

Orchard and berry production workshop

A harvest-time workshop on orchard and berry production could bear fruit for those interested in becoming commercial small farmers, or improving their current farming processes.

Western Nevada College Specialty Crop Institute is having an orchard and berry production workshop on Sept. 10, 9am-4:30pm at WNC Carson City campus, 2201 West College Parkway.

Cost is \$35 if registered by Aug. 31, or \$45 after Aug. 31. Lunch is included in registration; seating is limited.

Participants will learn about orchard and berry production for the small farm including best varieties to grow in northern Nevada's climate and soils; site selection and planting, fertilization, pruning, pest management, and more. The workshop is intended for experienced and new farmers interested in small-scale commercial production and sales. It includes classroom training and an on-farm tour of Agape Organics, a certified organic apple orchard in Washoe Valley.

Featured speaker is local expert Michael Janik, who has grown and experimented with orchard fruits and berries for more than a decade. He's grown more than 100 apple varieties, as well as currants, grapes, berries and more. Janik is a certified arborist and is accomplished at grafting.

The WNC Specialty Crop Institute is an innovative education program to teach alternative farming methods, allowing growers to diversify from low-value crops to high-value, direct-marketed specialty crops; increase per-acre return; and manage water efficiently. It is made possible with funding from the Nevada Department of Agriculture and USDA/AMS through the Specialty Crop Block Grant.

For workshop registration or details, contact Ann Louhela at (775) 351.2551 or email louhelaa@wnc.edu.

Dueling Tahoe chefs part of annual Autumn Food-Wine Festival

One of the North Shore's most heated competitions will pit Tahoe culinary colleagues against each other to determine who rightfully deserves the title of Mountain Chef at the Blazing Pans Cook-Off Sept. 11. The cook-off is part of the three-day Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival (Sept. 10-12) at the Village at Northstar in Truckee.

Reigning champion David Lutz, owner of Tahoe City's Evergreen Restaurant, will be challenged by Chef de Cuisine Chad Shrewsbury of the Resort at Squaw Creek's Six Peaks Grille.

Lutz was raised in the Bay Area and attended the Culinary Institute of America in New York. Lutz's culinary philosophy, which is seen and tasted in the Evergreen menu, revolves around seasonal dishes featuring local and organic ingredients and high quality, sustainable meats. He strives to deliver deceptively healthy meals at an affordable, friendly restaurant.

Shrewsbury was also raised in the Bay Area. As a child, he became entranced with the culinary industry by helping in the kitchen in a variety of restaurants his father managed. Food preparation, atmosphere and creativity were an everyday part of his life. Shrewsbury carried his passion for food to the mountains, where he delights diners with his innovative

creativity, especially in the realm of molecular gastronomy.

The one-hour competition will entail both chefs taking one main, secret ingredient and creating as many delicious dishes as possible in the allotted time. The ingredient will not be revealed until moments prior to the start of the clock. Both chefs will also be supplied with a complete pantry of kitchen staples and fresh produce. Past secret ingredients have included mackinaw, lamb, foie gras and rabbit.

Many of this year's Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival events, including the cooking classes, are free. Ticketed events range from \$20 to \$90 and are on sale. For more information, call 888.229.2193 or go to www.TahoeFoodandWine.com.

The Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival is a fundraiser for the Community Fund of North Lake Tahoe through the 501c(3) Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation. The 25th annual festival is produced by the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association in partnership with Sunset, Northstar-at-Tahoe, the Northstar Foundation, Standards of Excellence, Charbay Winery and Distillery, Tahoe Quarterly and Tahoe TV.

Wine on the Water fundraiser at Hyatt in Incline

Hyatt Regency in Incline Village is having its inaugural Wine on the Water festival Aug. 29 from 1-5pm.

Featuring 20 wineries and a dozen local restaurants, the event will include exclusive tastings of some of the region's best food and wine, live music, and a noteworthy silent auction.

Set against a backdrop on the Cottage Green beside Hyatt's private beach, 100 percent of all proceeds generated from ticket sales and silent auction sales will be donated to the Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe.

Tickets are \$65 per person in advance, \$75 at the door.

For tickets or more information, call (775) 886.6889 or go to www.loneeaglegrille.com.

Poker run through Fair Play wineries

Fair Play Wine and Poker Run is Aug. 14 from 11am to 5:30pm.

Sample wines from five Fair Play wineries, then end the day enjoying dinner on the Grand Deck at Chateau Routon. Each winery you visit will present you with an envelope containing a playing card. At the end of the day, you will have at least five cards to create your hand. Prizes will be given for various hands.

Tickets are \$89.50 plus tax. Call (530) 620.5818 for reservations.

Art of fruit pie worth the

drive in summer

By Noelle Carter, Los Angeles Times



A couple of weeks ago, I was out on the road in Northern California, heading southeast from Sacramento on Highway 16 toward the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. It's a beautiful drive, and on that blistering summer day I might have noticed the massive old oaks dotting the rolling hills or the occasional solitary weathered barn as the highway shimmered in the heat up ahead. But I was on a mission.

I hung a right onto Highway 49, heading toward the heart of California's Gold Country. "Historic 49," as it's often called, meanders through scenic little Gold Rush towns with names like Drytown and Sutter Creek before continuing on toward Jackson and Angels Camp, where one Samuel Clemens originally made a name for himself under the pen name Mark Twain, writing about a jumping frog. But I wasn't out for the scenery, or a history lesson.

I wanted pie.

Fresh blackberry pie, to be exact. I stopped in Amador City and walked down the wooden plank sidewalk to Buffalo Chips Emporium, a tiny storefront diner complete with an old-fashioned soda fountain, and ordered a slice of pie from owner Ashley Putz as she worked the griddle behind the counter.

It came still warm, its sugar-dusted crust glittering in the sunlight through the front window, the light, flaky exterior quietly shattering under the fork with each bite. Underneath, the rich berry filling oozed slightly – the thick, sweet glaze

cradling tender, slightly tart berries that seemed to pop with every mouthful. It was magical.

Read the whole story

K's Kitchen: Hot Spinach Tortilla



By Kathryn Reed

It seems like as the weather gets warmer, I want to eat less or not at all. The less part wouldn't hurt me, the not at all isn't the healthiest of choices.

There are just those days when all the "regulars" sound boring and opening a cookbook sounds way too involved.

When all of these thoughts and sentiments collide I tend to look in the fridge, freezer and cupboards to come up with something that might even qualify as nutritious. A consecutive day of tater tots was probably not going to do my body good.

This is how the recipe below came about. It's quick and easy, too – definite added bonuses. Because it's fast, it means not heating the house up for long on hot days. (I was already baking, so heating up the house further with the stove was irrelevant at that point.)

To make it a bit healthier, skip the cream cheese or even skip

the tortilla. It would make an excellent side dish. It could also be used as a topping for rice or pasta. Eating it alone as a midday snack would work, too.

I like buying spinach in large quantities and then using it in different dishes. It's great cooked or raw in a salad. The nutritional value of spinach is incredible.

The basil came from the backyard. Herbs are one of the easiest things to grow in Tahoe. I have basil, cilantro, spearmint, rosemary and dill all in a half wine barrel. It's not too late to start your herb garden.

I had chive-onion cream cheese in the house, so that's what I used. Any kind would be fine. Light cream will help with the fat-calorie in-take.

Hot Spinach Tortilla

Olive oil

1 red onion, chopped

5 cloves garlic, minced

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. fresh spinach

Handful basil leaves, chopped

4 oz. roasted red peppers, chopped

4 tortillas

Cream cheese

Coat pan with olive oil. Once hot, add onion and garlic. Over medium-high heat sauté until onion is slightly opaque. Add handfuls of spinach. Stir. As spinach wilts, keep adding more handfuls until all of it is in the pan. When the spinach is mostly wilted, add red pepper and basil. Add some of the liquid from the peppers if need be. Stir more to meld flavors.

Remove from heat.

Heat tortillas. Spread thin layer of cream cheese on tortilla. Add as much spinach mixture as you like. Fold like you are eating a burrito.

Jail culinary program creates yummy food, future cooks

By Kathryn Reed

When El Dorado County Sheriff Fred Kollar worked in Lake Tahoe the jail was serving TV dinners. Last week he made a special effort to commend the inmate, yes the inmate, who made the cream puffs.

Kollar has a thing for cream puffs and he told inmate Jimmy Beechler these were as good as the ones his mom made.



Sheriff Fred Kollar raves about the cream puffs made by inmates at the Tahoe jail. Photos/Kathryn

Reed

As the high bidder of the “lunch with the sheriff at the jail” during Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra’s Elegant Evening earlier this year, I finally redeemed my voucher on Monday. Joining us was jail commander Lt. Randy Peshon.

It’s under Peshon’s leadership that the culinary program in the jail has taken off in the last three years. In cooperation with Lake Tahoe Community College, three adjunct faculty members (Hugo Lizaola, Bob Grijalva and Trish McGrath) work in the jail kitchen under the supervision of head jail chef Jeanette Shippee.

The inmates who qualify for worker status, are not behind bars for a violent crime and show an interest in the program may apply to be in the culinary arts program that has the same curriculum as LTCC. It means working 12-hour days.

“They come out of here with a GED, culinary arts certificate and resume. Jeanette and I work our contacts to get them a job. The recidivism is almost non-existent,” Peshon explained. “They are out and not coming back. That is where the huge savings to the county comes from.”

It takes eight months for an inmate to complete the program. Their final is serving a complete meal to a public panel.

Peshon was needled by Shippee to take the serve safe class. This class is a necessity for anyone working in a commercial kitchen. Now the inmates are challenged to beat his score.

He’s even learning a thing or two about cooking, which is paying off for his wife.

With state mandated nutritional guidelines as well as the presentation of the food, the inmates are eating well-balanced meals. They can also get meals if they have special diets or for religious reasons.

Bad food equals bad behavior, Peshon said. No slop, like what is sometimes depicted in the movies, is served here.



Lt. Randy Peshon has learned cooking skills as part of his work in the jail.

“In the early '80s every meal was a TV dinner. It took 20 to 30 minute to heat up,” Kollar said. “It would be expensive today and it wouldn't meet nutritional requirements.”

Baking is what Shippee likes to focus on. She teaches at LTCC on occasion, so it's not just inmates who benefit from her culinary skills.

For several years she has had her charges enter the El Dorado County Fair. And each year several ribbons are awarded to the inmates. Oftentimes this is the first time any of them has won anything.

Carlos Gonzalez, still dressed in his inmate white cooking uniform, is a little shy about talking about his blue first place ribbon for his dinner rolls. Having had one of the light, fluffy rolls with my lunch that day, I'd say they are a definite runner-up to my mom's dinner rolls.

Gonzalez said he and Shippee came up with the recipe.



Inmates Carlos Gonzalez and Eric Malone show-off their ribbons from the county fair.

Eric Malone has ribbons from the past two county fairs. For this summer's fair he entered a chocolate raspberry bar (second place) and a chocolate raspberry cream cake (first place).

"It was kind of nerve wracking trying to prepare everything. You think you have more time than you really do," Malone said.

In the past he won for an almond kiss cookie and a triple layer brownie.

It was Malone who had a strong influence in what was served to the sheriff. He admitted to being a little nervous cooking for the sheriff.

"You worry if it's going to turn out," Malone said.

For the July 19 lunch, Malone said, "Me and Jeanette threw it together." The idea was coming up with one dish that could be served three ways to accommodate the three of us. I skipped the chicken, Peshon wanted just the chicken and Kollar could eat everything.

Malone came up with the name of the pasta dish at the last minute while back in the kitchen after everything was cleaned

up.

Our lunches were served in the same plastic trays the inmates get, along with a carton of milk. Individual slots in the tray hold the food, so no worries about items touching one another.

A green salad with a side of ranch dressing occupies two slots, the yummy dinner roll, a decadent cream puff, and pasta primavera as the entrée fill the other areas.

Per meal costs are \$1.10-\$1.15, according to Peshon. This does not include labor. When you serve more than 100 people three meals a day, shopping in bulk pays off.

Inmates have a minimum of 15 minutes to eat a meal. Luckily, no one was watching the clock while I was there.

Considering my voucher said I could bring a guest and I didn't, I'm thinking I may call the sheriff up again for another lunch or maybe wait until the new guy gets in office. I wouldn't say the food is a reason to commit a crime, but I would suggest bidding on this item or the lunch with the jail commander at the next Elegant Evening.

Sheriff in the Jail Meal

1 purple onion, julienne

2 zucchini, quartered

2 yellow squash, quartered

1½ red bell peppers, julienne

8-10 mushrooms

2 tomatoes

1 C basil, chiffonade

1 full bowl broccoli

Cook all of the vegetables, toss with cooked pasta. Serves five.

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News will feature an interview with Sheriff Fred Kollar on June 26.*

LT Autumn Food and Wine Fest lines up slew of chefs

The Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival is celebrating a milestone – 25 years – Sept. 10-12.

Culinary aficionados and hungry travelers can return to the cobbled streets at the Village at Northstar in Truckee for chef battles, free cooking demonstrations, along with wine seminars.

Visitors can join in with noted celebrity chefs, presenters and vintners, including a special Celebrity Chef Luncheon with Chef Traci Des Jardins of Manzanita at the Ritz-Carlton Highlands; a live cooking demonstration with Chef Joseph Keller of Bouchon at Yountville, Las Vegas and Beverly Hills; outdoor grilling with Chef Lars Kronmark, a chef instructor at the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in the Napa Valley; cooking demonstrations with Jason Gronlund, former executive chef with Tabasco; and Lake Tahoe's Chef Michael Plapp of Baxter's Bistro & Lounge; kids' cooking class with Chef Lara Ritchie of Nothing To It Culinary Center in Reno; food and wine pairing seminar with Roger King of Suisun Valley Vintners and Growers Association; Silver Oak Cellars vertical wine tasting and Olivier Napa Valley food and wine pairing with Silver Oak Senior Wine Educator Kim Caffrey; and the Charbay Artisan Winery & Distillery Annual Launch Party with

Marko & Jenni Karakasevic.

The 25th festival will also host a number of other events and programs, such as a Grape Stomp, 25th Anniversary Welcome Reception at the Ritz-Carlton Highlands, Lake Tahoe; sushi rolling class with Mikuni Japanese Restaurant & Sushi Bar; a Gourmet Marketplace Vendor Fair; Plein Air Painters, Art & Sculpture Show; a Wine Walk, Blazing Pans Mountain Chef Cook-Off (Iron Chef style) and a Chocolate Class, as well as live entertainment and winemaker dinners throughout the week.

The weekend culminates with the Grand Tasting and Culinary Competition, when dozens of regional chefs serve their finest creations paired with premium California and international wines. An auction of unique wines and libations follows.

Guests can come early to take advantage of the region's most delicious week and its exceptional values by attending the inaugural Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week (Sept. 5-12), when more than 30 of the area's best bistros, eateries and resorts are offering 3-course prix-fixe menus for \$20, \$30 and \$40 per person.

Many of this year's Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival events, including the cooking classes, are free. Ticketed events range from \$20 to \$90 and are on sale now.

For more information, call 888.229.2193 or go to www.TahoeFoodandWine.com. Special room rates will also be available during the festival, click to the North Lake Tahoe Visitors Bureaus' website, www.GoTahoeNorth.com, and then Cool Deals.

The Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival is a fundraiser for the Community Fund of North Lake Tahoe through the nonprofit Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation.

Sample the Sierra blends food, wine and art

Sample the Sierra is a cooperative effort of El Dorado County organizations, growers, producers and businesses to increase awareness of the region's bounty, heritage, culture and activities through a market-to-table event featuring tastings from the Sierra Nevada's best chefs and restaurants – all created with local produce, and paired with tastings from local wineries and breweries.

Food and wine tasting will be Aug. 21 from 1-4pm, however, other activities start an hour earlier and end an hour later.

It all takes place on Ski Run Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.

The event marketplace will also include regional products such as honey, jams, olive oil and soaps. A juried, original art show will feature pottery, painting, photography and handmade crafts by regional artists and artisans.

Live entertainment, including music, storytellers, acoustic musicians, and regional presentations and activities will round out the program.

Sample the Sierra has openings for growers, wineries, breweries, chefs/restaurants, marketplace vendors, entertainment and artists. Event sponsorships are also available at many levels.

For more information, contact TahoeChamber.org – call (775) 588.1728 or email Natalie@TahoeChamber.org.

Thai One On making money for Relay for Life

Thai One On is this week's featured restaurant for Taste of Tahoe. Taste of Tahoe is a fund raiser for the South Shore's Relay for Life.

Eating at the Kingsbury Grade restaurant now through July 24 means a portion of the proceeds go to the local Relay for Life, which in turn is a money-maker for the American Cancer Society.