of Marketing for Elite Restaurant Group, owner of Slater's 50/50, Daphne's Mediterranean, Paxti's Pizza and Gigi's Cupcakes. This longtime restaurant veteran (literally...he served in the Air Force) has embraced the challenges of not only managing four very different products and brands, but doing so with the added variable of the franchise model. But despite the overwhelming complexity of moving parts, Eldredge has risen to the occasion by bringing out the best of each brand through product innovation, technology integration and community engagement.

Eldredge shared insight on how he's tackled such hurdles, as well as imparted advice for restaurant owners to build their concept's brand.

How did you get started in restaurants and what led you to Elite Restaurant Group?

My role in restaurants started as a teenager. I began as a dishwasher, moved up to be a prep cook, then a line cook. I continued to progress doing pretty much everything you can do in a restaurant, except for bartending. After graduating high school, I went into the military, where I served in the Air Force on an electronic warfare plane. When my enlistment was up, I wanted to go straight back into restaurants, but my family pushed me into college. I earned my MBA right afterward, completing six years of school in about 3½ years.

When I got out of school, I was an attractive candidate for defense contractors, but took a job in marketing with Dunkin' Brands. I was making 1/3 of what I would've made as a defense contractor, but it was what I loved. I held various roles at Dunkin' for six years.

The next step of my career took me to various e-commerce groups and retailers, but when I saw this opportunity with Elite, I jumped on it. It takes me back to my roots.

Elite Restaurant Group is like a home flipper for restaurants. You acquire distressed brands and turn them around. Can you elaborate on that model?

We buy brands with good foundations. Our goal is not to gobble them up as Elite, but to turn them around as a brand. We're brand-focused and want to make sure that we're doing what's best for each individual concept we own. Elite Restaurant Group doesn't have a website for itself, nor a LinkedIn page, and that's very conscious. Each concept needs to be its own ongoing cause.

I love the opportunity to work with franchisees, rather than just with an internal corporate team. [The franchisees] depend on you to keep their lights on. You don't have that perspective in other segments of the restaurant industry.



Working with each brand individually must come with some additional challenges. Can you discuss a few?

At Daphne's, we have our baby boomer customers who just want a low cost pita. But we also have our millennials who want more authentic Mediterranean experiences. It's very hard to give both of these groups what they want. So we expanded the menu. We brought in shawarma, we created pita burgers.

At Gigi's cupcakes, people think about the cupcake fad being over and done with. Gigi's is more about franchisees serving their community. Yes we sell cupcakes, but we also sell experiences, like our famous boo box. We make the product more relevant to the community. Customers are also socially conscious about how businesses impact their communities, so we've focused the brand so that 100% of profits go back into the community through charitable events. We're celebrating the art of baking.

And Slater's is all about the experience. Our over-the-top burgers and milkshakes speak for themselves there.

You're integrating a lot more technology into each brand as well. What are some of your projects that are pushing these concepts further into the digital age?

For Slater's, previously, we had to print out coupons and pay for direct mail. I'm investing in CRM, so we can market to our audience in a more relevant way. We're looking at Atmosphere [formerly Chive TV] and testing that in a few locations. Typically on a slower weekday, you'll see SportsCenter on around the bar and it's not super compelling dining, but Atmosphere puts on viral content that really engages the millennial audience. We want to emphasize the 'dinnertainment' aspect of dining. Sports are of course integral to our DNA at Slater's, but we're also talking about ways we can leveraged streaming media.

For Gigi's, we're trying to get to a point where our signage is always digital. People buy with their eyes. We want to make our menu boards more dynamic, highlight more cupcake flavors people might enjoy.

We get [technology] ideas from vendors left and right. We're testing mobile charging stations that allow us to market to customers.

What are some of the seismic shifts you've seen that are affecting the restaurant business as a whole, regardless of concept?

People are shifting what they expect out of dining. When I was brought up, I looked at value as how much something costs vs. what I get for that price. Restaurants were discount focused back then: couponing, lunch menus, focusing on specific price points. Millennials look at things holistically. They're not as focused on price, but rather the all-encompassing experience when they go to a restaurant. They're judging brands in terms of 'how is it going to affect my life?'

They want to share the experience with their friends, whatever that wow factor is. That's what's driving the new consumer segment. [Restaurants need to] evolve their business model to appeal to that type of consumer.

Coming from the retail/e-commerce world, I'm trying to bring some of the best practices there into the restaurant world.

What additional marketing advice do you have for restaurant owners?

Think bottom up when it comes to restaurants. At the end of the day, people are enjoying not just your recipes but your location. It's not like it was in years past.

When I look at a marketing campaign, the first thing I want to know is whether what I'm selling is relevant to the customer. We could try selling fried chicken at Slater's, but it's not relevant, because people come to us for our burgers.

Then, think about your ability to execute operationally. And finally, as yourself, 'based on all my efforts, is this profitable for the franchisee?' At the end of the day, if it's not profitable, it's not going to work.

In restaurants, you have to create a unique experience and do your best every single day, transaction by transaction.

Wine Talk

with Alice Swift

By Alice Swift

Alice Swift, Assistant Editor and Journalist for The Las Vegas and SoCal F&B Professional, is passionate about hospitality/F&B, education and instructional design, with 15+ years of experience. In 2016, she moved from Las Vegas to O'ahu, Hawai'i, working for the UH System as a multimedia instructional designer, while maintaining her hospitality/F&B ties through writing, teaching and consulting (Swift Hospitality Consulting). email: alice@lvfnb.com | website: www.aliceswift.com



Swap the Roses for Rosés this Valentine's Day

With a blink of an eye, 2019 has come and gone, and we are well on our way into 2020. I have some friends that regularly ask me for wine recommendations, and recently have had a few asks for some good gifts for romantic loved ones. There have been so many great wine bottle designs out there in recent years that it becomes hard to choose the right ones ... does the wine taste as good as it looks?

This Valentine's Day, or even "just because," consider these wines that happen to look good AND taste good too! The concept of unique Rosé wine bottles may have become popular in recent years, but places like Provence, France, have been doing it for decades. Instead of a bouquet of roses this year, what about a gift of Rosé wine? Below are a few recommendations that not only look great in design (even making for a great vase afterwards), but also are a great value.

JNSQ Rosé Cru

JNSQ gets its name from the famed French saying "je ne sais quoi," creatively labeled as the acronym instead. The wine is made up of Grenache, Pinot Gris, Syrah and Viognier from the Central Coast, and the result is a fruit-forward crisp wine with hints of strawberries and cherries, and even white peaches and other floral aromas. The most unique thing about this wine would have to be the bottle shape, along with the beautiful rose-shaped glass stopper. Made by a French glass designer, the bottle is so elegant and special that you can keep it on the shelf as a vase or other display long after the wine has been consumed.

<https://www.jnsq.com/products/rose-cru-wine>

Fleurs de Prairie Côtes de Provence Rosé

Translated to "wildflowers" from French, Fleurs de Prairie Rosé (producer: Les Grands Chais de France) comes from the most well-known Rosé producing region in France: Provence. This wine is also a traditional blend of Grenache, Cinsault and Syrah, with a beautiful pale salmon tone, and a wine that is full of aromas like strawberry and roses.

<http://www.fleursdeprairie.com/Wine-Fleurs-de-Prairie-Info>

Gérard Bertrand's Côte des Roses (Languedoc, France)

If you're looking for another "rose-inspired" bottle of wine, here is another beautiful creation, from the other Rosé producing wine region

in Southern France. Another great spring/summer wine if you're looking for a refreshing wine with hints of roses along with crisp, freshly picked stone fruits and berries. The bottle itself is also crafted by a young designer from the École Boulle Paris Institute of Arts and Design, and is a unique sight to see with a base shaped like a rose.

www.gerard-bertrand.com/en/wines/cote-des-roses-rose

Sofia Rosé, Francis Ford Coppola Winery

If you're looking for a Rosé from the United States, here is another reasonably priced wine with yet another elegant bottle design. This particular Rosé is made of 70% Syrah, 20% Grenache, and 10% Pinot Noir grapes, which result in a hint of spice along with the juicy red fruit and fragrant potpourri aromas.

<https://www.francisfordcoppolawinery.com/en/our-wines/sofia/rose>

Rosé Pairings

Rosés generally have a red fruit and floral profile, some with an additional layer of spices or herbaceous aromas and flavors. The tendency is to crave these wines when you are looking to cool down on a hot summer day, or just when you crave something refreshing. The same would go for foods that pair well with the wines. Lighter foods like a spicy arugula and light vinaigrette dressing, or lighter cheese like goat cheese and beet salad. Tomatoes would do well to balance out the high acid in the wine, with items like bruschetta, caprese salad, or even a wood-fired pizza (margherita or a prosciutto and arugula pizza come to mind).

Depending on your location, you should be able to find the aforementioned wines at your local wine-centric markets (Total Wine & More, BevMo, Lee's Liquor, Whole Foods, etc.). This year, change it up or add on to your plans for a romantic dinner or getaway with a bottle (maybe two!) of "Rosés" with a twist!

Until next month, cheers~!

Alice

what's BREWING

By Bob Barnes

Bob Barnes is a native Las Vegas, editorial director of The Las Vegas Food & Beverage Professional, regional correspondent for Celebrator Beer News and covers the LV restaurant scene for Gayot.com.

He welcomes your inquiries.
Email: bob@lvfnb.com



Upcoming Beer Festivals

Spring is just around the corner and so are several of Southern Nevada's beer festivals and fun events, so time to mark your calendars and save the dates. You can thank me later.

On Sunday, Feb. 16, Eataly Las Vegas at Park MGM will host its first ever **Italian Street Food & Beer Fest**, a pairing of traditional Italian street foods such as arancini, meatballs and pizza alla pala with a selection of beers from breweries including the Italian Baladin, Menabrea, Moretti and Peroni; and US breweries Dogfish Head and Goose Island. Seven pairing stations will be set up within the marketplace, and your ticket will get you an all-inclusive wristband for two hours of unlimited tastings of the pairings. Tickets are \$60 for pre-sale and \$70 the day of; time slots are 4-6 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. To purchase tickets visit Eataly.com/LasVegasEvents.

This year is Leap Year and what better way to celebrate the special day that only comes once every four years than by attending the **Beer Zombies Craft Beer Festival**. Unlike Leap Year, this fest happens annually, and this year the 4th annual fest on Feb. 29 will again be held at the SkinnyFats location at 6261 Dean Martin Dr. There will be more than 100 breweries pouring, including several locals (such as Able Baker, Astronomy, Hop Nuts and CraftHaus) and the likes of Stillwater, Pizza Port, Prairie and Mason Ale Works. Part of the fest is the Day After Share on March 1—a bottle share, which this year takes place at Able Baker Brewing from noon-3 p.m., during which attendees are encouraged to bring beers from their personal collections to crack open

and share and meet-and-greet with visiting brewers. General admission tickets are \$50 for unlimited pours from 3-7 p.m. and tickets to the Day After Share are \$10. Unfortunately, VIP is already sold out, but those lucky enough to have already snagged one will be enjoying early entry at 2, access to a VIP lounge, VIP-only beers, food provided by SkinnyFats and entry to the Day After Share. For more info, the list of breweries and to purchase tickets visit <https://bit.ly/384A1Pw>.

On March 28 from 1-7 p.m. the **8th Annual Boulder City Beerfest** will again be held at Wilbur Square Park in the heart of the historic city. The park is located just two blocks from Boulder Dam Brewing, which is where you can buy tickets in advance (they are also being sold at Khoury's). The only beerfest currently held in Boulder City, it will have more than 36 brewery tents pouring more than 100 beers, live music, food for purchase from 10 food trucks, "beer centric" specialty vendors, homebrewing demonstrations and the brewers games hosted by the Nevada Beer Lovers. Unlike most beer fests, this one is child and pet-friendly, as long as accompanied by their parents and kept on a tight leash! VIP tickets are \$45 in advance for early entry at 1 p.m., and general admission is \$35 in advance for entry at 3 p.m. These tickets will be available online at the discounted price until March 21. For more info, a list of breweries or to purchase tickets, visit bouldercitybeerfest.com.

The 10th annual **Motley Brews Great Vegas Festival of Beer** will again be held at the Downtown Las Vegas Events Center at 200 S 3rd St. on April 3 and 4. It is expected to

draw 10,000 attendees over the two days and is Nevada's largest craft beer festival in terms of amount of beers poured, offering tastings of more than 400 craft beers from more than 100 breweries. The Friday night event, the Mad Craft Experience from 7-10 p.m., will feature beer and cocktails paired with culinary creations from more than 30 chefs, mixologists and breweries. The next day, The Great Vegas Grand Tasting will be held from 3-7 p.m. with early entry at 2 p.m. Ticket prices vary. For more info and to purchase tickets visit greatvegasbeer.com. Buy your tickets early, as prices increase closer to the festival dates.

The family-owned and -operated **Lovelady Brewing** will commemorate its **4th anniversary** on April 11 from noon-11 p.m. with all day special pricing on beers, live music, and some special beers, including a doppelbock and an imperial red. Lovelady is located at 20 S. Water St. in Downtown Henderson.

The next **Big Dog's Brewing** quarterly beerfest will be its **11th Annual Peace Love Hoppy-ness**, held in the outdoor area of the Draft House at Rancho and Craig in northwest Las Vegas on April 25 from 3-9 p.m. As always, more than 40 local, regional and international beers will be poured, including several from the host brewery. As this is a celebration of bold, hoppy beers with several IPAs and double IPAs, all hophounds should make plans to attend. There's no admission for the fest, but tasting packages are available. For more info, to view the beer lineup and to purchase tasting packages visit www.bigdogsbrews.com/festivals/plh.

As always, great beer happens in Vegas!

Product Review

By Bob Barnes



The Bruery Ruekeller Helles

The Bruery has long been one of my all-time favorite breweries, as I quite enjoy their Belgian-style, sour and wild ale offerings. So I was a bit surprised to see this latest release that ventures beyond what we normally expect from this renowned brewery, and is in fact, its first-ever lager and the first in the Placentia, CA-based brewery's true-to-style series. The name Ruekeller is a play on words, combining Rue, the Bruery's family namesake, and Ruhkeller, which is German for "Rest Cellar," where the beer rests in a secondary fermentation so that it can mellow and develop. In keeping with the German style, this 5.2% ABV lager is brewed with premium Pilsner malt and Magnum and Saaz hops from Germany. The result is an easy-drinking, full-bodied brew with light bitterness, a touch of sweetness and a clean and crisp finish befitting a well-made lager. As anyone who knows beer is aware, lagers are much harder to make than ales, and I'm not surprised that The Bruery was up to the task of making a truly great one. And while it may have been hard to make, it sure is easy to love, and I sure hope there will be more to come.

www.thebruery.com



Flying Embers Hard Kombucha

Kombucha, a fermented tea, is a very unique beverage that is fast taking root in the beverage industry, and now hard kombucha is also growing in popularity and market share. Flying Embers features handcrafted hard kombucha with live probiotics and botanicals with zero sugar (0 net carbs) and ranges from 4.5% to 7.5% ABV. Made from a sparkling fermented tea kombucha culture with adaptogens, it's also organic, gluten-free, vegan and unfiltered; and comes in six flavors: Ancient Berry, Grapefruit Thyme, Lemon Orchard, Pineapple Chili, Cherry Lime and Ginger & Oak. While not to be confused with beer or cider, it does have a lively carbonation thanks to the champagne yeast it's brewed with. As it contains live probiotics—live cultures considered "good" bacteria that offer health-promoting benefits supplementing your body's natural microbiome and gut health—it may be considered an all-around good-for-you drink. I tried four of the flavors and found them all to be delightful and enjoyed them as much as a good beer or cider.

<https://flyingembers.com>



Four Peaks Gilt Lifter Scottish Light Ale

A segment of the market that is lacking in the craft beer industry is light calorie beers, with only a handful that resemble beer more than flavored water to choose from. With this in mind, I was very interested to check out this new release from Arizona's largest brewery. I've also long been a fan of the Tempe-based brewery's Kilt Lifter, which this brew it's modeled after. But it's not a watered down version, but actually an entirely new recipe and is designed to fit within a beer style called Scottish Light Ale, which is traditionally low in alcohol but high in malt character. Such is the case of Gilt Lifter, which weighs in at only 3.4% ABV and 99 calories per 12-oz serving, half the calories and carbs and nearly half the alcohol content of Kilt Lifter. While it won't replace Kilt Lifter, to my tastes, it's for sure an enjoyable brew and should be a contender for those looking to watch their calories and alcohol intake while still appreciating malty, bready, real beer flavors.

www.fourpeaks.com/beer/year-round/gilt-lifter



Ohza Classic Mimosa

Mimosa, the ever-popular low-alcohol brunch drink, may not be just for brunch any more, now that there is a ready-to-drink option available. Packaged in a 12-oz can and at 5% ABV, the Ohza Classic Mimosa is gluten-free and contains no added sugar or artificial flavors. While not required for alcohol beverages, a Nutrition Facts label on the can proudly details a count of 140 calories, 14 carbs and 0 mg sodium per 12-oz serving. It's made with real orange juice (not a fake artificial orange flavor) and premium Brut sparkling wine from the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York. This canned version adds the convenience of being able to pop open a can anytime you want one, and is easy to transport.

www.ohzamimosas.com

Twinkle Toast

Newsflash! Shape and Size DOES Matter

By Erin Cooper & Christine Vanover

Erin Cooper and Christine Vanover have been residents of Las Vegas since 2007. Vanover is also a UNLV Alumnus. Cooper is a Territory Manager for the Resort Wine Team at Southern Glaziers Wine & Spirits. Both women founded Twinkle Toast in 2017.

info@twinkletoast.com • www.twinkletoast.com

Facebook: @TwinkleToast

Twitter: TwinkleToastLV

Instagram: TwinkleToastLV



Photo credit: Riedel

George and Maximilian Riedel

While the majority of wine drinkers probably don't put much thought into selecting the vessel with which to consume their wine, the Riedel family has been perfecting the science behind varietal specific glassware for over 60 years. When we participated in a Riedel comparative glassware tasting experience, we found it surprising that even water tasted differently coming from glasses of varied shapes and sizes. Recently, we were fortunate enough to speak with Chris Hillin, Regional Sales Manager for Riedel Crystal, about the history of Riedel and its dedication to quality craftsmanship and the enhancement of food and wine pairing around the world.

When and why was Riedel originally founded?

Riedel has been a family business since 1756, as the family glassworks began the Riedel legacy in luxury decorative glassware only moving into varietal specific wine glasses in the late 1950s.

How does the production process at Riedel differ from other glassmakers?

Riedel produces both machine and handmade decanters and glassware. At its headquarters in Kufstein, Austria, master glassblowers produce all products by hand. In recent years, Riedel has invested in the development of proprietary machinery at its glassworks in Weiden and Amberg, which facilitates production of its ultrathin crystal glass collections like the Riedel Veritas and Performance Series.

What was the first glass ever created by Riedel?

The first varietal specific wine glass created by Riedel was the Riedel Burgundy Grand Cru Glass, introduced by my grandfather Claus Riedel.

In what way does the shape of a glass affect the perception of its contents?

The shape of a glass effects how the nose and palate first experience a wine. The shape of the bowl affects how the aromas are released within the glass, allowing the aromas of a specific varietal to open up and showcase their true characteristics. The shape of the rim determines where wine is delivered on the palate, affecting the palate's response to acidity, tannins and fruit.

How many different glasses does Riedel currently offer?

Across all of the collections Riedel has produced over the years, Riedel has introduced hundreds of different styles of glasses, many of which are still on the market today.

What is the best way to properly clean wine glasses and decanters?

The best way to wash wine glasses and decanters is by hand, using warm water and a sponge. Using a strong smelling dish soap can leave soap residue on the glass, then affecting how aromas of a wine are perceived within the glass. We recommend using a polishing cloth to dry the wine glass after cleaning, as water marks can remain on the glasses if left to air dry.

Which is your favorite series of Riedel glassware and why?

As the first full glassware collection I designed, the Riedel O Series is often at the top of my list in relation to casual settings. I designed the series while living in New York and I think it embodies my interests and lifestyle at the time of design. New Yorkers are notoriously tight on space so the O Series' stemless design optimizes space while maintaining varietal specificity, adding a casual element to the consumption of fine wine. In a more formal setting, I favor the Riedel Performance Series. The series is optically blown, meaning the crystal has nearly imperceptible ridges, adding a glimmer to each wine glass. More than aesthetics, however, these waves are specially crafted for the movement of wine, thereby aerating it faster within the glass.

We noticed that your website honors a sommelier of the month. How are these individuals selected?

As a part of our sommelier of the month program, we highlight some of our most important partners in the industry who value how varietal specific wine glasses and decanters enhance the dining and wine drinking experience. We greatly value the support that these industry professionals with such expertise show to us. We look at them as evangelists for our brand, sharing the importance of varietal specificity in everyday use in the enjoyment of wine.

Where is the best place for people to learn more about Riedel and its offerings?

Riedel's webstore offers a wealth of information on Riedel Crystal and varietal specific glassware, but I recommend a Riedel comparative glassware tasting experience, as the physical reaction to smelling and tasting what a Riedel glass can do for wine is quite profound.

<https://www.riedel.com/en-us>



By Savannah Reeves

Savannah Reeves, a Hospitality Management student at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, represents the Epicurean Society, a collection of food and restaurant enthusiasts. As the journalist on their leadership team, Savannah desires to share the club's experiences with the public. Growing up in central California, she discovered her passion for hospitality and decided to pursue that passion in Las Vegas.



Photo credit: Cundice Imam and Madison Alexander

Epicurean Society finally began to wind down as members prepared diligently for their finals, eager for winter break at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. The semester of Fall 2019 had provided our team with many challenges to overcome and offered incredible success to be earned. As the greater majority of the team had graduated the semester prior, we started Fall 2019 with a mighty team of three, each taking on multiple roles and tasks. What kept our drive was the passion for the industry and the desire to bring all the benefits of Epicurean Society to others. To learn, grow and enjoy together.

We conducted our first meeting two weeks into the semester, hoping for at least four or five people to show up. We walked into a room with almost forty students, primarily freshman, all eager to join and enjoy the food we had provided that day. The advertisement and hard work our team did over the summer had really paid off. While it is common that students may come and go as the semester carries on, we had a strong core group of a little over twenty or so. Together, our team volunteered for various events that contributed to our school. We supported other clubs, provided for the arts department on campus and even helped with a Chaîne des Rôtisseurs event. And so much more.

While there is still much to be learned and improved on, our small club of three turned into a thriving group of students. Through the common interest of food, we've become a bonded family with a passion to serve. Sharing a simple meal together with a group of like-minded individuals is more impactful than one may realize. And to see the growth in a club of people is truly an incredible experience. Students that have never stepped foot in a professional kitchen became leaders in the back-of-house. Freshmen that have never worked a front-of-house operation in their lives became Michelin Star-level servers. Others showed us a level of skills and creativity I never could have anticipated, proving that we shouldn't underestimate anyone. To see that confidence, development and growth within

one semester in a young person entering this wild industry for the first time is indescribably rewarding.

Seeing this steady group of individuals, our original leadership team of three decided it was time to expand the team. We had a high interest in members to join, so it was time to begin the application process. We were ready for the club to become more inclusive to everyone by delegating tasks. In doing so, we hoped we could create the foundation to thrive, each leader focusing on one task rather than doing multiple. Interestingly enough, we had just the right number of new members interview to fill each role, with each individual being exactly the kind of person we wanted to fill it. The decision was unanimous, and our original leadership team of three truly felt like everything was falling into place. The few who did not fill the offered positions still proved to have strong skills within other areas of Epicurean. These individuals allowed us to expand some leadership specifically to focus on areas either in BoH or FoH service. Soon, our small leadership team of three became a team of seven. We had our first official new leadership team meeting before the end of the semester, and it is very exciting to see what these individuals will be bringing to

the table. Their new ideas and talents will truly help Epicurean Society thrive and grow in the upcoming years.

To tease what is to come, we do have our big fundraising dinner at the end of the Spring Semester. Our team came up with some incredible ideas and have concluded on what we'd like to accomplish; it will be ambitious, but a wonderful and rewarding new concept. We also have a multitude of new events, outings, learning opportunities and even restaurant tours in the works for the upcoming future. We're excited to be able to provide students with experience and more learning opportunities as we continue to expand. Students who may not have been able to otherwise, will have the opportunity to learn and experience offerings from all over the Las Vegas area.

With all that being said, this will be my last article for Epicurean Society. Our club has an incredibly talented new journalist, and I can't wait to read about our activities from his perspective. I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to read my writings as I try to share our experiences with the industry. It was a pleasure to share my passion with like-minded individuals who understand the importance of hospitality as much as we do.



A photograph of two men in a distillery. The man on the left is wearing a baseball cap and a dark shirt, holding a glass of whiskey. The man on the right is older, with a white beard, wearing a dark polo shirt. They are standing in front of a large wooden barrel. In the background, there are many more barrels stacked on racks. A green tractor is visible through a doorway in the background.

FREY RANCH DISTILLERY

From Ground to Glass, Made in Nevada

Frey Ranch Straight
Bourbon Whiskey

By Bob Barnes

Photo Credit: Frey Distillery

Longtime Nevadans take a lot of pride in their state and in the Silver State's history, especially those who can trace their family back to the days of the pioneers. Such is the case of the Frey (pronounced fray) family, who trace their Nevada roots to Joseph Frey Sr., who acquired one of the original land claims filed in Nevada in 1854, 10 years before it became a state during the Civil War.

Over the years the family made its mark as farmers on their 560-acre farm located in Fallon (just outside Reno), which they still do today, but with an added twist. In 2001 Colby Frey and his father, Charles Frey Jr., planted a three-acre vineyard to produce a high value crop that consumed less water: wine. After the winemaking venture proved a success, and after experimenting with distilling the grains they grew on their farm, in 2010 Colby, his wife Ashley and Master Distiller Russell Wedlake applied for and received a federal commercial license, and Frey Ranch Estate Distillery

was born. Russell, like Colby, comes from an agricultural background and is one of only a handful of Certified Crop Consultants in the state of Nevada. He met Colby and Ashley through that experience and his 20+ years of experience and knowledge of seed, grains and agriculture made him the perfect collaborator to start a distillery that focused on controlling every aspect of the distilling process, which they refer to as "From Ground to Glass™."

The husband and wife team and Master Distiller Russell Wedlake designed the operation and were involved in every aspect of construction of the 4,700-square-foot building just steps from the Frey home and after careful planning to create a state-of-the-art distillery, it began operation in 2014. The facilities include a one-of-a-kind, custom-made Vendome still that is capable of producing 10,000 cases of spirits a month, four 5,000-gallon fermenters, one 5,000-gallon mash cooker, one 5,000-gallon beer well, one 500-gallon pot still, a 23-foot vodka column, 24-foot continuous still, a malt house, still room, tank room, tasting room and barrel house.

After launching a complex, four-grain vodka in 2014, production on Frey Ranch Gin began soon after, and it won a quite prestigious Double Gold Medal in the 2016 San Francisco World Spirits competition. At the same time the team began aging a series of different premium distilled whiskeys, including bourbon and 100 percent rye whiskey. Now after a minimum of four years of aging in 53-gallon oak barrels, their efforts are coming to fruition, as this month the first of those aged spirits is hitting the Las Vegas market: Frey Ranch Straight Bourbon Whiskey.

In anticipation of this momentous release, we chatted with Ashley, Colby, Russell and VP of Marketing Mike Price, to find out what sets their whiskey apart from others and how Frey Ranch Distillery is raising the bar for premium whiskey.

Is this bourbon start to finish yours?

Colby: Yes, and that's the whole idea. All of the grains in the whiskey—the wheat, rye, barley and corn that it's distilled from—are all grown here on the farm. Not only do we produce it, but we malt the barley and ferment all the grains.

Ashley: It's a level deeper than just growing the grains: not only selecting the grains for the best quality, but how we grow them.

Russell: There are things you can do to improve the quality of the grain that ends up in less yield of the grain but better quality. So that's something we do all the way through the whole process: We sacrifice quantity for quality. One of the benefits we have here by having irrigation systems, as opposed to the Midwest where most of the commodity grains are grown, is we can put the water on exactly when the plant needs it most. On the bottle it says distilled from four slow grown grains, which means we don't rush the growing process, and want the grains to grow slower to produce better quality.

Colby: We can control our soil, water applications, fertilizer and nutrient management, the way we harvest it and the way we store the grain; all are done in the right way, the best way, not the easy way.

What does your trademark “From Ground to Glass” represent?

Colby: We have total control of our product. When someone comes to our tasting room and takes a bottle home, none of the ingredients have left our possession until you take it home.

Ashley: We always think the better the input—the quality of the grain—the better the output: a pure, cleaner bourbon.

Mike: Very, very few distillers are doing this and often those calling themselves farm distilleries are only growing one grain onsite, whereas we grow 100% of the grains in the bourbon and even malt our own barley. Every aspect of what we do is to get the best quality, not the easy way or to save money, but to focus on quality.

How much was produced for this first run?

Russell: The first year, five years ago, we produced about 180 barrels (4,000 cases), which are now being released. Now we're producing 55 barrels a week, so in each month we're now equaling about what we did the entire first year.

Colby: Each year we have increased and last year we produced about 65,000 cases, but keep in mind it won't be available until four years from now.

How was the bottle label/package determined?

Ashley: We wanted a bottle and label that are a modern take on farming and distilling. We have a new approach, doing everything onsite. There are really fun hidden messages on the bottle and the label has Farmers + Distillers and our motto: “Be good to the land and the land will be good to you.”

What is the meaning of your motto?

Colby: As farmers we have to take care of

our land, our ground, our farm and our environment, so we can do business next year and have something for our future. Since 1854 my family has been farming in Nevada and we are really fortunate that they've taken care of our land, so we have a really good farm now, and we want to do same for our kids.

I'm assuming since it's a bourbon it's at least 51% corn and aged in a new oak barrel. What other ingredients are in it?

Colby: The breakdown is 66% non-GMO corn, 11.4% winter rye, 10% winter wheat and 12% two-row malted barley, which is malted here onsite. Mash bills are normally a secret, but there is no way for anyone to copy what we are doing because of how many factors there are in growing the grains. We dare someone to try to make what we are doing. What sets us apart, is we grow for distilling purposes. On the open market, you can't count on it being the best quality, and the commodity grain market is not always best. You can't make good wine out of bad grapes, and it's the same for whiskey.

What proof is it?

Russell: It's 90 Proof Straight. Straight is a legal definition in bourbon and means it's aged a minimum of two years, but ours is actually aged closer to five years.

How about the barrels being used?

Colby: We use all new oak barrels. The staves (body) have a heavy four-char and the heads (top and bottom ends) a three-char, which give it a little different flavor profile, so we capture the flavors of both char types.

How long was it aged in the barrel?

Colby: It's a blend of four and five-year. We blended a lot of barrels to get our current whiskey and did a lot of tasting. It was a tough job. 😊

What is the release date?

Mike: It was released in Reno in November and in Las Vegas it will be released on February 4 through Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits. It might be on store shelves less than a week after that. For Northern California we are looking at mid-2020. As stocks grow and the whiskeys mature and we have enough, we will launch in other states. We anticipate being nationwide in a couple years.

What is being done to familiarize potential buyers about the new bourbon?

Colby: Being in this issue of The Las Vegas Food & Beverage Professional!

Mike: We've got a robust marketing plan, including public relation activities, trade events and consumer events. We'll be doing tastings all over the Las Vegas market and will be involved in just about every major whiskey event in the state, including the Nth Ultimate Whiskey Experience at the Wynn.

What is in the future for your bourbon and whiskey line?

Colby: Rye is in the works, and lots of other specialty stuff is coming. Whiskeys aging now include an oated bourbon, 100% corn, 100% wheat, single malts, quad-malted bourbon and a scotch-style with smoked, peated malt. But those are in really small quantities.

Ashley: The bourbon is our flagship product and 80% of production is currently bourbon and rye is 15%. We will have some innovative products in the future, in small quantities, about six months from now.

Frey Ranch is distributed in Nevada by Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits. To read more about Frey Ranch, its products and where to purchase them, visit www.freyranch.com.



Chef Spotlight

William DeMarco

By Pat Evans

Pat Evans is a writer based in Las Vegas and Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is a regular contributor to Grand Rapids Magazine, October and The Manual often writing about food, beer and spirits. He has written one book, Grand Rapids Beer, and has more on the way.

Twitter: @patevans
Instagram: @patrickmevans



As William DeMarco was growing up, it was his sister who was supposed to be a chef. But as life happens, it was DeMarco who ended up going to culinary school and going on to a career in the kitchen.

Now as the corporate executive chef of Morton Group, DeMarco leads the culinary programs at a variety of Las Vegas establishments, including La Cave Wine and Food Hideaway, La Comida, CRUSH, MB Steak and Greek Sneek.

When did you know you were destined to be a chef?

I dabbled in the family pizzeria when I was younger, and in 11th grade, I was going to college fairs and decided I should just keep cooking. I'd watch this Emeril guy, when 'Bam!' was getting big, and seemed to show if you're good at it you can make money. That was my mentality, not knowing your weekends, holidays are gone.

So once it was decided on as a career, where'd you go?

I was born and raised on Long Island, and didn't want to go to the Culinary Institute of America. I wanted to get out of New York, so I went down to the Florida Culinary Institute in West Palm Beach, which was six months old at the time. I reached out to them, but I was not ready once high school was over and wanted to make some money, but they held onto the spot for me.

How'd you get to Las Vegas?

I was coming out on vacation, and helped an old boss, Sam DeMarco (no relation), and would fly back and forth and help out at his restaurants. That got my feet in the door, meeting people, and I decided it'd be good to live here for good. So I was working at The River Café in Brooklyn, and it was funny, I told the chef there I'd never leave, but Vegas kept sticking in my head; I don't want to wake up and regret it because this town seems like it was the culinary mecca and only growing. That was about 15 years ago, as I was seeing it booming for culinary and seeing all these restaurants popping up. I went back to New York to work with Charlie Palmer and that got me back out here with Aureole, before opening up the buffet at Wynn. Once I came out, Grant MacPherson offered me a job at Bellagio, right before the Wynn opened.

What are the culinary differences between NYC and Vegas?

Moving out here, there were so many others things, really. The beautiful weather is one, the cost of living, the hotels with these big massive restaurants being built and the availability of ingredients. The craziness of money is no object in this town; the expenses



Photo credit: Al Powers

are a lot more unlimited because you have the backing of the hotel and the ability to get ingredients. Like white truffles in New York are rare, now (here) it's no big deal, dropping thousands of dollars on them. But mainly just a difference in living and tastes and getting away from the weather and (higher) cost of living. But these hotels are just beautiful and massive and constantly busy. That was all intriguing.

How do you balance the styles of Morton restaurants?

Through the hotel I had the opportunity to meet Michael Morton, who said, 'You're my guy.' We opened up La Cave nine years ago, and little by little we're growing it. We opened up La Comida, then CRUSH, then MB Steak and now Greek Sneek. It does get tricky balancing from place to place, but we have great chefs that help me out and I never have to worry about a place. These guys are awesome and help me. La Cave is where I spend my mornings. At dinner, I'm bouncing between MB, Greek and Crush.

The newest one, Greek Sneek, what was the idea with that?

Surprisingly in this town, there are not many Greek spots on the Strip. Some very high-end ones with Milos and Costa di Mare at Wynn, but in the MGM, Greek just popped off between me and Micheal [Morton]. It's great food, easily approachable, seems like everyone loves and relates to and it's not too expensive. It was the perfect concept to me.

What's coming down the pipeline?

Hard Rock is closing after Super Bowl Sunday and becoming Virgin Hotel. It'll reopen in November and MB Steak is staying, with renovations to make it bigger. We're excited about that. But we're also looking at doing some stuff outside of Vegas, looking into Chicago, San Francisco. Michael loves New York. But we're just focusing on what we have right now, reopening MB Steak and looking at opportunities outside of Las Vegas.



By Adam Rains & Terry Clark

Adam is lead bartender at The Golden Tiki and a member of the Health & Wellness Committee for the Las Vegas USBG. He has studied at SDSU, USBG, BarSmarts, International Sommeliers Guild, Certified Cicerone Program and Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits Academy.

Terry is Beverage Director at the Summit Club where he is building an elevated bar program. He is certified by the Court of Master Sommeliers, an active USBG member and in 2018 won the USBG award for Most Creative Bartender.



DEE HERNANDEZ

2019 was a great year for Dee Hernandez. She won cocktail competitions, continued her spirits education and won the Armando & Sheila Rosario Tales of the Cocktail Scholarship award from the USBG. Keep an eye out for her as 2020 will be even better.

Where do you currently work and what do you love about it?

I currently work at Herbs & Rye and Tacos and Beer. I love them both! They both bring out different personalities in me.

How did you get your start behind the bar?

I moved my way up from hosting at IHOP to serving at Miller's Ale House. Miller's Ale House gave me a shot at bartending when someone called out during St Patrick's Day. It was the most nerve wracking and exhilarating experience I ever had. I fell in love with that feeling and here we are now.

Herbs & Rye has won Best American High Volume Bar twice and Best American Bar Team at The Spirited Awards during Tales of the Cocktail. What do you think are characteristics that make up a great bar team?

COMMUNICATION! I can't say that enough! We all help each other out, we communicate and we say what we need and get it done. Plain and simple.

What is the biggest goal you hope to accomplish by the end 2020?

So many. One of my biggest goals in 2020 will have to be focusing on self-growth. I would like to be more educated about my craft. Knowledge is power.



Photo credit: Dee Hernandez

What is your favorite cocktail trend at the moment?

Well, I hate admitting it, but I like the bubble cocktails we see on Instagram all the time. I think it is an intriguing way to capture an audience, which gives you an opportunity to educate the crowd.

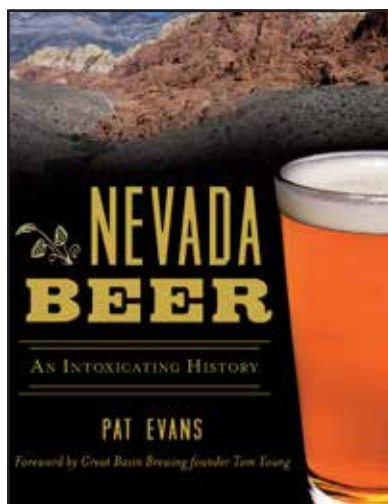
How has the USBG impacted your life since joining?

I cannot say enough! It has changed every aspect of my life. I knew I loved being a bartender and I chose this as my career,

which means I need to educate myself to be better. The USBG has helped me accomplish that. I always mention this to every new bartender I talk to. Join the USBG! It's worth every penny!

What is something important to you that you want the world to know?

I want the world to know that you matter. The world might say no today, but every day is a new start. You can do anything your heart desires, but it takes hard work and dedication. It is not easy. But you can do it.



Beer has been brewed in Nevada since before it was a state and now the beverage's history in the Silver State has been consolidated into one book, *Nevada Beer* by The Las Vegas Food & Beverage Professional's own Pat Evans. It's the second book released by Evans, who released a book about the history of beer in his hometown of Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 2015. *Nevada Beer* is available on Amazon and at local retailers.

The RESTAURANT EXPERT

What Successful Restaurant Owners Have

By David Scott Peters

David Scott Peters is a restaurant coach and speaker who teaches restaurant operators how to cut costs and increase profits with his trademark Restaurant Prosperity Formula. Known as the expert in the restaurant industry, he uses a no-BS style to teach and motivate restaurant owners to take control of their businesses and finally realize their full potential. Thousands of restaurants have used his formula to transform their businesses. To learn more about David Scott Peters and his formula, visit www.davidscottpeters.com.



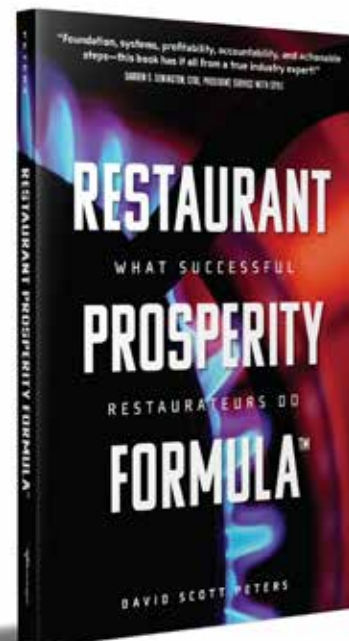
If you really want to be in the restaurant business or you're trying to remember why you got into it in the first place, I feel your pain. It's a tough business: tough to run and tough to make money. In my experience in working with thousands of restaurant owners over the last 16 years, I have seen a few common denominators in the most successful restaurant owners. There are quite a few things most of these successful restaurant owners do, systems they have or traits they all have in common, but for the purposes of this article, I'm going to share three things you must have in place to be a successful restaurant owner. Whether you've been in business one year or 30, I have to take you back to basics. These three things that you must have in place answer the question, "Is this the business for me?"

Number one: passion. Oh my gosh, you better have a passion for this business. Creating hospitality, creating memories. If you want to be in the food business, your competition is as basic as a gas station. I'm assuming you'd like to rise above the quality of product offered at a gas station? As a restaurant owner, you want to create memories. You have to love hospitality. That's taking care of guests, taking care of your employees, really just putting out the best experience possible. You have an opportunity to literally touch people's lives on a day-to-day basis. If you don't have a passion for hospitality, you don't belong in this business.

Number two: you must know your numbers. This is a wide spectrum. Let me just give you a brush stroke of what I mean on knowing your numbers. You have to have budgets. Create your targets so you know what success looks like in your business. You have to know your prime cost, the one number you must know to have any chance of making money. Last but not least, you need timely and accurate profit and loss statements. That way, when you take your budget, and your actual numbers, and you know they're accurate, you can measure success, identify challenges and proactively manage your business. With this kind of information you can change and shape your future.

Number three: you have to have a clear vision of your concept. I cannot tell you how many people are ready to open a restaurant and they just don't know. They don't know what kind of restaurant they want to be, they don't have an idea of what their menu is supposed to look like. How the hell do you build a restaurant if you don't know your menu? It has to do with everything in your business: the decor you've chosen, the uniforms, the flatware, the price point, the quality of product and style of service. Everything comes down to your menu. If you don't have a clear idea of your concept, how do you open a restaurant? Unfortunately, some people have opened a restaurant without a clear concept, and then have to reinvent themselves. If you want to be a restaurant owner, you must

have these three things: a desire—a passion—for hospitality, you have to know your numbers and you have to have a clear vision. If you're missing any of these, all of them—even passion—can be learned and figured out. But with these three boxes checked, your chances of running a successful restaurant greatly improve.



Chef Talk

The Versatile Empanada

By Chef Allen Asch

Feel free to contact Chef Allen with ideas for comments or future articles at allenasch1@gmail.com.

Chef Allen Asch M. Ed., CCE is a retired culinary arts instructor who has earned degrees from Culinary Institute of America, Johnson and Wales University and Northern Arizona University and taught at UNLV. He earned his Certified Culinary Educator Endorsement from the American Culinary Federation in 2003.



I recently went out for lunch and ended up in a shop that sold Cornish pasties. The first time I saw the sign I thought maybe there was a typo and it should be Cornish pastries, but I was very mistaken and this led me to do some research about this delicious dish.

The first thing I researched is what is the basis for a Cornish pasty. I learned that the pasty is very similar to an empanada. Almost every culture has a version of an empanada, which is basically a dough made without yeast and filled with either a sweet or savory filling. These pasties are unique to different parts of the world, mostly due to ingredients that are indigenous to that land. The origin of this type of food is typically from the lunch that laborers brought to work so they can eat it with one hand or while still working with a clean hand while taking a break. This is much like the sandwich here in America or a taco in Mexico.

One of the most famous versions is the Australian meat pie, which has been called the national dish of Australia. This dish has strict standards based on the country's Food Standard Code (more next month on that), which requires each pie contains at least 25% of meat. Jamaica is another country that is well known for their beef pasties, but this version includes a lot of Jamaican spices which are very favorable. The pie came to Jamaica when the British colonized the area. Colombian empanadas are atypical since they start with a corn meal, similar to the Mexican tamale. African versions are also spicy due to the indigenous growth of herbs and spices due to its longitudinal site.

The Moroccan version uses chicken and a filo dough that is usually flavored with almonds. The Russian version, again due to its indigenous foods, is usually made with salmon or sturgeon and contains dill, hard cooked eggs and rice or buckwheat to stretch it out. The dough is usually high in fat similar to a brioche or puff pastry crust. Surprisingly, quiche is considered in the family even though it does not have a top crust. Pizza also falls into this category. While Bolivia fills their version with meat and vegetables, it is unique by adding liquid, such as stock.

Empanadas are often eaten around Christmas or New Year's, especially in Canada, being abundant during autumn. This is similar to the tradition of eating dumplings in Asian culture. Chilean empanadas always include raisins and black olives, while El Salvador uses plantains and is made with some orange flavor. Another well-known empanada variety is from the British, which is steak and kidney pie. This dish always includes beef kidney, as well as potatoes and carrots.

One of the many varieties that is not well known is the Torta Pasqualina, originally from



Liguria in Italy, near France on the top of the boot in the northwest part of Italy. This area is known for growing roses and other flowers and is near Genoa and, of course, the Ligurian Sea, on the east coast of the country. This food item is now enjoyed throughout Italy, most often during the Easter season. The fillings usually include indigenous ingredients such as spring greens like artichoke leaves, Swiss chard or spinach and then mixed with ricotta cheese and currently being put inside a puff pastry crust. Most importantly, whole eggs are baked inside. Historically, it was a cake with religious significance and featured 33 layers of thin pastry, one for each year Jesus was alive.

We think of the word empanada and certainly my first thoughts are to South America. The dough is a simple mixture of fat, salt and flour but then the variations come into play. You can use shortening, butter, lard, margarine or beef tallow and of course the different fat will create a different flavor profile for the dough. The type of fat will dictate whether or not there is saturated and unsaturated fats, which may certainly be a factor when shopping for them, but all of the fats contain the same amount of fat.

I've always enjoyed empanadas from a range of countries both here in Las Vegas, as well as when I travel, but today I was trying the Cornish pasty available here in town. I learned so much about, well, everything related to Cornish pasties. The first thing is to be a true Cornish pasty it needs to be produced in the county of Cornwall, which is in England. There are also rules about the fillings including the fact that

there must be at least 12½% beef and 25% of certain vegetables. Additionally, all Cornish pasties must include swede, known here as a turnip. Other variables are that the ingredients must be raw when being placed inside the pasty, must be slowly cooked within the dough, and the way the pasty is crimped must be formed in the shape of the letter D. This all falls under the PGI status which was initiated and controlled since 1993 by the European Union. Basically, it gives legal protection for a regional food product to make sure it's not being imitated elsewhere. This concept will be discussed more in a future article.

Here are some interesting facts about traditional Cornish pasties. They have different names depending on whether a left-handed person or right-handed person crimps the dough. If the person sealing it is a right hander it is called a hen pasty and if it is crimped by a left-hander it is called a cock pasty. In Cornwall at least 120 million pasties are made each year and generate around \$330 million in sales.

Cornish Pasty Week is celebrated from February 23 to February 29 in Cornwall, England, which is in the southwest region of the United Kingdom. One of the events during this celebration is a world's fastest crimper contest. The person who crimps the most pasties in three minutes is given the title. (This can be anywhere from 10 to 20 pasties crimps during that time.) The competition has different categories including for the professional, as well as the amateur.

Farmtable Kitchen + Spirits

Warms Your Palate as Well as Your Heart

By Elaine and Scott Harris

Elaine and Scott Harris are full time journalists for over a decade covering resorts, spas, fine dining, wine, spirits and luxury travel. The husband and wife writing duo are sommeliers through the Court of Master Sommeliers and their work has appeared in the LA Times, Travel and Leisure, Google Travel, Modern Luxury, French Quarter Magazine in France and Monaco and Lausanne Tourism City Guide. Visit their website at Cuisineist.com to read articles and view over 400 videos featuring celebrity chefs, winemakers, sommeliers and Food Network stars.



Photo credit: Elaine and Scott Harris

Authentic Southern cuisine is not easy to find, so when you do find a venue, it can be very special indeed, especially when genuine hospitality is combined with great tasting food and refreshing beverages. New to the Las Vegas culinary scene, Farmtable Kitchen + Spirits (which opened in early December of 2019), exemplifies these qualities. Being located at Town Square Las Vegas, we wanted to see what the buzz was all about.

This scratch kitchen has become well known for exceptional cuisine featuring fresh, locally sourced ingredients, as well as good old-fashioned Southern cooking, coupled with convivial hospitality. This is a true family operation with Chef Melissa Walton at the helm, and at the back of the house Owner Tony Depasquale, a man of deep faith and years of business experience, who is keeping his finger on the pulse of the entire operation, with his wife Lynn handling marketing duties. "This is a true family operation, where everyone is hands on deck and is made to feel a valued part of our team," said Depasquale. "We put our hearts and sincere efforts into creating a true culinary experience which we hope, reflects our deep faith." Tommy Freeman General Manager added, "We are not a chain—we are family, we coach our team members, we are unique and special. We want our guests and team members to feel like family because they are."

Walton has more than 40 years' experience as a commercial cook and chef, and is a graduate from the Las Vegas Culinary Academy. Over the years she has honed her skills, working many of the city's kitchens and has become a specialist of Southern Cuisine. She has since earned many awards, one of which is for the best BBQ in Las Vegas.

Looking over the menu, we found it to be quite extensive, featuring creative dishes for all ages to enjoy during breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner. Side dishes including salads, soups, fresh Lavazza coffee, natural teas and assorted fresh baked goods offer a plethora of additions to accent whatever entrée you choose.

The house specialties include Southern delights such as Farmhand Chicken and Waffles, and Sweet Tea Braised Short Ribs with orange-blossom-honey biscuits smothered in country gravy, accompanied by eggs served to your liking and a side of crisp bacon. Don't forget to indulge in flawlessly fried green tomatoes with smoked pepper aioli along with their Braised Brisket or Louisiana Grilled Shrimp Skewers.

The dish that was worthy of every swipe of napkins is the Farmtable Nashville Hot Chicken that is plump, moist and redolent with that peppery hot sauce goodness. Their Farm table Nashville Hot Chicken can be ordered grilled or fried, either choice is brilliant. Biting into our fried chicken breast, hot, spicy flavors exploded in our mouths followed by soothing Vermont cheddar and crispy bacon all between a fresh toasted brioche bun. This "Nashville hot" certainly lived up to its name.

For a much cooler option, dive into a medium rare Farmhand Burger. The juicy lean Angus chuck is combined with perfectly braised short rib and pulled pork for a deftly prepared patty; the hot jalapeno jam and smoked gouda surrounded by a brioche bun will give you something to crow about.

Pecan-crusted salmon with lemon béchamel is a noteworthy dish that combines the light crunch of pecans with the creamy, zingy richness of the rich béchamel.

For a lovely beginning of your day, you can't go wrong with their Farm Fresh Chef's Omelet with fresh eggs, fontina, sautéed greens, and toasted sunflower seeds, avocado, lemon topped with béchamel dressing. You can even choose to add grilled chicken, smoked salmon, grilled salmon, ham, or even bacon.

A house specialty we just had to try is their brilliantly prepared Farmtable Fried Chicken. This ½ of a chicken is brined for at least 24 hours, served with spicy dill pickles, and their rich homemade country gravy evokes culinary memories of the South. You can't leave any experience at Farmtable Kitchen + Spirits without a proper 'see y'all soon' and not mean it sincerely.

With over 138 whiskeys and bourbons to choose from—what a nice way to leave on a proper note. Of course, their hand-crafted cocktail program is certainly worth an exploration, without a doubt. A hospitable way to punctuate the experience is the Banana Bread Pudding topped with French vanilla ice cream and salted caramel drizzle.

For a special treat for your special someone this Valentine's Day, stop in and enjoy a one-of-a-kind menu featuring hanger steak and juicy lobster with grilled shrimp in a red wine reduction, brussels sprouts, a secret dessert and a bottle of champagne for the table. For \$60 per person, this menu is an excellent choice to celebrate.

farmtablekitchen.com

Human Resources Insights

By Linda Westcott-Bernstein

Linda Westcott-Bernstein has provided sound human resources advice and guidance to Fortune 500 companies and others for over 25 years. Linda has recently re-published her self-help book entitled It All Comes Down to WE! This book offers guidelines for building a solid and enduring personal work ethic. You can find her book on Amazon or Google Books.

Phone: 702-326-4040
Email: Vegaslinda89129@yahoo.com



Just as important as maintaining your own personal health by eating right, exercising and getting enough rest is the value of keeping your workforce happy and healthy! As we start this new decade, we should make a couple resolutions as to what we want to achieve to change our future, and among those plans should be the importance of monitoring and maintaining our most valuable workplace asset—our workforce.

It can cost us plenty if we don't maintain a safe workplace, offer benefits which allow employees to rest/de-stress and monitor poor people management behaviors within our operations. Shortfalls in those areas can destroy morale and motivation, especially when our managers engage in behaviors, actions and/or practices that are destructive to self-esteem and team work. Here are a couple of my examples of ways to address these types of issues.

Maintaining a Safe Workplace

We can best keep our employees safe while working by supporting a culture of safety. A culture of safety includes having support from all of the management team for safety, developing and communicating safety expectations, providing safety training and rewarding good safety practices.

Benefits that Keep us Healthy

Tantamount today is a comprehensive benefits and wellness package that supports a healthy workforce in numerous, often unseen, ways. These benefits might include the following.

Health insurances that provides free preventative care and other ongoing care at a reasonable cost.

EAP (employee assistance program) that is a resource when problems arise for employees.

PTO (paid time off) so that they can rest, relax, recuperate and recreate.

Work breaks during the day so that employees can rest and rejuvenate.

Service recognition so that employees will feel valued and part of your success.

401K or similar so that employees are able to save for their future from each check without hassle.

Wellness resources like newsletters, access to flu shots, clinics and health fairs, to address concerns.

Keeping Your Workforce Healthy

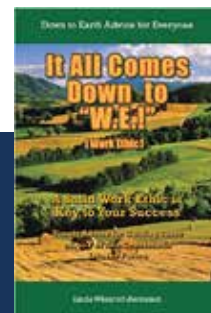


Management that Properly Engages your Workforce

Just as important as any benefits program is to support and maintain a workplace culture that is respectful and team driven. Individuals seek engagement and participation at work to feel valued and fulfilled, not just a paycheck. Your employees need to be part of the communication process and to receive ongoing training to improve and learn, and they need your support in order to address business and guest concerns in a more effective manner. Management that understands and supports these concepts and maintains a respectful and engaged workforce will experience the finest service levels, enjoy positive morale and engagement and achieve overall business success in the long run.

A healthy workforce will provide ongoing and consistent return on investment through a variety of outcomes that are not always attributed to this effort. When you notice more smiles on your employees' faces, an atmosphere of teamwork and working better together, more motivation and drive and regular use of courtesies such as please and thank you's, you will know that you're on your way to success in one of the most valued and essential areas of our lives—good health! Best wishes in your efforts!

HR Question of the month: Please send your HR questions and concerns, or share your thoughts on your human resources challenges via email to the following address. Send input to vegaslinda89129@yahoo.com. Your comments, questions or concerns will help determine the direction for my next month's column and earn you a copy of my book. Include your mailing address when sending your responses.



May I Recommend...

Ferraro's Italian Restaurant

By Blake Myers

Blake Myers visited Las Vegas many times annually for over 35 years, and as his familiarity with so many restaurants grew, more and more people "back home" began asking him where to eat on their "upcoming visit." In 1998 he began formally reviewing and recommending his best picks in a newsletter he published, and after moving here in 2008 soon established his website, Bestofvegasdining.com, through which he shares his selections with a worldwide audience.



Photo credit: Blake Myers



The yearning for a better life has attracted tens of millions of immigrants to our shores from all over the world. And so, in 1966, that dream resulted in the arrival from Calabria, Italy of twelve-year-old Gino Ferraro, his six siblings and their parents at New York City's Ellis Island Immigration Inspection Station, and then on to their ultimate destination of Syracuse, New York. His grandmother and aunt had come to Syracuse in the early 1950s, and they and his mother brought with them their "old-world" recipes and cooking skills.

After moving to Las Vegas in 1976, Gino operated several businesses, including a wholesale company and Caffè Ferraro, which was housed in the Aladdin Hotel's Desert Passage Shops (now Planet Hollywood's Miracle Mile Shops).

But his greatest hospitality ambitions centered around his namesake Ferraro's Restaurant, which he and his wife opened on West Sahara Ave. in 1985, and then relocated to West Flamingo Rd. in 1992. When the recession hit Las Vegas in 2007, many locals dramatically cut back on their restaurant dining, and Gino wisely decided that he could attract much greater volume by moving closer to our large concentration of tourists.

So in December, 2009 he opened the restaurant's present location at the corner of Paradise Rd. and Harmon Ave., just minutes from the Strip, and business has been flourishing ever since. The restaurant's stylish interior attracts an eclectic mix of diners, from casually dressed tourists and locals to dressier clientele sporting the latest designer fashions.

As you're being shown to your table, you'll notice that many patrons are enjoying wine with

their meals, and there's a definite reason. The restaurant's cellar contains some 23,000 bottles and 1900 different labels—a truly staggering total. Sommelier Paolo Uccelliatori is extremely personable, and after ten years of experience at Ferraro's, his detailed knowledge of their selections is truly encyclopedic.

The immense wine list begins with Discontinued Vintages, Wines by the Glass and Sparkling. There are sections covering U.S. Whites (including Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc), German Whites, French Reds and U.S. Reds (including California Blends, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cab Franc, Merlot, Petite Sirah, Petite Verdot and Mourvedre, Pinot Noir and Syrah and Zinfandel.)

The voluminous Italian offerings cover all the country's wine-growing regions and almost seem to include virtually each and every individual vineyard. Some of the outstanding whites represented are Brachetto, Carricante, Chardonnay, Cortese, Gewurtztraminer, Pecorino, Pino Grigio, Ribolla, Sauvignon Blanc, Trebbiano and Verdicchio.

Just a few of the absolutely huge selection of reds include Barbera, Pinot Noir, Nebbiolo, Barola, Barbaresco, Brunello, Chianti, Montepulciano, Valpolicella, Supertuscans, Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Sagrantino and Rare and Unique Varietals. The corkage fee is \$50 on all 750 ml bottles.

If you prefer to include food with your wine, the menu is filled with all sorts of delicious choices under the direction of Executive Chef Francesco DiCaudo, who came to Ferraro's five years ago from the Catania, Sicily area.

He has prepared both an extensive regular menu

and a separate "Specials" menu (much of which actually changes daily, though it also contains a number of frequently-requested customer favorites).

On the night of our visit, mouth-watering appetizers included Vitella Tonnato—slowly roasted veal with a light tuna, olive oil and capers mousse, peppery croutons and micro lettuce salad; Mozzarella in Carrozza—a Neapolitan fried Bufala Mozzarella sandwich with tomato marmalade and anchovy dressing; and Risotto Aragosta with lobster, seasonal black truffle and mascarpone cheese. And for salad lovers, Ferraro's version of a Caesar is a unique and delicious presentation.

If you crave meat for your entrée, prime steaks include a 36-ounce Tomahawk; 20-ounce Ribeye; 14-ounce Veal Chop; and one of the house specialties, Osso Buco, a veal shank braised in red wine reduction served with farro. Among the many delicious pasta dishes is Pappardelle Mimmo, long wide pasta with scallops, lobster, asparagus, butter, sage and truffle.

And fish and fowl lovers won't be disappointed with Grilled Branzino (Mediterranean Seabass); Oven Roasted Mediterranean Dover Sole; or Petto Di Pollo, a seared all-natural chicken breast with dandelion, butternut squash and nduja sauce.

To bring your meal to a sweet close, Ferraro's offers an extensive dessert selection ranging from the classic Tiramisu to Crepes, Panna Cotta, Cheesecake, Gelato or Sorbet, Italian Cookies and many other delectable choices.

You don't have to speak Italian to love the delicious blend of "old country" and modern cuisine that Ferraro's offers. Mangia!

FERRARI-CARANO
Vineyards and Winery

CHARDONNAY SUMMER SHAKEUP!



“LIFT YOUR GLASS TO
SUNSHINE & GOOD TIMES”

Please enjoy our wines responsibly. ferrari-carano.com



Best of the Best

By Shelley Stepanek

Shelley Stepanek is President of DSA, the oldest non-profit tourist association in the state, along with being on the board of ticket brokers. Shelley has previously owned three restaurants.

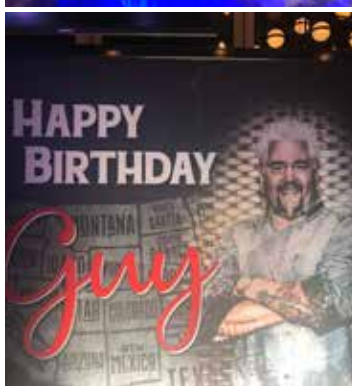
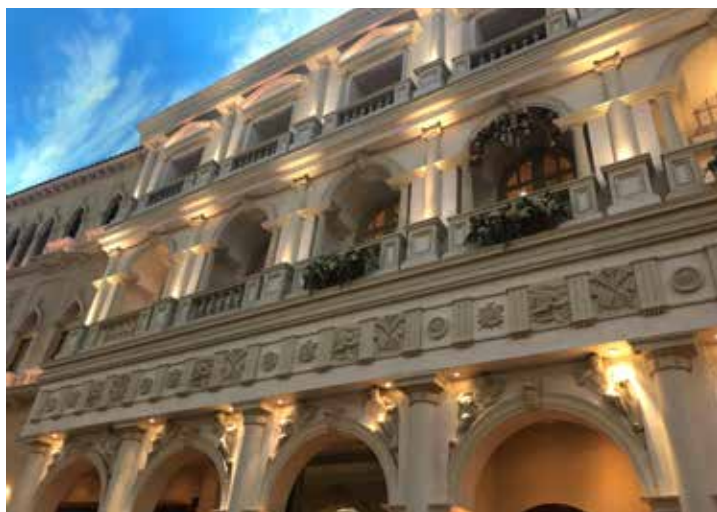


Photo credit: Shelley Stepanek

One of my all-time favorite restaurants in Las Vegas is CANALETTO in The Venetian Resort, located right on the canal in the second-floor shopping mall. This huge restaurant is two stories, with plenty of indoor and outdoor, as we should say, dining in the Italian piazza area. The Venetian Resort is theme oriented, and this lovely dining area is recreated with bridges and waterways to be a replica of St. Mark's Square in Venice. The founders of Il Fornaio restaurants own Canaletto and they feature wonderful house-made pastas, salads and soups, wood-fired rotisserie and grilled meats, game and poultry, along with pizzas and plenty of pasta dishes. I started with a lovely Mojito. First up was the Insalata Di Rape—roasted organic yellow and purple beets, wild arugula, asiago cheese, toasted walnuts, red wine and lemon vinaigrette. For the main course I had Grigliata Di Pesce Con Polenta—mixed grill of salmon, sole, prawn, scallop and calamari topped with lemon olive oil served with grilled polenta and sautéed seasonal vegetables; and Asparagi Alla Griglia—fresh asparagus grilled with extra virgin olive oil. There is such an extended menu to choose from, and I try to eat here at least every couple of months.

The upstairs area can host small and large groups all overlooking St. Mark's. The service is always excellent, and you will find yourself immersed in Italy, as most everyone speaks Italian. Our waiter, Gilberto Soto, was exceptional with his service. The courtyard features strolling Italian musicians, acrobatic acts and all kinds of entertainment which can be enjoyed from your table. Canaletto is the Winner of the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence 2007. Reach out to Kelly Mendez for any group you might have. 702-733-0070 Open 11:30-11 daily.

Can't wait for the opening of the new BUGSY & MEYER STEAKHOUSE in the Flamingo. Taking over the former Center Cut space, which is right across from the wildlife park, this is a very large venue. There is an ongoing \$10 million investment and it should be opening by spring. With a definite "mob" feel in the décor, there will be a private bar and lounge in the back. Featuring a lot of steakhouse classics, you can book a party in one of three private dining rooms. Why am I so excited? Because my good friend Meyer Lansky, grandson of Meyer who actually headed up the mob, is a consultant. He will be adding a touch of old-time glamour,

and contributing some of his grandfather's items. The real thing is hard to find unless you go to The Mob Museum downtown. There will be a "fake" entrance thru a look alike bakery, past a meat cooler dry aging the meat and into a dining room. Feel like you might be having dinner in the *Casino* or *Goodfellas* movies? You'll never know who will show up on any given night. We'll keep you posted on the actual opening date.

Coming up soon on March 1st at the ever-popular HOFBRAUHAUS on Paradise, is the first ever CHICKEN WING FESTIVAL. Running from 1-4 p.m., there is a limited number of early tickets. The festival will have samples from various wing shops, and anyone over 21 may participate, as there is a free beer along with your event ticket. Plenty of free parking. Go to www.eventbrite.com/e/wing-fest-las-vegas-tickets-87022018199.

THE STRAT, formerly the Stratosphere, had a "reinvention" gala last month. Showcasing new areas, a lounge, the SkyPod and upgraded casino, locals and celebrities alike came out to dine at BLVD & MAIN on the casino floor. Legendary icon Sammy Hagar was there playing some of his music and toasting with his new Santo Blanco Tequila and Sammy's Beach Bar Rum. Crab, shrimp, Chinese dumplings, meatballs, sirloin sandwiches, cheeses and plenty of desserts were served in the festive atmosphere. The Strat has really undergone some changes in the last year and with its free valet parking is one of the few casinos that offer this added bonus. There are plenty of rides in the sky, a great view over all of Las Vegas, the Remix Lounge, and of course the tented show in the back, Celestia, which is a great bargain at its price.

GUY FIERI'S BIRTHDAY BASH at his VEGAS KITCHEN AND BAR in The LINQ, was a crowd of happy cheering people. Everyone was on the deck and dining on pastrami sandwiches, tacos, brisket and a whole lot of other finger foods. Great mojitos, and plenty of drinks. The desserts were absolutely some of the best decorated I have seen in a long time and cakes that showcased the evening were adorned with the Vegas Raiders logo. Guy was busy giving unlimited interviews and saying hello to everyone. Along with his other restaurant in Las Vegas, El Burro Borracho at the Rio, and numerous other locations including Baltimore, Mount Pocono, Atlantic City and South Africa, he truly is one of the top chefs in the world.

IN THE TIME IT TAKES TO READ THIS AD, WE'VE MADE LITTLE TO NO PROGRESS.

We slow-roast the finest 100% Weber Blue Agave for more than three days and then slowly crush it with a two-ton tahona stone wheel. The result is an earthy, complex taste that's more than worth the wait.



SIMPLY PERFECT.®

rocapatron.com

The perfect way to enjoy Patrón is responsibly. Handcrafted and imported exclusively from Mexico by The Patrón Spirits Company, Las Vegas, NV. 42-45% abv.



Plan for the Future with the New Restaurant Industry 2030 Report

By: National Restaurant Association

The National Restaurant Association, in partnership with American Express and Nestle Professional, recently released its 10-year outlook report, "Restaurant Industry 2030: Actionable Insights for the Future." The report provides a full insight to help restaurant operators and suppliers prepare for and capitalize on the upcoming trends, developments, demographics changes and industry challenges. The findings are based on input from a variety of restaurant sector experts, futurists, and government statistics.

With the ever-changing industry, the report examines the key indicators shaping the future of the restaurant industry, identifying the most and least likely developments over the upcoming decade and considers possible disrupters outside the industry that could transform it.

Here is an overview on key projections from the Restaurant Industry 2030 report:

Economic projections

- Restaurant industry sales are expected to reach \$1.2 trillion by 2030.
- The industry workforce will likely exceed 17 million by 2030.
- Total U.S. employment is projected to increase at an annual rate of 0.5% during the next decade.
- Total U.S. employment is expected to increase 8.5% between 2018 and 2030.

"The restaurant industry is at a crossroads as it finds ways to respond to consumer demand for meal and snack solutions away from home," said Hudson Riehle, senior vice president of the Research and Knowledge Group for the National Restaurant Association. "Restaurant owners are swiftly adapting across their businesses to meet the wants and needs of guests. The radical transformation of the last decade will change the way the industry operates going forward. It's exciting to ponder how the industry will grow and transform over the next 10 years, and consider how the Association can best support the industry in capitalizing on these opportunities."

The definition of "restaurant" will change as off-premises continues to drive industry growth.

Over the next decade, technology and data will become a greater focus for restaurants as they adapt to growing consumer expectations in the on-demand world. Guests will expect a seamless digital experience and want their preferences known at each interaction with a restaurant. As off-premises traffic and sales continue to accelerate, consumers will place heightened importance on experiential dining for on-premises occasions. Areas to watch include:

- A greater proportion of meals will no longer be cooked at home, lending to the continued rise in delivery, virtual restaurants, subscription services and grab-and-go at retail locations.
- Cloud kitchens (shared kitchen spaces for delivery-only restaurants) will continue to grow, fueled by the expansion of centralized kitchens and the growth of online, delivery-only brands.
- Consumers may grow increasingly loyal to third-party delivery apps, impacting loyalty to individual restaurants.
- Governments are likely to impose further regulation on third-party delivery.
- Drive-thrus may need to accommodate interactions with self-driving vehicles.
- The restaurant of the future will be smaller in size. Smaller restaurants could incorporate more automated kitchen equipment and the typical kitchen layout may change.

Nutrition and sustainability will drive menus.

Sustainable sourcing and transparency will continue to grow in focus for consumers over the next decade. In order to remain competitive, restaurants will need to adapt to evolving dietary restrictions and consumer preferences.



Food trends and menus will naturally evolve to reflect the increasingly health-conscious, ecological mindset of the consumer. Areas to watch include:

- Single-use restaurant packaging, including in delivery, will evolve.
- Artificial intelligence with knowledge of cooking techniques, food chemistry, recipes and alcohol could produce unexpected new culinary and beverage experiences.
- Advanced genetic knowledge and the rising incidence of lifestyle diseases are likely to create growing demand for meals that provide specific health benefits to diners.

The restaurant workforce is changing.

Population growth at an expected annual rate of 0.7% between 2018 and 2030, accompanied by changing demographics in the next decade, are expected to lead to an average labor growth rate of 0.5% annually between 2018 and 2028. With slower labor-force growth, restaurants will continue to compete against other industries for talent, making recruitment and retention vital to success in the coming decade. Restaurant employers will adopt career-focused mentalities as operators enhance retention by offering benefits and long-term career paths to success. Key statistics and areas to watch include:

- The number of adults in the labor force 65 and older is expected to reach a record high of 16.1 million by 2028.
- The number of teenagers in the labor force is expected to decline to 5.1 million by 2028, its lowest level in 65 years.
- Operators will automate more routine back-of-house tasks to enhance productivity and efficiency.

"Deconstructing possible trends and innovations of the next decade will help both large and small-business owners in the restaurant industry anticipate their greatest challenges," said Riehle. "With these actionable insights for the future, restaurants will remain an integral part of the economy and a cornerstone of every community across this nation."

These are just a few of the likely developments outlined in Restaurant Industry 2030. Expect "restaurants" in the future to come in more forms than ever before and count on competition for share to heat up. Consumers in 2030 will have great food options from c-stores, groceries, food halls, pop-ups, subscription services, cloud kitchens, street-food stalls and formats we haven't even thought of yet. It's time to start thinking ahead. To download the full Restaurant Industry 2030 report: Restaurant.org/Restaurants2030.

SPIRITS CONFIDENTIAL with Max Solano

Celebrating National Margarita Day

By Max A. Solano

Max Solano is a principal mixologist at Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits of Nevada and is considered one of the most respected and premier authorities in the West Coast on all matters whisky. He also serves as a Spirits Judge at the coveted New York World Wine & Spirits Competition, International Whisky Competition and world-renowned San Francisco World Spirits Competition.



When we consider the most popular and commonly consumed cocktails in this country, there will certainly be a very short list of them. And then there's everything else! Some of these mega-popular libations did not either exist or gain much notoriety until Prohibition (1920-1933) or thereafter. Atop of this list, is the mack daddy of all tequila-based cocktails: the Margarita. A very simple, yet delicious cocktail traditionally consisting of tequila, Triple Sec (orange liqueur) and lime juice (or fresh sour). Not only is the Margarita one of the most commonly requested cocktails, but it's also one that has the most riffs and modern variations. The Margarita had reached such a high in popularity in the US, that February 22nd has officially been recognized as National Margarita Day (year of inception is not known). The history of the Margarita has several possible and debated origins, depending on whom you ask. Tequila, a native and very heavily regulated product of Mexico, was first shipped to Texas several years after our Civil War ended, but did not start to become a household name in the US until World War II, when importing whisky from Europe became difficult, as well as sourcing the very limited amount of whiskey being produced in this country at that time. One of the more popularized versions of the Margarita's origin is when in 1938 Carlos "Danny" Herrera at his restaurant Rancho La Gloria, halfway between Tijuana and Rosarito, Baja California, created a similar tequila cocktail recipe for customer and former Ziegfeld dancer Marjorie King, who was allergic to many spirits, but not to tequila. There are other accounts that from a timeline perspective would take us a few years back or others, several years forward. A close friend and trusted cocktail author and confidant, Livio Lauro, cited in his book, *Liquid Legacy*, that New York-based cocktail historian Dave Wondrich wholeheartedly believes that regardless of the Margarita's true origin, it was West Coast bartender and influencer John Durlless that became the first person in Los Angeles to serve and heavily popularize the Margarita at the widely-known establishment, Tail O' The Cock.



This popular tippie is served shaken with ice and traditionally served on the rocks. Others are blended with ice and served frozen and some are just shaken with ice and served straight up into a coupe or cocktail glass. Although it has become "acceptable" to serve a Margarita in a wide variety of glass types including cocktail, wine or goblet, pint and yards and schooners, the drink is traditionally served in the eponymous Margarita glass, a stepped-diameter variant of a cocktail glass or champagne coupe. To help further this fad, Mexican cuisine has really taken off all over this country in the last 20-30 years, approximately. So now, venues ranging from small family-owned establishments to various sized national and international chains to celebrity-owned or -endorsed higher-end destinations can be found just about anywhere. By default, many of these establishments will also have agave-centric cocktail programs, some elevated and exquisitely done, some that are fun, whimsical and "interesting" and others that would get an "A" for effort! I mean, did you honestly in your lifetime ever think that Taco Bell would be serving alcohol? Not I!

One very fascinating argument is that traditionalists today would dispute that many of these riffs or varieties are truly not Margaritas. However, lime is no longer the only accepted flavor, and the specialists behind the bar have gotten creative mixing exotic and fresh fruits, different types of citrus, fresh and dried herbs, infused sugars and exotic salts to enhance both the presentation of the glass and the flavor of the cocktail. Where do my loyalties lie, you are probably wondering? I say, if the cocktail

has an agave spirit base that can clearly come through in the cocktail, an acid component and a sugar component to balance it out, then I am okay still calling the riff a "something" Margarita.

After all, my go-to cocktail aside from a delicious Margarita or Whiskey Sour, is an Old Fashioned. I have more variations of the Old Fashioned than a wheel of Swiss cheese has holes—all delicious, of course! The DNA that I will use for my riffs is a libation with 2 ounces of an oak-aged spirit at the helm (whisk(e)y, rum, tequila or brandy), two generous pieces of citrus peel for muddling and discarding (grapefruit, varying orange or varying lemon), ¼-½ ounce of a sweetener (uniquely created flavored syrup with either sugar, honey, maple syrup, agave syrup, etc.) and 2-3 generous dashes of bitters (brand and flavor of choice). Of course, at this point I would list this variation as a "Tequila Old Fashioned," "Rum Old Fashioned," etc. My point is that if you stay true to the DNA of that original classic, then it's acceptable to use its name in your creation.

I am going to go out on a limb and say that it's safe to assume that most of us do not need a National Holiday as an excuse to libate! To me, I have a profound appreciation of the Margarita's history and rise in popularity. This can be said for the plethora of other libations that came about long before all of us! With all this said, this February 22nd, let's all raise a glass with our favorite Margarita or riff of it and let's all toast to National Margarita Day! Til' next month, friends...

~ Cheers



EVENTS

There are several major food & beverage events happening in the coming months. Here is a sampling of some of the events we highly recommend, so if planning to attend you can start booking now.

February 18-20: The Coffee, Tea & Cocoa Winter EPPS will convene at Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino and provide a venue for suppliers of coffee, tea and cocoa to present new items and promotional opportunities to buyers from across all retail channels.

ecrm.marketgate.com/Sessions/2020/02/CoffeeTeaCocoaEPPS

February 23-26: The National Grocers Expo held at the San Diego Convention Center will bring together independent retailers and wholesalers, food retail industry executives, food/CPG manufacturers and service providers for opportunities to learn, engage, share, network and innovate.

www.thengashow.com

February 29-March 3: AFFI-CON, the premier event for frozen food and beverage makers, industry suppliers and logistical partners, will convene at The Cosmopolitan and bring together over 600 companies and 1,500+ attendees in a single location, allowing them to meet one-on-one to discuss current and future opportunities.

affi.org/affi-con/

March 3-7: The Natural Products Expo West, held at the Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim Hilton and Anaheim Marriott will include the newest trends in natural food & beverage products.

www.expowest.com

March 9-12: The Catersource Show will be co-located with The Special Event at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center and feature everything to do with the business of catering. The combined event will bring over 500 suppliers and 8,500 professionals together to provide an unmatched opportunity to source, network and learn. If you or your company is involved in catering, or even if it isn't, you'll want to attend this show.

conference.catersource.com

March 30-April 2: The Nightclub & Bar Show comes to the Las Vegas Convention Center for the largest beverage and bar show in the world, with unlimited tastes and treats! Don't miss it.

www.ncbshow.com

March 31-April 2: The 36th Annual International Pizza Expo returns to the Las Vegas Convention Center with the world's largest pizza, ingredients, products, and service expo, including demos and contests plus samplings all day long!

www.pizzaexpo.com

AD INDEX

Al Dentes' Provisions sales@aldentes.com 702-642-1100	page 9	Keep Memory Alive Event Center 702-263-9797 kmaeventcenterlasvegas.com	page 2
Arctic Ice Plus CBD Water info.pembertonco@gmail.com 702-8698152	page 31	Jay's Sharpening Service www.jayssharpending.com 702-645-0049	page 30
Big Dog's Brewing Company www.bigdogsbrews.com 702-368-3715	page 30	Roca Patron rocapatron.com	page 27
Designated Drivers, Inc. designateddriversinc.com 877-456-7433	page 30	Power of Love 2020 keepmemoryalive.org/POL 702.263.9797	page 32
Ferri Carano www.ferrari-carano.com	page 25		



Jay's Sharpening Service

Sharpest in Town Since 1975

4310 W Tompkins Ave Las Vegas, NV 89103
702-645-0049
www.jayssharpending.com • customerservice@jayssharpending.com

Mobile Service
Our mobile service vans provide sharpening services on-site to even the largest resort properties, without disrupting workflow.

Commercial Knife Exchange Program
We furnish sharp knives to your kitchen on a weekly or biweekly rotation schedule.

Equipment Sales
We offer top-of-the-line knives, culinary tools, kitchen supplies and replacement parts.

Cutting Board Resurfacing & Replacements

Steak & Table Knife Re-Serration / Sharpening

W Harmon Ave

★ Jay's Sharpening Service

Arville St

W Tropicana Ave





DESIGNATED DRIVERS, INC.
YOUR FRIEND BEHIND THE WHEEL

877-456-7433
(R I D E)

FOOD & BEVERAGE PROFESSIONAL SPECIAL

2 MONTH BASIC MEMBERSHIP

\$118 VALUE JUST \$39

Membership includes \$20 off up to 5 rides per month - an additional \$100 savings!

designateddriversinc.com
CALL TO SIGN UP AND USE PROMO CODE 5836CAJ



BIG DOG'S BREWING COMPANY
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Est. 1993

ON TAP AND IN BOTTLES THROUGHOUT SOUTHERN NEVADA

LAS VEGAS' ORIGINAL BREWING COMPANY
www.bigdogsbrews.com



ARCTIC ICE[®]

PLUS

HEMP DERIVED WATER

30MG PER BOTTLE



FUEL YOUR BODY

Original

Green Apple

Passion Fruit

Blood Orange

Mango



- 16.9 FL OZ
- Vegan
- Gluten Free
- No Sugar
- ZERO Calories
- Hemp Derived Infused 30 MG
- 100% THC Free
- Combats Muscle Soreness
- Aids Recovery
- Supports reduction in Inflammation & Pain



NOW AT

Lee's
Discount
Liquor

LIQUOR
WORLD

X.O LIQUOR

HOME OF ARCTIC ICE BRANDS

PEMBERTON DISTRIBUTION COMPANY
FOR MORE INFO CONTACT US AT
ORDERS@PEMBERTONDC.COM
INFO@PEMBERTONDC.COM
OR CALL 702-869-8152



KEEP MEMORY ALIVE
Supporting the Mission of Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health
ALZHEIMER'S | HUNTINGTON'S | PARKINSON'S
MULTIPLE SYSTEM ATROPHY | MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

AND

Cleveland Clinic
Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health

PRESENT

POWER OF LOVE 2020

MGM Grand Garden Arena
Las Vegas, NV

Save the Date | Saturday, March 7, 2020

Mark your calendar and expect **big surprises** at the Power of Love® Gala.

Cuisine by Wolfgang Puck ♥ Tantalizing Cocktails
Exquisite Wines ♥ Luxury Auction Items ♥ Spectacular Entertainment
Celebrity Appearances ♥ Philanthropy and Camaraderie

Proceeds Benefit:

Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health
Alzheimer's | Huntington's | Parkinson's | Multiple System Atrophy | Multiple Sclerosis

Seating available now: KeepMemoryAlive.org/POL
702.263.9797 | PowerofLove@KeepMemoryAlive.org

Bill Edwards
PRESENTS, INC.



SOUTHERN GLAZER'S
WINE AND SPIRITS



MGM RESORTS
INTERNATIONAL

Dom Pérignon