



Food for Thought

BY DOROTHY MARAS-ILDIZ

Happy New Year 2011!

What's Behind & What's Ahead for Food Freaks & Cork Dorks in 2011

A fresh new year gives us the all move forward with a skip in our step into 2011. I've always believed that it is best to take a moment to look back before I begin skipping forward. Just for kicks, I reviewed all of my columns that appeared in the Bulletin over the past year. Here is a month-by-month recap:

January 2010 – The start of 2010 was filled with hope and reflection. The economy was looming large and playing grim reaper to more than a few dining establishments. During the second half of January, I was trying to give men lessons in preparing in advance for Valentine's Day. Guys, if you followed my directions I'm sure you 'made out' in a good way. That crazy Chef Todd Fisher was throwing a sensual, aphrodisiac themed dinner for lovers at his more-fun-than-a-barrel-of-lovestruck-monkeys venue, THE KITCHEN. I missed that dinner but made up for it later in the year when I crashed his Dinner in Paris Night. Just as you'd expect of a man of his BIG Talent, it was over the top.

February 2010 – The First Annual Clambake for a Cure was ready to make its debut with ten stellar chefs showing their best dishes and 10 wineries pouring for the lucky 200 guests who attended. The winner of the Top Clam contest was none other than Chef Todd Fisher. Runner-up was the affable and talented Chef Jerry Regester, who thrills diners daily at the Intercontinental "C" Restaurant on Cannery Row.

I'm happy to report that The Second

Annual Clambake for a Cure, a benefit for The Musella Foundation, which is busy searching for a cure to brain cancer, is scheduled for a two-day event this coming February 9-10. It will be held at the beautiful Chateau Estate located just steps from Peter Hay golf course and all of the fun 'n' games that will be taking place at the AT&T Pro-Am golf tournament.

An incredible Epicurean's Delight Dinner will take place on Wednesday evening for a very lucky 25 attendees. Top Chef Season Five Winner, Chef Hosea Rosenberg will be preparing dinner along with Top Chef All-Stars 2010 Chef-testant Jamie Lauren, Michelin Star Chef Peter Armellino of The Plumed Horse in Saratoga and Chef Charles Phan of San Francisco's Slanted Door. If you are into food and wine, this will be the HOT ticket to have in hand. For more information and tickets to both the VIP Dinner and the Clambake that will follow on Thursday, February 10, check out the websites, www.golfandgrapes.org and www.clambakeforcure.com. I'll be there with my fork in one hand and my wine-glass in the other! Watch my next column for more details.

The Thursday Clambake chef lineup currently includes, the aforementioned Chefs Rosenberg, Lauren, Armellino and Phan working in concert with Corporate Chef Mark Ayers of Coastal Luxury Management (Pebble Beach Food & Wine, Cannery Row Brewing Co., the very soon to be open Restaurant 1833), Courtside Café at Chamisal guru of the stoves David Frappiea and, hopefully, you guessed it, Chef Todd Fisher! I'm sensing a theme developing here...

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March 2010 found me warning readers not to put too much weight in the reviews they might read in online sites such as Chowhound and Yelp. Once again, I urge you to consider the source of the comments you find there. Many are placed there by terminated employees, competitors without the guts to use their real names and gosh knows who else. C'mon folks, just go out and try the restaurants you're interested in and form your own opinions. Dining out is like art, music and poetry; some of it you love and some of it you loathe. It's all a matter of taste and perspective.

March also was the month that the PG High School Culinary Team hit the jackpot at the ProStart California Culinary Cup statewide competition. Instructor Adrian Schueneman's kids came in third place by cooking up a culinary storm. Yay, Breakers!

April 2010 was largely a blur of activity surrounding the planning and execution of the Third Annual Pebble Beach Food & Wine event that was as extravagant, fun, entertaining and amazing as the two previous years' were and then some. I just got a preliminary glimpse of the Chef Roster and program line up for the Fourth Annual Pebble Beach Food & Wine that will take place April 28 - May 1, 2011. You might want to get online immediately at www.pebblebeachfoodandwine.com and buy tickets NOW! I'll be there

with my fork in one hand and my wine glass in the other...yet, another recurring theme.

May 2010 - I recapped PBFW from behind the kitchen doors and introduced you all to budding food writer and local girl Zelda Elisco, who contributed both a review of Favaloro's Big Night Bistro and her recipe for the perfect marinara.

June 2010 showed my dual personality traits. The first column of the month was about all of the gastronomical goodness and fun that could be found at Steve Chesney's relocated Fresh Cream in Carmel. June's second column reflected the dangers of over-indulgence, following the death of my brother who suffered from diabetes. Anyone who is dealing with diabetes, or has someone they love who has it, should go to www.pgbulletin.com and hit the archive button for the June issues and read it. It is an evil, nasty, horrible disease that can be controlled by eating right and taking care of your health.

HECK! I only got to June and I'm outta space. Sooo...stay tuned for July-December review in the next issue of the Bulletin. Thanks for reading and even more thanks for your comments and opinions that you've sent me over the past year. Happy New Year!

Just FYI...I welcome your opinions on my column. Also, if you are in the food service industry and would like your event, holiday menu, wine dinner or Sunday specials to be included, please feel free to e-mail me at LVR-SPT@aol.com. Cheers!