



Official e-Newsletter of the American Personal & Private Chef Association
September/October 2011

In this edition ...

From the Executive Director: The good work of Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center in San Diego County will feed the souls of personal chefs, who can tour the gardens and kitchen classroom during the 2012 Personal Chef Summit.

[Click here for more](#)

Upcoming personal-chef training through December.

[Click here for more](#)

2012 Personal Chef Summit update: Meet many of the presenters who will wow attendees in San Diego in February!

[Click here for more](#)

Office catering on the rise. While so many segments are down, usage of breakfast and dinner catering by offices is up noticeably since 2007. Can personal chefs grab a piece of this pie?

[Click here for more](#)

Palate-specific recipe: Award-winning Crab & Goat-Cheese Torte with Avocado & Kalamata Relish and Cilantro Oil.

[Click here for more](#)

Member profile: Debbi Dubbs, creator of Deb's Kitchen in Southern California, talks about her multifaceted work in which she teaches, forages, leads tours, writes and develops unique products. And that's not all.

[Click here for more](#)

Market research: Frozen meals too often are one-size-fits-all, posing an opportunity for personal chefs to offer portion-specific options to clients.

[Click here for more](#)

Side Dish

- Food Network removes shark recipes from Web site following viral online campaign.
- Jon Taffer to save more failing bars on Spike TV's "Bar Rescue."
- More Americans love tilapia.
- The world's top ham grows in appeal.
- Iconic Chicago restaurant builds the biggest brat.
- Food trucks thrive in San Diego.

[Click here for more](#)

This e-Newsletter was sent to you by the [American Personal & Private Chef Association](#). Please add info@personalchef.com or personalchef.com to your address book. This will ensure delivery into your inbox (not your bulk or junk folders).

From Candy Wallace, Executive Director

I live in San Diego County, one of the most beautiful areas in the United States. Perched north of the U.S. border with Mexico, my county has 70 miles of coastline and a landscape of rolling hills against a backdrop of mesas and small canyons. We enjoy a mild, Mediterranean-like climate where tall palm trees thrive. As the second-most-populous county in California, to many residents, to live here is to live in Paradise.

Yet in National City, squeezed between its giant neighbors San Diego and Chula Vista and with a population of about 60,000, huge need exists. According to California Border Kids Count, in 2007, 34% of National City's children and youth lived in poverty. Eighty-five percent of students in the

school district qualify for free or reduced lunch. The community has one of the highest childhood-obesity rates in California, with a rate of diabetes hospitalization and mortality more than double the county average. Fast-food culture dominates, and options for purchasing affordable, locally produced, high-quality fresh food are limited.

That's why the Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center is so important. Founded in February 2010, Olivewood's mission is to connect and motivate students and families from diverse backgrounds through organic gardening, environmental stewardship and nutrition education, empowering them to be healthy and active citizens. Its vision is to reconnect students and families to the natural environment through food, education and community engagement.



Olivewood's 6.85-acre property serves as an interactive, indoor-outdoor classroom for San Diego County's 3 million rural, urban and suburban residents. It's one of the few school-garden programs in the nation that emphasizes food preparation along with garden cultivation, teaching children and adults how to grow, cook and enjoy tasty, healthy whole foods.

It does this with funding from such entities as the San Diego Restaurant Association, American Express and Kaiser Permanente. But Olivewood could never exist without its army of dedicated volunteers, including chefs and food

professionals who donate their time to teach hands-on cooking classes, and master gardeners, scientists and educators who serve as field instructors, leading lessons in the colorful demonstration garden. The more than 5,500 hours contributed so far by nearly 1,000 volunteers has enabled Olivewood Gardens to extend its programming to greater numbers of children despite the small staff.

Olivewood's core program offers visiting schoolchildren a synergistic curriculum of ecological, academic and culinary lessons to build scientific literacy and environmental awareness, while encouraging students and visitors to explore the interrelationships of a quality diet, sustainable agriculture and healthy living. Through garden-based education, its programs inspire children to explore connections between plants and the natural world and the disciplines of history, science, art, literature, math, geography and nutrition. Its environmental-education program adds hands-on, inquiry-based workshops in sustainable agriculture, water conservation, recycling and composting.

Participating classrooms visit Olivewood four times a year, giving students the chance to observe the garden's different growing seasons as they move through the calendar year. During each visit, students rotate through three sessions—a gardening activity, nutrition activity and cooking activity—that engage them in the full cycle of cultivating, preparing and eating fresh produce from the garden.



In the garden, students undertake a grade-appropriate sequence of standards-based science and nutrition lessons. Back in Olivewood's intimate demonstration kitchen, spellbound kids receive cooking lessons from uniformed chefs and participate in hands-on culinary alchemy. Age-appropriate, easy, wholesome recipes feature seasonal produce from the garden. Students are encouraged to explore the food they sample with all their senses, and to adjust seasonings to their liking. This increases their enjoyment of and knowledge about healthy foods.



“It’s a moving experience to help elementary-school kids who have never dug a trowel into the earth to plant a seed or crack open and beat an egg learn these skills—and then also enjoy the dishes they create, trying fresh vegetables and other ingredients that may be totally foreign to them—and then falling in love with their flavors,” says Caron Golden, an award-winning food writer based in San Diego and an avid volunteer at Olivewood Gardens. (Caron will present on food-blogging at the 2012 Personal Chef Summit.)

In addition to its core school program, Olivewood offers gardening classes, field trips, weekly tours and weekend family days along with meetings and luncheons for health- and sustainability-related companies and organizations. It also is one of five regional sites where San Diego County residents

can take free classes to learn how to convert lawns, yards and small spaces into fruit and vegetable gardens. Other classes help residents start or maintain school and community gardens.

Experiential nutrition-education programs that include exposing kids to a variety of foods, along with hands-on activities such as cooking, are becoming recognized as important contributors to improving children’s dietary behaviors. Such experiences could significantly increase children’s knowledge of, preference for and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, even into adulthood. By practicing positive nutritional choices over the long term, local children and community members may reduce their risk of chronic diseases associated with obesity including diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

That’s why Olivewood Gardens is so critical to San Diego County—and beyond. An in-depth tour of the gardens and facility is on the agenda of the 2012 APPCA Personal Chef Summit in San Diego, Friday, February 10. Personal chefs endeavor to give back by making their communities a better and healthier place to live. Olivewood Gardens is doing just that for a growing number of children and adults in need.

For more information on Olivewood Gardens, visit www.olivewoodgardens.org.

Candy Wallace

Personal-Chef Training through December

The personal-chef segment of the foodservice industry has expanded enormously and blossomed into a recognized career path, with demand for high-quality food and service growing each year throughout the country. Join us at one of the following scheduled training sessions, where APPCA will deliver a dynamic one- or two-day, high-intensity “Jump Start” seminar or Webinar providing the best tools and educational materials in the industry with which to build a successful personal-chef business. Also, new, in-depth half-day sessions on specific business areas are now offered. Visit www.personalchef.com for complete information.

- December 10-11, San Diego
[Click here for more](#)
-

Meet the Presenters of the 2012 Personal Chef Summit

Has the APPCA got something in store for you at its 2012 Personal Chef Summit in San Diego, February 10-12! A host of experts presenting on everything from gardening and preserving to food blogging to simple Asian cooking to making the most of food apps on your smart phone will be on hand for two days of inspiring, business-building programming.

Get to know some of the scheduled presenters by clicking [here](#). They include:

- Carol Borchardt, chef and proprietor of A Thought for Food serving greater Memphis, Tenn., and the APPCA's 2010 Chef of the Year.
- Jerald W. Chesser, Ph.D., a professor at The Collins College of Hospitality Management at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona.
- Dana Cox, a procurement instructor at the Kendall College School of Culinary Arts in Chicago and owner of a successful personal-chef service, Old Stove LLC.
- Debbi Dubbs, profiled in this edition of "a la minute."
- Caron Golden, an award-winning food writer whose monthly column, "Local Bounty," appears in *San Diego Magazine* and on its Web site.
- Dane Mechlin, co-owner of Nadine & Dane's Personal Chef Services in Northern California.
- Diane Phillips, known as the Diva of Do-Ahead and the author of more than 14 cookbooks.
- Lee Silber, a dynamic speaker and award-winning author of 15 books.

Lodging info at the Westin San Diego is found at www.personalchefsummit.com. And for an at-a-glance schedule of the Summit weekend, click [here](#). We look forward to seeing you next February!

Office-Catering Opportunities Growing Beyond Lunch Meetings

Few restaurants and caterers would be surprised to hear that catering orders for business and medical offices slipped during the economic downturn of the past three years. But what may be surprising is that breakfast and dinner catering usage is up noticeably since 2007, according to Technomic.

Nineteen percent of surveyed business and medical users ordered breakfast catering at least once a week, compared to 13% in 2007. Dinner usage also increased, with 26% saying they order catered-in dinners at work at least monthly, up from 18% four years ago.

"We learned that breakfast occasions are growing due to meeting time-shifting and lower costs," says Melissa Wilson, Technomic principal. "Dinner occasions, on the other hand, are growing because employees are being asked to work late, and some employers provide dinner to help ease the pain of longer days."

Wilson points out that more catered breakfast and dinner occasions spells new opportunities to step into office and medical catering, segments that used to be the nearly exclusive domain of lunch-time meal providers.

Among other interesting findings:

- The average group size for business and medical catering orders has remained steady at 19 to 20 people. However, cut-backs have occurred in average per-person expenditures since 2007.
- Catering decision-makers acknowledge that incentives have grown in importance, as a way to stretch their catering budgets. While all types of incentives have increased in importance, coupons gained the most influence.

- Retailers, especially warehouse clubs, are competing effectively with restaurants for business and medical catering occasions. One in five survey respondents reported using a warehouse club in the past 60 days for a business catering occasion.

The study is based on primary research with more than 1,200 decision-makers in the business and medical markets. It provides insights on driving motivations in selecting catering suppliers, as well as details on frequency and expenditures, menu offering preferences, effective marketing techniques and more.

Crab & Goat-Cheese Torte with Avocado & Kalamata Relish and Cilantro Oil

A palate-specific recipe from Chef Daniel Hendon, Boca Raton, Fla.

Yield: 8 servings as an entrée; 16 servings as an appetizer

This award-winning recipe (first place in Phillips Seafood's Fifth Annual Crab Recipe Contest) features the goodness of luscious crabmeat combined with the tangy zip of goat cheese.

Torte

- 1½ lbs. goat chest (soft)
- 1½ lbs. cream cheese
- 6 whole eggs
- 3 egg yolks
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ t. ground nutmeg
- 2 T. chopped fresh dill
- 2 T. Dijon mustard
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 3 oz. chopped shallots
- 8 oz. red bell pepper, diced, blanched
- 4 oz. heavy cream
- 2 T. cornstarch
- 1 lb. Phillips crab meat (jumbo lump preferred, but any grade will do)



Relish

- 2 avocados, diced
- ½ c. diced kalamata olives
- 1 large tomato, seeded and diced
- ¼ c. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 T. white balsamic vinegar
- 1 T. minced red onion
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cilantro Oil

- 2 bunches cilantro, leaves only
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 c. extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Put goat cheese and cream cheese in a mixing bowl and mix until smooth. Add eggs one at a time, then yolks, until the mixture is smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste along with nutmeg, dill, mustard, lemon juice, shallot and bell pepper. Mix until all is incorporated.

2. Dissolve cornstarch in heavy cream; fold into mixture. Gently fold in crabmeat. Pour the mixture into a greased 10-inch springform pan and bake in a water bath for about 1 hour and 20 minutes at 325°F or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Refrigerate until served.

3. For the relish, mix all ingredients together just before serving.
4. For the cilantro oil, blanch the cilantro leaves in boiling salted water for about 15 seconds. Immediately remove and place in an ice bath to retain color. Squeeze out water. Place all ingredients in a food processor until smooth.
5. To serve, cut a wedge of torte and let stand at room temperature for about 10 minutes. Spoon a little of the avocado relish into the center of a plate. Place the torte slice atop the relish. Drizzle with cilantro oil around the plate and garnish with a sprig of cilantro.

Photo courtesy of Phillips Foods.

In Search of the Next Big Foodie Thing

Debbi Dubbs learned the nuts and bolts of cooking in some of the best restaurant kitchens with versatile and eclectic chefs. Running her own catering company in Southern California, All Thyme Catering, she developed her own style of cooking with fresh, seasonal ingredients to bring out the best flavors in food. Dubbs also found that she loved teaching her cooks new recipes; as executive chef of Spaghetini Cucina, she developed The Kitchen Arts Series of cooking classes. Upon leaving there, she created Deb's Kitchen, where she continues to teach. As a corporate chef for Melissa's World Variety produce, Dubbs worked with produce from all over the world and helped transform them into delicious recipes.

Classically trained in French technique, Dubbs continues to look for new and unusual ingredients as a forager for a local restaurant. She has taught at Williams-Sonoma, South Coast Plaza, Kitchen Outfitters in Naples and Spaghetini Italian Grill & Jazz Club in Seal Beach, and hosts food and wine tours to the central coast, Paso Robles and Napa Valley. The APPCA caught up with Chef Deb recently to delve deeper into her multifaceted business.

APPCA: You don't seem to have a traditional personal-chef business. Describe Chef Debbi's Culinary Adventures and what you specialize in. What's a typical "day in the life" for you?

Dubbs: I have one personal-chef client who I cook for a few times a month, but I started hosting food and wine tours out of my love for traveling and discovering places to visit. I'm an organic gardener, so I love to visit small family farms, gardens and vineyards. My clients began asking me when I would take them, so it naturally followed that the tours should begin.

As with many personal chefs, we wear many hats from bookkeeping to marketing to creating menus and cooking. A typical day for me is to check e-mails and voice mail for any that should be answered immediately. I spend a lot of time on the computer setting up tours, cooking classes, private parties and speaking engagements. I try to work at least six months out on the tours, and my goal is to work one year or more out to have the time to market them properly. Cooking classes need to be set up at least six months in advance, and I try not to repeat the menus. That means designing new menus for each season and session. Private parties are a little more time-sensitive, and often are on the fast track for completion. Speaking engagements work anywhere from six months to a year out and are easier and faster to complete. Not to mention that I host the tours, teach the classes and conduct the private parties and speaking engagements.



APPCA: You're a forager for a restaurant in your area. What does that entail? Is this a possible additional income stream for personal chefs?

Dubbs: Foraging can be a full-time job, and there are a few people around who do this regularly. It can also be a second source of income on a part-time basis. I find myself in all sorts of "foodie"-type places, from farms to vineyards, cheesemaking houses, oyster farms and mushroom growers. I am exposed to various foods and sources that may be unusual, neglected or on the verge of becoming the next "big foodie thing." It's my job to recognize appropriate items for my restaurant and introduce the owners to the new product(s). If they approve and want to pursue acquiring a product, I help make the connections.

APPCA: What was the motivation behind your writing *What's In Your Pantry*? How is it unique from other books?

Dubbs: I have been teaching cooking classes for over 10 years, and my students were the ones who encouraged me to write the book. I think secretly we all would like to write a book, but it's not as easy as one would think. There's a lot more than just writing the words. My students loved all my tips and recommendations and how I could teach them to cook intuitively, so I tried to convey that in *What's In Your Pantry*. I am working on another book, *What's In Your Garden*, about how you can grow vegetables in a kitchen garden, in containers, on a porch or a patio and how to incorporate them into dishes that you already cook, with or without a recipe.

APPCA: Do you still work with Melissa's World Variety Produce?

Dubbs: I am a former corporate chef for Melissa's Produce, and after I left, we developed a sponsorship relationship. Melissa's and I work as a team to help cooks and non-cooks understand how easy it is to incorporate fruits and vegetables into your diet and to introduce everyone to wonderful new items available from Melissa's.

APPCA: Why did you launch Deb's Kitchen Pantry Spices? What distinguishes your line from other products in the marketplace?

Dubbs: I chose to market my herb and spice blends again because my students kept asking where they could purchase the ones that I use in my dishes. I only offer ones that I use personally. They are all organic and available on my Web site, www.debskitchen.com/pantry-store, right next to my book, *What's In Your Pantry*.

APPCA: You're an avid gardener and food preserver, and will be addressing both topics at the 2012 Personal Chef Summit in San Diego in February. What is the source of your passion for gardening and preserving?

Dubbs: Like almost any chef you ask, the answer to that question is almost always, "My mother (or grandmother) helped me develop my love of cooking, gardening and preserving." In my case, I worked with my grandmother in the garden from the time I was a little girl (because that's where our fruit and vegetables used to come from!), and in her kitchen. I continue to garden, cook and preserve from my own organic garden. Preserving will be part of my new book, *What's In Your Garden*, which will be available early summer 2012.

APPCA: What's next for Chef Deb? What are you exploring that you can share?

Dubbs: There is always a new adventure right around the corner that awaits me, and sometimes it smacks me right in the face! I am focusing on my food and wine tours in the next year, increasing local trips, as well. I recently launched day tours to Temecula, Calif., where we meet cheesemakers, olive growers and, of course, winemakers. I'll be traveling to Italy next year in hope of offering a Tuscan Adventure in 2013. Who knows what adventures await me next!

For more info on Chef Debbi Dubbs' tours, book and products, visit www.debskitchen.com.

Men Want Larger Portion Sizes and Young Women Want Single-Serve Portions, Says NPD

Nearly 2.5 million U.S. households had a frozen meal for dinner last night, but it's more than likely that the number of actual servings from the meal differed from the servings stated on the package label, according to food and beverage market research by The NPD Group, a leading market research company.

A recent NPD report finds that one in three family/party-sized frozen meals that are labeled to have four-plus servings are eaten by only one to two individuals. More than one-fourth of frozen-meal users eating from a package that is labeled for two to three servings consumes the frozen meal on their own, according to the report, which is based on a custom survey completed by a nationally representative sample of 2,500 adults, ages 18 and older.

"There is a disconnect between the stated serving size on a frozen meal package and what an individual is consuming," says Darren Seifer, food-and-beverage industry analyst at NPD. "As it is now, for one-quarter to one-third of frozen-meal consumers, the labeled package serving size is more of a guideline to the frozen-meal user than an actual serving size."

Although many consumers disregard the servings size indicated on the frozen-food package, they are concerned with portion sizes for a variety of reasons. Males, younger users and even non-users are dissatisfied with the current portion sizes in frozen meals and want larger portions. Single-serve frozen meals, which account for two out of every three frozen meals eaten today, are popular as a carried lunch with young, working females and seniors who consume single-serve frozen meals in their homes.

"Consumers continue to seek out quick and convenient meal options and, frequently, frozen meals are the answer," says Seifer. "It's important for manufacturers and retailers to understand that various generational and demographic groups perceive frozen meals differently, and then respond to these variant needs with the right products, flavors and marketing messages."

SIDE DISH

Just Say No to Shark Meat. Activists are celebrating the Food Network's recent decision to remove all shark recipes from FoodNetwork.com after a viral online campaign on Change.org. Conservation activist Jessica Belsky started the campaign to promote shark conservation during the popular "Shark Week" television series. Less than 10 days after the launch of the online campaign, the Food Network removed all shark recipes from its Web site and issued a statement on the future use of shark at the network. More than 30,000 people joined the campaign, many of them after the Food Network had already made the above commitment. Many sharks are threatened with extinction, with some species' populations plummeting by as much as 90% in recent years. Sharks are listed on the "Red/Avoid" section of the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch guide, along with more than 20 other species of fish like bluefin tuna, Chilean sea bass and orange roughy. To view the Change.org petition, click [here](#).

"Bar Rescue" to the Rescue, Again. Spike TV will pick up a second season of 10 episodes of its original series, "Bar Rescue," one of Spike's new, successful original series reaching a broader audience, which has delivered a steady increase in ratings since launch earlier this summer. In fact, the September 11 telecast against



strong NFL competition drew a series high of 1.3 million viewers, nearly doubling the premiere's viewership of 742,000 on July 17. "Bar Rescue" is hosted by Jon Taffer (pictured), one of the country's top restaurant and bar consultants. The show gives failing nightlife establishments one last chance at success. Taffer delves into every facet of running a bar, from creating a profitable drink/food menu, to music selection, to managing crowds, to dealing with disgruntled employees. Production for season 2 will begin this winter from venues around the country for airing next summer.

Tilapia Consumption Shows Greatest Seafood Gain. Americans ate 20% more tilapia in 2010 than they did in 2009, propelling it from the No. 5 spot to No. 4 with the single largest gain in consumption (1.45 pounds per capita total) on the National Fisheries Institute's (NFI) latest Top Ten Seafood List. Other impressive gains saw pangasius jump 14% to claim the No. 8 slot, up one from last year. And while cod remained at No. 7, it gained 11% over 2009. The No. 1 seafood? Shrimp at 4 pounds per capita, followed distantly by canned tuna (2.7 pounds) and salmon (nearly 2 pounds), respectively.



More Americans Clamor for World's Most Famous Ham. While last year the United States became Italy's top export market for Prosciutto di Parma, surpassing France, exports keep growing; the second quarter of 2011 compared to 2010 saw significant increase. April was modest, but May and June featured growth with export increases of 15.6% and 39.5%, respectively. The Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma is the association of producers of the world's most famous ham, responsible for regulating every step in the production that still takes place only in the region of Parma using centuries-old methods. The ducal crown is branded on each ham that has met the Consorzio's strict quality standards and is the

consumer's assurance of authenticity.

That's a Big Brat. On September 15, the Berghoff Restaurant in Chicago, an iconic 112-year institution serving German-American cuisine, went for the Guinness World Record for the Midwest's Longest Brat. The Berghoff unveiled a 47-foot, 3-inch brat at its 26th Annual Oktoberfest celebration at which "bites" were sold as a fundraiser for Chicago-based Mercy Home for Boys and Girls. In less than 20 minutes, the Mercy Home kids sold 135 sandwiches, raising more than \$1,000.



Highland Bakery provided the bun, which required 35 pounds of dough, was approximately 50 feet long and was transported in a 53-foot trailer truck. Schmeisser's Meats and Sausage provided the brat, weighing in at 40 pounds and made from a pork/beef mixture. Hall's Rental provided the eight grills to cook the brat, which was grilled by the Berghoff's executive chef, Matthew Reichel.

Meet San Diego's Food Trucks. For those attending the 2012 Personal Chef Summit in San Diego, February 10-12, the wealth of world-class dining options awaits! Some of those options are on wheels ... Lori Weisberg reports on a handful of mobile restaurants—like Mangia Mangia Mobile, MIHO Gastrotruck and Corner Cupcakes—with stellar offerings that are taking San Diego by storm. To learn more, click [here](#).