



CHEFS' COUNCIL™
+ EMERGING TRENDS
+ STRATEGIC THINKING
SUCCESSFUL NEW PRODUCTS

LaToque

SUMMER 2003

Andrea Rappaport

Private chef, creative talent, artist

Surely one of life's greatest luxuries is having your own private chef. And this bright, energetic young chef says it is also a fine luxury to be one.

"Maximum creativity is always my goal," says Andrea Rappaport, who recently left a frenetic executive chef career to cook exclusively for a private family. "My creativity has quadrupled in this job, because I can do things I would never attempt in a restaurant," she says, "like those tall vertical creations that most waiters would surely topple over."

Cooking is the consuming passion of Andrea's life. Leaving none of the senses behind, she sets out to create a full-on sensory extravaganza. "The human palate is naturally inclined to taste sweet, salty, sour and bitter all at once," Andrea says, "and a dish that delivers all these qualities is going to be the most pleasing to the mouth."

It comes as little surprise that her favorite chef of the moment is a man she hails as the "Dali of the culinary world", Ferran Adria of Spain's El Bulli restaurant. "He whimsically

plays with surprising combinations of temperatures, taste, textures and ingredients to create exciting experiences for the eyes, nose and palate," says Andrea.

Ferran Adria infuses white chocolate with white truffle oil. He combines chocolate with oil-cured black olives. And a sloe gin fizz, Andrea says she will never forget. In a tall shot glass, he layers slushy lemon ice beneath warm foamy egg white, all topped with hot caramelized sugar. "You knock it back all at once," she lovingly remembers, "for a warm, creamy, foamy, tart, frosty, tangy total rush."

But mere sensory thrill is not the only objective of Andrea's creativity. Her current mission is to create uncompromisingly delicious foods that are also healthy and low fat, as her employers have decided to cut back on decadence and try to eat more sensibly. She reports using many vegetable and fruit purees as building blocks for sauces and baked goods, and is also experimenting with non-wheat grains and seeds.

Andrea's tireless ingenuity also helps fuel the development of new food products for all of America. With consumer insights that are right on the mark, Andrea is a perfect fit with CCD's Chefs' Council.



"One day the light went on and I realized I could actually get paid to do this kind of work"

She has created recipes for everything from new breeds of potato snacks and ready-to-reheat meat products, to wraps, pockets, and vegetarian frozen meals.

Her experiences with the CCD have been "nothing but fun." Andrea loves the challenge of projects which require a great deal of creativity, even if the products are the simplest in the world. "It's a real challenge to step outside the box and create new twists on products that you only know in their existing form," she says. "It's even more exciting to walk past one of these products in the market and know that I played a role in its creation."

Her energy is positively contagious, and you can't help but feel just a little envious of those who are lucky enough to have Andrea shopping, chopping and sautéing away all day long, four days a week. She even does the dishes.

Delicious Beginnings

Like many great chefs, Andrea's culinary passions began early, at the apron strings of a talented, devoted nurturer. Her eastern European Grandmother made "life altering" blintzes and a mouth watering, packed-in-potatoes meat loaf which her large extended family gathered around regularly. Andrea's parents were also early LA foodies, often treating the whole family to hip new restaurants. "Even though we were decidedly middle class, my parents believed good restaurants were worth the money," says Andrea. "And when a kid gets to eat regularly at places like Spago and Trumps," Andrea says, "it can also be a life altering experience."

In high school, Andrea loved working at a gourmet cheese shop. In college, she went broke cooking for her friends, but loved it anyway. "One day the light went on and I realized I could actually get paid to do this kind of work," she said.

Andrea's first official culinary



Shaping the future of the American palate

position was at the well-known Madison, Wisconsin restaurant L'Etoile. After earning her degree in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a culinary arts degree from the CIA in New York, Andrea returned to LA to work for Wolfgang Puck at Spago, and also helped open Spago's famed Las Vegas location.

In 1995, Andrea realized her lifelong dream of moving to San Francisco, where she became executive chef at Zinzino restaurant. She won critical acclaim and commercial success as an executive chef, but eventually decided to step out on her own. Andrea's vision was "to make restaurant quality cuisine available to people in their homes." From catering and cooking lessons, it was a natural progression to Andrea's current position as a private chef.

In her own words:

On current consumer food trends

As the economic situation in this country declines, people will continue to look for alternatives to dining out. I hope they will grasp this as an opportunity to explore the world of cooking. This would fuel a welcomed return to our ethnic roots, and encourage us to explore other

ethnicities. The popularity of cooking shows on television and the impressive array of cookbooks available is proof that our nation is moving in this direction.

Comfort and security are important to all aspects of peoples' lives, and health is still top of mind. Highly fatty and rich foods will lose popularity as we see more healthy type restaurants and grocery products with a particular focus, such as vegetarian and raw. This will continue to greatly impact cooking methods. Grills, wood ovens, and woks are growing in popularity, in part because they use less fat, but also because of their speed and easy clean up.

Andrea's favorite kitchen secrets

Practically every dish I create is both savory and sweet in

some sense. Almost every sauce, entree, or savory dish has some sweet, and I am also known for salting my sweet desserts! This dimensionalizes the flavors. Salt naturally balances the flavors in desserts just as it does in savory foods.

Something else I've learned over the years is to keep quiet about certain ingredients. For instance, if I talk about meat and fruit combinations, I hear a big "yuck", but when I quietly add apples to vegetable stock or meat sauces, people love it.

Dinner of her dreams

Every private chef should have her own private chef, and for me, it would be Ferran Adria, the most creative of all food gurus.

For my fantasy dinner party, I would bring back my grandmother, and invite my Mom and Dad, along with several of my favorite all-time creative artists: David Bowie, Julia Child, Salvador Dali, Haruki Murikami, Maya Angelou. I'd also invite Ruth Reichl, former food critic of the New York Times and author of the book "Comfort Me with Apples." We would eat whatever Ferran wanted to cook for us, as long as it all began with that trademark sloe gin fizz!

A Child's Delight

Andrea loves coming up with food ideas for children, and for a time, offered cooking classes for five-to-eight-year olds. Even

The Private Chef Trend

Despite the economy, private chef placements are still going strong, says Susan Flynn, owner of Four Star Chefs, a Bay Area private chef matchmaking firm. There is also growing activity in the personal chef business, where one chef prepares and delivers food for many different clients at a time.

Flynn cautioned against hiring personal chefs without credentials. While there are economies of scale using a chef who also cooks for others, it's not as closely regulated as the private chef industry, she says, which requires culinary and food safety training. "There's nothing to stop any cooking enthusiast from simply setting up a website, and cooking foods for you in an unregulated home kitchen."

Various sources report that personal chef usage is growing, as consumers place greater priority on food quality, health, and eating at home. Seniors, executive couples and parents of very young children are heaviest users.

though kids are notoriously fickle, Andrea says it is possible to get them hooked on healthy foods. Toward that end, Andrea begins by pureeing foods like tofu and eggplant, and making dishes like hummus, stews and lots of fruit purees. Here again, her sweet/salt flavor balance helps "sell" a healthy recipe. Freezing purees in ice cube trays make portioning and re-heating easy.



Garnishing an appetizer as *Guest Chef* at the James Beard House, NY

Bay Area Favorites

Andrea prefers smaller family-owned restaurants, with good honest food and zero pretentiousness. She loves little San Francisco places like Le Soleil, a family owned Vietnamese restaurant on Clement Street; Ebisu in the Sunset for sushi; and Gary Danko on Fisherman's Wharf with its multi course small plates menu. There's also Chez Papa Bistro in Potrero Hill, Oliveto in Berkeley and she says she would love to go to Roxanne's in Larkspur for its famous raw cuisine, although she remains a bit skeptical about the concept as a whole.

Best Cookbooks

A passionate collector of cookbooks, Andrea gravitates toward those with beautiful photography and recipes that inspire her own creations, rather than insisting on verbatim mimicry. Favorites of the moment are "Olives" by Todd English, Cindy Pawlcyn's "Mustard's Cookbook", as well as all books by Donna Hay, the food editor of the Australian "Marie Claire" magazine. She also enjoys technical food books such as fellow Chefs' Council member Harold McGee's "On Food and Cooking", "What Einstein Told his Cook" by Robert Wolke, and she loves to get swept away by the food adventure writing of Anthony Bourdain, Mort Rosenblum and Peter Mayle.

Ingredient of the Moment

Andrea has recently been experimenting with Moroccan spices, and has fallen in love with a spice blend called Za'atar, a Middle Eastern blend of dried thyme (or Syrian Hyssop), sesame seed and sumac. The sumac imparts a lemony quality, and the toasty, spicy combination is heavenly on meats and in breads.

Top Tools

Andrea's number one tool is definitely her blender, which she says she "does everything in", from soups and vinaigrettes, to sauces and fruit purees. She also swears by her Global knives and a good mandolin. Andrea was recently given a food dehydrator, and is looking forward to having some fun with that.

Private Passions

While not cooking or socializing with friends, Andrea loves taking art classes and making jewelry, and wants to learn glass blowing. She, walks, hikes and loves museums, live music and traveling to France, Spain and Morocco. She would love to explore the culture and foods of Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. ■

Andrea Rappaport

... In a Nutshell

BACKGROUND

Bachelor's in Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison; culinary arts degree from the Culinary Institute of America. On staff at L'Etoile, Spago, Zinzino.

BELIEFS

Andrea works creatively to deliver a full-on sensory experience, and believes that healthiness should require no sacrifice in taste. She combines savory and sweet in virtually every dish – even desserts – to dimensionalize foods, and loves to create unexpected culinary contrasts, in textures, temperatures and tastes.

PERSPECTIVES

She believes health and security needs will continue to dominate consumer food choices and is hoping for a continued resurgence in home cooking.

INSPIRATIONS

As with so many great chefs, childhood experiences were pivotal. Her grandmother's Eastern European blintzes and meat loaves, as well as family meals out at Spago and Trumps were "life altering."

CURRENTLY

Private chef, creative talent, artist

ANDREA'S FAVORITES...

• KITCHEN SECRETS

Combinations of savory and sweet in virtually every dish to dimensionalize foods, and contrasting textures, temperatures and tastes.

• BAY AREA RESTAURANTS

Andrea prefers restaurants that are smaller and less hyped, with good honest food and zero pretentiousness! She loves little San Francisco places like Le Soleil, a family owned Vietnamese restaurant on Clement Street; Ebisu in the Sunset for sushi; and Gary Danko on Fisherman's Wharf with its multi-course small plate menus.

LaToque is written by Pat Field Ravasio: Patravasio@attbi.com
This report may be reprinted in part or in whole, provided credit is given to the Center for Culinary Development, San Francisco.

Copyright 2003 Center for Culinary Development

You can reach CCD at 415-693-8900, by email at admin@ccdsf.com or visit us at www.ccdsf.com

James Beard
Foundation
I A C P



2003

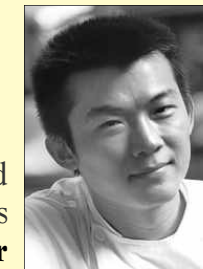
Congratulations!

CCD Chefs' Council Members

2003 James Beard Foundation Kitchenaid Cookbook Awards



A previous James Beard Award winner, **Janet Fletcher** was nominated in the **Americana** category for "Savoring America"



Luke Sung was nominated for the second year in a row as **Rising Star Chef of the Year**



Hubert Keller, chef/owner of the world famous Fleur de Lys, was 1 of 5 people inducted into the **Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America**

2003 IACP Cookbook Awards

Janet Fletcher won in the General Category for her work on *Michael Chiarello's Casual Cooking*

