

chadzilla

"The future of gastronomy belongs to chemistry." Brillat Savarin. 1825

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mental digestion

Just got home from New York last night for the 4th annual (and my third) [International Chefs Congress](#). Many thanks to [Antoinette](#), [Will](#), and staff for putting on another greatly inspiring and motivational show. Many thanks to all of the people out there who keep making me think. I just want to run through some of the random things running through my head and basically shout out to so many cool people. It's impossible (and probably boring) if I posted everything so if I forgot something or someone, it's just that my head is still spinning for many various reasons. Here we go in no particular order...

Still after so many years being amazed at the insight and intelligence of Charlie Trotter.

4 mornings of coffee and congee to wake me up in a tiny Chinatown bakery... awesome.

4 nights of 4 guys crammed into the smallest hotel room in the world in Chinatown... not awesome. Just more reason to sleep less and stay out more.

Seeing modern science and ancient tradition fused together through Japanese umami in Chef [Yoshiro Murata's](#) demonstration.

Still wondering why 'fusion' as a concept is still being debated when it already exists in 99% (or more) of the world's culinary dishes in some form or another.

Having [Pierre Gagniare](#) and [Juan Mari Arzak](#) remind me to always be humble.

Witnessing the organic genius of Pierre Gagniare.

Eating on a budget in NY is difficult. Drinking on a budget is impossible.

Eating the best wood brick oven pizza I've ever had from our new friend, Guillermo, at [Motorino](#) in Brooklyn. Great food, great company, and great hospitality! That just built up my already burning brick oven fever.

Meeting up with new and old friends... our friend [Chris Windus](#) and his sous chef Danny, [Linda](#) from Food Player, Alberto Cabrera from here in Miami, [Jeremiah Bullfrog](#), talking to [Kevin Sousa](#) who is always a step ahead of us, saying Hi to [Alex](#) from Ideas in Food (thanks for sharing your [personal notes](#) from the demo's with everyone), [Kostas](#) from Just Food, [Tyler Teass](#) of New Mountain Cookery, Chef Richard and Peggy in DC, Howard from [Winston Industries](#) along with Jill Conklin, meeting the guys from [Elements](#) restaurant, [Dirk Flanigan](#) from Gage, meeting [Craig Deihl](#) from Cypress in Charleston (awesome charcuterie! thanks for sharing), having the privilege of meeting [Jeremy Fox](#) from Ubuntu, [Scott Boswell](#) from NOLA, [Jacquimo](#) from NOLA, meeting Judy Shertzer from [Terra Spice](#) in person instead of through many emails, talking to [Akiko Katayama](#).

Seeing [Sean Brock](#) blow it all out of the water with his highly theme-relevant demo on Low Country Cuisine. Thank you for so much ecological and cultural insight and for reminding everyone that while America is crying over polar bears sitting on melting icebergs, we also need to focus on the many disappearing treasures right in front of our faces. You rocked it like no one else did!

Getting to have an actual conversation with [Grant Achatz](#).

Getting on the subway, getting off the subway, getting on the subway, getting off... etc.

Seeing [Alex Stupak](#) constantly evolve his cuisine ahead of everyone else, and staying true to creativity.

Eating some surprisingly great BBQ in Brooklyn at [Fette Sau](#).

Watching [Charles Phan](#) demonstrate how to make rice paper (and his assistant, Lien).

Hearing practically every chef for 3 days give recognition their chef teams and how it takes collaboration to make it happen. There was definitely a lack of ego when it came to acknowledging the ones who make the wheels turn.

Meeting [Asbel Reyes](#) in person, and hopefully we will get to converse someday.

[Paco Torreblanca](#)... nothing else can be said about this genius except "Wow."

Seeing [Michael Laiskonsis](#) again, and having him invite us to help him again at the next SoBe W&F for Daniel Boulud's tribute dinner. There is no chef out there with more class than Michael Laiskonsis. It's always an honor.

Rick Tramonto might be known as a hard chef, but he comes across on stage as being humble and true to cuisine. Chef K reminded us that he (more than any other well-known chef there) sat in the front row for every single demonstration and diligently took notes the entire time. That's respect.

Watching Nathan Myhrvold and Chris Young put an entire crowd in anticipation over their upcoming book... and wondering how to employ a staff of 15 people for 4 years on a project that has not generated revenue. Their efforts will more than pay off.

Jose Andres is like a culinary evangelist. He really knows how to work a crowd.

Morimoto... the God of Thunder in the culinary world.

Seeing the incredible synergy of [Dave Arnold and Nils Noren](#) in action before me, and finally getting to skoal. Hoping they will visit us in Miami sometime.

Witnessing countless evidence that the dirty south will rise up in the near future.

Meeting up with our old friend, Antulio.

Realizing that as great as New York city is to an outsider, it's not America.

Eating a brown bag lunch of porchetta, asiago, and focaccia that we bought at [Di Palo's](#) in Little Italy while waiting to go through security at LaGuardia.

Coming home to re-coop before work tomorrow.

Last but never least, hanging out for 4 days with our great friend, [Mark Majorie](#). It was a good run.