

The Big Apple with a Lot of Bite

The Starchefs Congress in the Big Apple brought some of the best chefs in the world to exchange ideas. The slogan read, Kitchens without Borders, and fit perfectly at the place of the event.

The really famous chefs gladly let you peek into their menus. However, what they already know is that what they do can not be easily copied, because these techniques are too complex for normal restaurants. Others around them see that their roles are, to give inspiration to their colleagues, so that they can help the industry further develop. Finally it is also the explicit role of an International Chefs Congress like the one that took place September 16-18 in New York. The Starchefs.com Congress was to promote an exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Japan in all the mouths

The Japanese Siji Yamamoto of the Ryugin Restaurant in Tokyo opened the demonstrations round, but western chefs David Bouley and Joel Robuchon also dedicated themselves to the extensive Japanese techniques. "For me the Japanese kitchens are the most wholesome kitchens overall, because they are totally focused on the product. However, in America and Europe the egos of the respective chefs play a large role, the best chefs in Japan keep themselves amongst the product, the optimal achievement to reach," explained Bouley in his lecture, "Japanese Technique-American Ingredients." It is important to deal with the technical side while preserving the integrity and identity. A "Disorderly Kitchen" brings nothing to anyone. Joel Robuchon accompanied by Yosuke Suga, his Japanese Kitchen chef from his New York's Atelier Robuchon, deflated Japan's kitchens along with Rosen in the host country: "At first I thought, that the best Chefs came from France, then from Japan, but now I think the best chefs in the world live here in the USA"



Curing Steak for 90 days

David Burke, a classic American chef in his Chicago restaurant Mrs. Park's Tavern, developed a dry aging technology for his steaks. In a temperature and humidity controlled room entirely covered with salt plates, he cures his steaks up to 90 days. "With this long curing process, the steaks absorb even the smallest aromas from their environment. That's why we have the room lined with Himalayan salt," explained Burke.

The expensive, rose-pink salt is also always inserted into Burke's table. He cuts from the blocks (see fig.5) small boards in which he serves up Sashimi. These "Salt Boards" lets him use them over 100 times and are easy to clean.

Not so sweet patisseries

Another central topic of demonstration was that of the desserts. In the past few years the pastry chefs have struggled to come out the shade. Before, fine-food consumers knew the name of sommeliers in top restaurants but not the pastry chefs. That has seemed now to have changed. In Manhattan, there are already six pastry-centric restaurants that were opened by pastry chefs. These places have almost nothing in common with your ordinary confectionery. Rather these places fit better with elegant tapas or

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notable restaurants. It's no wonder then that everything in these places is not sweet, and these so-called desserts have numerous taste nuances. More often are bitter, salty, and sour ingredients coming into the mix. And we have known lately in this country from Josef Zotter that chocolate goes very well with chili. "Many innovations come from the patisserie, because we operate simply in more detail and experiment with different techniques. David Bouley continually encourages me to try even more unrealistic combinations, even if these creations don't make it on the menu," explains Viennese Alex Grunert, who is the Pastry Chef responsible for all of desserts in David Bouley restaurants. With Pichet Ong of P*ONG, John Luzzini (Jean George), Alex Stupak (wd~50), Will Goldfarb (Room 4 Dessert-all New York) and Oriol Balaguer (Barcelona) were all five pastry chefs that were on the podium during the 3-day conference. Nevertheless, a remarkable number of pastry chefs that would have been unthinkable in years past.

Impressive building follows impressive program

The meeting place for the second Starchefs Congress took place on the 51st and 52nd floors of the not quite finished first skyscraper at Ground Zero, the former World Trade Center location. The top creators in the world presented themselves in the central auditorium, along with the Viennese vinegar specialist Erwin Gegenbauer. The view was-as one can also recognize from our title photo- really spectacular. This Congress was organized by the online magazine, www.starchefs.com which has existed since 1995. This year's Congress entire program was focused on this extensive web platform of "Working Chefs" The inspired efforts of Antoinette Bruno and Will Blunt, the two partners behind Starchefs.com, will also find the congress in New York for 2008. The date and location of the event has not yet been firmly planned.