

TROPICAL LIFE E

Miami Herald SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2015 | EDITOR: EVAN S. BENN ebenn@MiamiHerald.com 305-376-4624

HI

Famous friends

FOR SOUTH FLORIDA CHEFS, NEXT WEEK'S SOUTH BEACH WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL GIVES THEM A NATIONAL STAGE IN THEIR OWN BACK YARD.



DYLAN RIVES/GETTY IMAGES

SELFIE TIME: Celebrity chef Geoffrey Zakarian snaps a picture at last year's Farm-to-Table Brunch at The Palms Hotel in Miami Beach, which returns on Feb. 22.

BY SHAYNE BENOWITZ
Special to the Miami Herald

Julie Frans is seated beneath the covered porch of Essensia Restaurant at The Palms Hotel & Spa, looking out on its lush green lawn punctuated by fuchsia bougainvillea and tall palm trees. On Feb. 22, this tropical Old Florida setting will be the backdrop for a Farm-to-Table brunch co-hosted by Frans and celebrity chef Geoffrey Zakarian during the 14th annual South Beach Wine & Food Festival.

The sold out brunch is one of more than 75 events unfolding over the course of the Feb. 19-22 culinary bacchanal. An increasing number of Wine & Food Festival activities follow a similar format, pairing South Florida chefs with nationally known talent.

"It's an exciting thing for the hotel, in general, to attract the attention and the people," said Frans, execu-

• TURN TO FESTIVAL, 5E



DYLAN RIVES/GETTY IMAGES

FESTIVAL VETERAN: Julie Frans, executive chef of The Palms Hotel in Miami Beach, will host another version of her popular Farm-to-Table Brunch at this year's South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

If you go

What: 14th annual South Beach Wine & Food Festival.

When: Feb. 19-22.

Where: Various locations.

How much: \$20-\$500.

More info: sobefest.com.

Live coverage: Follow up-to-the-minute festival coverage, behind-the-scenes news and recaps at miamiherald.typepad.com/uncorked.

A FORK ON THE ROAD

Cake Thai Kitchen specializes in Bangkok-style street food



Linda Bladholm
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Thai people live on street food cooked over little charcoal braziers on the sidewalk with the flames fanned with palm fronds. Cake Thai Kitchen opened on Biscayne Boulevard just north of 79th Street a few weeks ago and serves up renditions of Bangkok street food in a small, take-out place with a few tables for those who want to eat there.

It is not fancy, just as Thai street carts are bare-bones, but the flavors are authentic, laced with the heady aromas of pungent fish sauce, lemongrass, palm sugar and coconut milk.

Phuket "Cake" Thongsodchareondee was nicknamed for his mother's favorite craving while she was pregnant with him, although he is official named after a resort island in southern Thailand. He was studying hospitality in Perth, Australia, when the tsunami hit Phuket, and he

• TURN TO CAKE THAI, 3E



LINDA BLADHOLM/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

NAMED FOR ISLAND, DESSERT: Phuket "Cake" Thongsodchareondee got his name from the Thai resort and his nickname from his mom's favorite dessert.

MIAMI REVIEW

Moyé in Miami captures the foods and flavors of Puglia

BY VICTORIA PESCE ELLIOTT
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Bari is the densely populated capital of Apulia or Puglia (pronounced POOL-ya) that is the rugged region of Southern Italy, the heel of the boot that juts out into the Adriatic. It's an area that tourists began to adore in droves over the past couple of decades. With its picturesque trulli, little round white homes that dot the landscape, handmade cheeses and groves of olive trees that produce some of the finest olive oil in the world, what's not to love?

Chefs, too, began to explore the cooking of this region, known as cucina povera, or poor food. Indeed, it is a simple peasant fare at heart, but it can veer toward rich and decadent with wholesome ingredients, including chicory, fava beans, farmhouse cheeses and



MOYÉ

ITALIAN COMFORT FOOD: Cheese-stuffed veal meatballs in tomato sauce at Moyé in Miami.

loads of fresh fare from the sea.

In the Barese dialect, Moyé means the time is now. And so it is. This adorable ristorante couldn't come at a better moment as it watches Miami blooming all around it.

Moyé should be the place

to go now — if you manage to get through the crazy construction, one-way streets and tow-away zones that define downtown Miami's Brickell district. Like its fratelli in Florence and Milan, this pretty little

• TURN TO MOYÉ, 3E

Miami Herald PLUS

SOUTH BEACH WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL® GIVEAWAY

FIRST PRIZE:

Two (2) tickets to the South Beach Wine & Food Festival®
Whole Foods Market Grand Tasting Village

SECOND PRIZE:

\$500 Gift Voucher to
Meat Market restaurant in Miami Beach
Courtesy of Miami Herald Rewards Card

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DO THIS TODAY

BOAT SHOW

The **Miami Boat Show and Strictly Sail** drops anchor this weekend with more than 3,000 boats and 2,000 exhibitors from all over the world to create a boat lovers' paradise so big it needs three locations.

Details: 9 a.m.-6 p.m. through Monday at Miamarina at Bayside, 400 Biscayne Blvd., Miami; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. through Monday at the Miami Beach Convention Center, 1901 Convention Center Dr.; and at the Sea Isle Marine & Yachting Center, 1635 N. Bayshore Dr., Miami; miamiboatshow.com; \$20, \$35 two-day pass, free for kids 15 and under.



MIAMI BOAT SHOW AND STRICTLY SAIL

ART ATTACK

Art Wynwood showcases 70 international galleries with emerging, cutting-edge, contemporary and modern works from Paris, London, Bogotá, Vienna, Seoul, Mexico City and more, plus U.S. hubs New York, San Francisco and, of course, Miami.

Details: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, at Art Miami Pavilion, 3101 NE First Ave., Miami; art-wynwood.com; \$20, multi-day pass \$45, students 12-18 and seniors \$15, kids 12 and under free.

MOONLIGHT & MUSIC

Deering Estate hosts its annual **Valentine's Day concert** with a performance by vocalist Wendy Pedersen with special guests Jim Gasior on piano and singer Lenard Rutledge. Bring a picnic and chairs, or order one for pickup and celebrate your love under the stars.

Details: 7 p.m. Saturday at Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72nd Ave., Miami; deeringestate.com; 305-235-1668 ext. 233; \$25.

VIRTUOSO

The **Danish National Symphony Orchestra**, under the baton of conductor Cristian Macelaru, performs works by celebrated Scandinavian composers along with violin virtuoso Ray Chen.

Details: 8 p.m. Saturday at the John S. and James L. Knight Concert Hall, 1300 Biscayne Blvd., Miami; arshcenter.org; \$50-\$130.



GO DRINK THIS

The experience: Mixology for Two.

The story: J&G Grill head mixologist David Ferre will lead couples through an interactive course in cocktail creation from 5 to 6 p.m. Saturday. Learn the tricks of fusing and infusing exotic ingredients into drinks to create the ideal potion for your love. To reserve, call 305-993-0614.

The price: \$50 a person.

Where to find it: J&G Grill at The St. Regis Bal Harbour, 9703 Collins Ave., Bal Harbour.

— Galena Mosovich, Miami.com

WINE

Go rosé on V-Day

BY PETER M. GIANOTTI
Newsday

Rosé sparkling wines are sweeter to get than a dozen roses. So, add some cachet and some bubbles to Valentine's Day this year.

Good choices include the fruity, soft **Banfi Rosa Regale**, a delightful, off-dry Brachetto d'Acqui from Italy, often less than \$20. **Martini Sparkling Rosé** has a rosy hue, a medium-dry accent, and is about \$15. **Freixenet Cordon Negro Rosé** from Spain: a fruity, dry sparkler, for about \$12. **Anna de Codorní Brut Rosé** blushes and delivers the effervescence for \$15. **Chandon Rosé** uncorks as dependable, enjoyable sparkling wine from California. It's \$24. Same for the toasty **Schramsberg Mirabelle Brut Rosé**.

The royalty of rosé sparklers is Champagne. **Moët & Chandon Imperial Rosé** has lovely color, and style. It's \$55, with or without the sharp "Untie the Tie Box" container. The marvelous **2004 Moët & Chandon Rosé** embodies finesse for \$99. A decorative bird cage contains **Laurent-Perrier Cuvée Rosé**, fruity plus pretty for about \$100. The classic, **2004 Veuve Clicquot Vintage Rosé**, fresh and floral, with complexity and flair, is about \$99.

And at the top are two familiar, celebratory names: Dom Pérignon and Krug. The seamless **2003 Dom Pérignon Rosé** offers suggestions of strawberry and vanilla, tropical fruit and spice, a mineral note and just enough intensity. It's a sensational, luxurious rosé. A bottle is \$299. One dollar more is the expressive and elegant nonvintage **Krug Brut Rosé**, a regal, silky, seductive, brilliant beauty with notes of red fruit and citrus. Cupid would approve.



Fred Tasker

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U.S. presidents are pretty sophisticated people, we like to think. But how savvy are they about wine? It varies. Wildly. In honor of Presidents' Day Monday, let's check some out:

- George Washington toasted his inauguration with Madeira wine and kept a good supply at Mount Vernon, paying for it with flour from his plantation. Madeira, a Portuguese wine from the island of Madeira, off Morocco, was the go-to wine of the revolutionaries because, being fortified with brandy up to 20 percent alcohol, it wouldn't spoil under poor storage conditions.

- Thomas Jefferson was a wine connoisseur, educated while U.S. ambassador to France. He had a spacious wine cellar at his home at Monticello, filled with wines from France, Italy, Germany, Madeira, Spain, Portugal and Hungary, according to Forbes.com. He tried for years to grow grapes at Monticello, but they succumbed to downy mildew.

- James Madison drank French Champagne.

- James Monroe drank a sherry cobbler, made of sherry wine, citrus and sugar, served over crushed ice. Historians call it "America's first cocktail."

- John Quincy Adams knew Madeira so well he



ROBERTO CANDIA/AP

CHEERS: President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama raise their glasses at a state dinner at in Chile.

once identified 11 out of 14 in a blind tasting, according to an item in The New York Post.

- John F. Kennedy and wife, Jacqueline, were sophisticated about wine. They liked France's respected Bordeaux Chateau Haut Brion Blanc, and Dom Perignon Champagne was their house wine, according to The Wall Street Journal.

- Lyndon Johnson, a Cutty Sark Scotch whisky drinker himself, decreed the White House henceforth should serve American wines at state dinners, according to Wine Spectator.

- Richard Nixon, when entertaining guests on his yacht, Sequoia, was widely reported to have his aides pour him superb, expensive Chateau Margaux

Bordeaux from a bottle hidden in a towel while serving his guests lesser wines.

- Jimmy Carter, who had made his own wine from grapes from his farm, stuck to alcohol-free sparkling wine while dining at the Willard Hotel, according to its bartender.

- Ronald Reagan, a former governor of California, served his state's sparkling wine instead of French Champagne. He sent in a supply of wine from Beaulieu Vineyards, Sterling, Stag's Leap and other California wineries.

- George W. Bush did a lot of beer and bourbon in his youth, his wife told ABC News, but he stopped drinking after his 40th birthday. His go-to beverage while in office was diet cola with a slice

of lemon, according to The Washington Post.

- Barack Obama's best-remembered alcohol outing was the 2009 "Beer Summit." He sipped a brew with Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. and police Sgt. James Crowley, who had arrested Gates for disorderly conduct, setting off a racial controversy. Obama had a Bud Light (which didn't endear him to beer sophisticates); Gates, a Sam Adams Light; and Crowley, a Blue Moon. Obama already had displeased some uppity wine fans when he told People magazine that under-\$20 Kendall-Jackson Chardonnay was a staple in his house. First lady Michelle Obama likes a \$15 sparkling wine from the South African winemaker Graham Beck.

SOUTH BEACH WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

South Florida chefs say yes to big-ticket events

• FESTIVAL, FROM 1E

tive chef of The Palms Hotel. "We have a lot of loyal fans who come back every year now."

About 150 of the 350 chefs participating in this year's festival are from Florida, mostly Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties. Cooking in festival events provides local chefs not only the stage to put their food in front of well-to-do travelers from across the country, but also the opportunity to form relationships with their as-seen-on-TV peers.

"I'm still friends with Amanda [Freitag] and have gotten my cooks jobs in her restaurants and text with her," said Frans, who previously hosted an all-female brunch with Freitag and fellow New York chefs Alex Guarnaschelli and Anita Lo.

"All of them have said, 'Come to our restaurants. Spend a day with us,'" Frans continued. "It's nice to make those connections."

Todd Erickson, executive chef of HaVen and Huahua's Taqueria in South Beach, said the camaraderie is a big factor in his participation in the festival, now four years running.

"It's kind of cool. The celebrity chefs know my name now," he said. "That's a great thing, to know that I'm being considered a peer and not just a fan."

Behind the scenes, the festival can take on the feel of "a chef convention," Erickson said.

"There are chefs' parties, a launch party, a finale



CARL JUSTE/MIAMI HERALD FILE

BIG TENTS, BIG SMILES: Alexandra Argudin enjoys a cocktail and food during the 2013 South Beach Wine and Food Festival in Miami Beach.

party ..."

That doesn't mean it's a cakewalk.

For her brunch next Sunday, Frans not only has to conceptualize, prepare and execute a dish for 300 people, she also has to manage ingredient orders and facilitate timing and other logistics for the eight visiting chefs who are participating in the event. All while running a restaurant that remains open to the public before, during and after the festival.

Erickson will be representing his restaurants at an exhausting number of events, including a late-night tacos-and-tequila party on Thursday, a tacos-and-beer seminar on Saturday and at the main-attraction Grand Tasting Village Satur-

Contest

The Miami Herald and Miami.com are giving away tickets to three premier South Beach Wine & Food Festival events: Italian Al Fresco Feast, Meatopia: The Q Revolution, and Sunday's Grand Tasting Village. Go to Miami.com/restaurants to find out how to win.

day and Sunday. He also got a call from celebrity chef Art Smith, a friend from the festival, to help bring on local chefs to be part of Smith's 101 Gay Weddings ceremony and party Saturday at The James Royal Palm Hotel.

"Every year I get through

it and think, 'I'll never do that much again.' And every year that it comes up, I end up doing more," Erickson laughed. "It's definitely a lot of work, but it's such a fun time interacting with other chefs, seeing what other people are doing around the country."

The Grand Tasting Village features the most local talent in one place, with more than 50 South Florida chefs cooking food on-site each day, up from about 35 last year. The beachside

tents are organized by neighborhood "districts," with a local culinary captain overseeing each 'hood.

"The idea came about very naturally," said Lee Brian Schrage, the festival's founder and director, who also works as a vice president for Southern Wine & Spirits.

"We were reaching out to chefs in the community to help us engage people," he said. "Chefs like to do things where their friends are participating, so we came up with the idea of getting different ambassadors from different areas."

Chefs also like to do things that are good for business, and they say that participating in the festival works to their advantage.

"Aside from the incredible time that you have, there's also a lot of networking, and you get a lot of exposure to people who may not know your restaurant," said Michael Pirolo, chef-owner of Macchialina in South Beach, which is opening a sister restaurant this spring in Asheville, North Carolina.

Pirolo will lead an interactive cooking demonstration for 180 people at the Biltmore, and he's one of the featured chefs in the festival's kickoff event, the Italian Al Fresco Feast on the Beach.

When the South Beach Wine & Food Festival calls? Pirolo: "I always say yes."

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