



Les Dames d'Escoffier, Boston Chapter

August 2011



Feast on a Farm
Saturday, September 17
6:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Hors d'oeuvres & Buffet Dinner

Live Music & Dancing

Silent Auction to benefit Future Chefs and The Food Project

\$68.00 per person

(read further to find out how you can get a FREE ticket)

Come early to shop Verrill Farm's wonderful farm stand and bakery for home-grown fruits, vegetables, prepared foods, cookbooks and other culinary items.

Purchase tickets at www.lesdamesboston.org or by check made payable to LDE Boston and mailed to:

Sheila Stone . PO Box 65 . Andover MA 01810

Volunteers Needed

Back of the House: e-mail [Leslie Lamb](mailto:Leslie.Lamb@lesdamesboston.org) or call 781.893.6700

Front of the House: e-mail [Anne Hopkins](mailto:Anne.Hopkins@lesdamesboston.org) or call 617.489.5708

In This Issue

[Dame Competes on Chopped](#)

[New Member Bio](#)

[Dame Ana Costa & President Obama](#)

[Free Ticket to Feast](#)

[Harbor Cruise Photos](#)

[ICO Benefit](#)

Dame Denise Baron-Herrera on *CHOPPED!*

by Dame Lucille Giovino

The scenario: four chefs, three courses, one chance to win. The challenge: to create an unforgettable meal from ingredients in a mystery basket before time runs out! Dame Denise Baron-Herrera, Culinary Director at Burtons Grill in Boston, competed with three male chefs in the Food Network show *Chopped*.

The first mystery basket for the appetizer course contained quahogs, persimmons, Italian bitters and nopales. In twenty minutes Denise concocted her version of Out of the Shell Clams Casino with Julienne Persimmons and Nopales sprinkled with Italian Bitters Vinaigrette.

The judges claimed that she hit a home run with the preparation of the quahogs and the accompanying slaw made from persimmons and nopales.

Still in competition and on to round two: the entrée basket consisted of halibut, purple cauliflower, salted duck yolks and pork skin. Denise's immediate thought turns to Asian flavors. She made an Asian Marinated Halibut with Sautéed Purple Cauliflower and Crispy Pork Skin. The judges liked the egg yolk emulsified into the soy sauce and were surprised that it worked so well. She received enough accolades to continue on to round three.

The dessert basket consisted of Mexican chocolate, mostarda, soft tofu and pretzel rods. Denise made a Strawberry Mousse with Mostarda and Chocolate Covered Pretzel Rods. The judges liked the addition of the mostarda that lent a creamy texture to the tofu. All in all, it was a very close competition and even though she was not the winner, she proved that she can "measure up to a lot of other chefs out there." Kudos to Denise. She's a true winner in our hearts.



New Member:

Dame Susan Chused Still - A Self Starter

by Dame Lucille Giovino

Susan has that special ability to jump start and maintain businesses even under difficult circumstances. After initiating From Nosh to Posh, Susan's first big catering job was the first Annual Employee Recognition Party at Bread and Circus for 200 guests. She said it was like being shot out of a cannon along with the challenges, affirmation and success that followed her for several years, including evolving into Charles River Caterers.



Continuing her quest for more challenges, Susan, with her partners, owned and operated three restaurants during the mid '80s to the late '90s. With novel business plans, determination and intuitively being in the right place at the right time they

Upcoming Events

September 9th

Friends for Haiti
(more details in this newsletter)

September 17th

Feast on a Farm

October 4th

Annual Meeting
Top of the Hub

November 3rd - 6th

Annual Conference
Atlanta, Georgia

November 30th

An Evening with Dame
Maryann Esposito

January 2012

Holiday Pot Luck

March 2012

Annual Dinner

proved successful formulas.

The first restaurant was the opening of the Blue Diner, an original 1947 trend setter which won two Best of Boston awards. This was Susan's defining moment, an affirmation of hard work, quick study and unwavering belief, with no guidance model or mentor. The result was a unique, successful formula of the highest quality made-from-scratch food in a diner setting, and at the time, in a fringe neighborhood. The weekend brunch line wrapped around the block.

The second restaurant opportunity followed with the opening of Venus Seafood in the Rough, a seasonal, outdoor New England clam shack on the Boston waterfront, also a Best of Boston award winner and proven one of a kind operation serving the freshest seafood. It was an instant success.

After two highly stylized restaurant projects number three was a more conventional restaurant, Zuxuz Cafe (pronounced zoozoos) opened in the mid '90s which by then had much more competition in Boston's exploding restaurant scene. One of the questions I asked Susan was: what was one of your biggest obstacles? Her answer: at the time that she and her partner opened the restaurant in Coolidge Corner, Brookline had just passed a no smoking ordinance in restaurants, the first in Massachusetts. That was a massive blow to their full bar revenue projections and plans for a cocktail crowd, but not enough to deter Susan (today it's commonplace). She brought in weekend jazz musicians from Berklee College of Music, initiated lunch and late night suppers, vintner wine dinners, private parties and partnered with local businesses including the Coolidge Corner Theatre, Brookline Business Association and art galleries for special events. Responsible for all facets of the business, it was tremendously satisfying but extremely challenging. Fortunately, she had a trustworthy and savvy business partner (and friend) who together were able to guide the restaurant along a financially sound plan. Of all her food business ventures, Susan considers this one to be her most difficult. While tremendously fulfilling, the restaurant's competition was too great and profitability too limited and she and her partner sold the business with no regrets.

Susan's next career move and current position (and don't think for a moment that this ingenious woman would not continue with a new prospect) is Catering Sales Manager and Event Designer at Catering by Andrew. She's responsible for everything related to an event from contract negotiation right down to stocking the bar and entertainment. She's also in constant contact with other Dames in related businesses such as Leslie Lamb, Anne Hopkins and Sharon Brendline, and has been a long time member of the New England Culinary Guild. She concedes that networking among the Dames is vital and most helpful, and soliciting work opportunities is necessary within our own organization and from others in the food and hospitality industries.

Dame Ana Costa and President Barack Obama

by Dame Lucille Giovino

What is the ultimate birthday gift one could possibly hope for? Perhaps it would be a ticket to a presidential fundraiser.

This is precisely what Dame Ana Costa received as a gift for her 92nd birthday from her son Manny Costa. Together they attended an elegant, tented dinner party for 100 guests at a Chestnut Hill estate with President Obama as he swung through Massachusetts in May, 2011. Certainly, this will be a cherished memory.



Get A Free Ticket to Feast on a Farm

Fill a table: sell nine tickets and the tenth ticket is free!

That's a \$68 value. But more importantly, you'll be helping to make this event a huge success which means we can donate more to The Food Project and Future Chefs. Do it for you, do it for us, do it for them!



Mahi Mahi Cruise Photo Album

Visit lesdamesboston.org for more photos on the Harbor Cruise Event in July.







Friends for Haiti

Dame Michelle Conway is enjoying her new position at ICOF (Island Creek Oysters Foundation) and the recent ICO tour Michelle hosted was a great success! If you would like to join in on future events at ICO the next one is scheduled for September 9, 2011....."

This is a not-to-be-missed event to be held on Friday, September 9th 6:30 - 11:00 pm under a tent on Duxbury Beach. The evening will start with sunset cocktails, raw bar and hors d'oeuvres and move into the main tent where 9 top shelf chefs will be cooking at interactive, up close and personal stations. Peppered throughout the evening will be a live auction, great music and a few Island Creek surprises. Chefs participating in the evening include Frank McLelland of L'Espalier, Jody Adams of Rialto, Jeremy Sewall of Island Creek Oyster Bar, Michael Schlow of Radius, Angela Raynor of The Pearl (Nantucket), Joanne Chang of Flour Bakery, Ming Tsai of Simply Ming as

well as chefs from NYC and Chicago. Tickets are \$250 per person and include everything from the raw bar at the beginning of the evening to desserts at the end and everything in between. The \$250 ticket also includes return admission to Saturday's Oyster Festival - a rockin' party with 25 more chefs, more oysters, Narragansett Beer and a dance band. All proceeds from *Friends for Haiti* benefit the Island Creek Oysters Foundation's Tilapia Fish Farming project in Haiti. Tickets are available online

www.islandcreekfoundation.org.

Pay Your Membership Dues by September 1st

Membership dues should be paid on or before September 1st. It is important to have an accurate number of members to forward to LDEI for the Membership Directory as well as to determine delegates for the Annual Conference. Dues can be paid online at lesdamesboston.org or mail a check payable to LDE Boston to P.O. Box 65, Andover, MA 01810.

Sincerely,

Sheila Stone, Executive Director
Les Dames d'Escoffier