

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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Notes p.6

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Diego p.9

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Corner p.16

easy eats

the magazine for gluten-free living

WINTER 2010

Celebrating Food

New York Food & Wine Festival

Appetite for Awareness

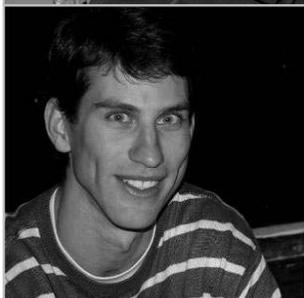


easy eats



Ellen Spiller *Executive editor*

After switching to a gluten-free diet in 2006, Ellen found relief after years of frustration with doctors and pain. Her health improved dramatically, and those problems have been replaced with the challenge of eating and living gluten-free. Today, Ellen looks forward to the improving conditions and awareness so she can eat out without worrying about getting sick.



Joel Wooten *Managing editor*

From his first trip through the grocery store armed with a list of 'safe' and 'not safe' foods, Joel has progressed to being well-versed in the world of gluten-free life. He relishes his job of helping Ellen watch out for wheat with an extra pair of eyes and is excited to be part of this family project.



Frank Wooten *Research and analysis*

Frank brings his love of economics to our familial ranks. Discovering interesting twists on topics and doing the heavy-lifting to make such stories a reality, Frank uses his expertise to deliver the goods. Other favorite deliveries involve those going to his mouth, making him a perfect test subject for recipes and product tastings.



Betsy Butler *Special contributor*

Betsy recently left her position as an editor at a Georgia publishing company to move on to bigger and better things in Charleston, SC. While her appetite isn't quite as big as those of her Wooten cousins, Betsy is enjoying all the good food and culture that South Carolina has to offer.



Katherine Wooten *Special contributor*

In 2004, when Katherine found herself writing about media, she wondered what a journalist could possibly be missing. It turns out the missing factor was food. A long-time fan of all things edible, she embarked on a journey to discover and craft perfect haute-recreational fare. The result was delicious recipes and inspiration in spades. Back to writing, her pen is gobbling it up.

INTERESTED IN EASY EATS? Please contact us and let us know what you think. Send any comments, questions, or inquiries to us via e-mail us at easy.eats@yahoo.com. ALSO NOTE: While we make every effort to publish correct, researched information, this is a periodical for entertainment and should not be viewed as medical advice or treated as such. Please consult a doctor if you have any medical questions or concerns.



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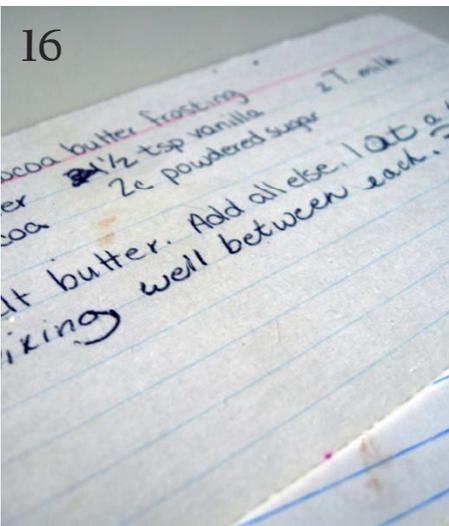
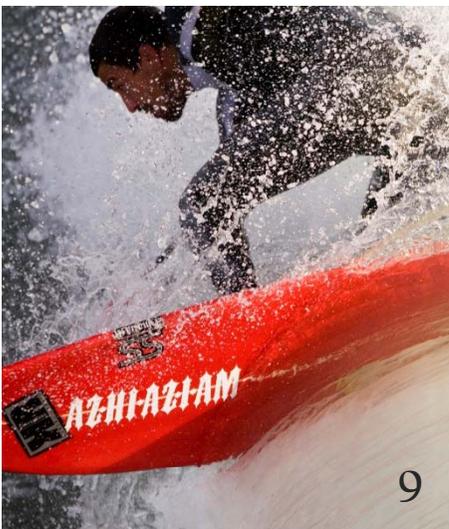
Surfing? Winter? Entertaining? San Diego makes it all look easy.

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Celebrating gluten-free life with food festivals seems great to us. We show you our experiences with two – one in New York and one in Philadelphia.

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Baking and winter go hand in hand – warm up your oven for these treats.



The Most Wonderful Time

Happy Holidays from everyone at *Easy Eats*. We are having a fantastic season of eating with all the holidays: dressing, sweet potato biscuits, doughnuts, cookies, and pies... mmm. As usual, we have been roaming around looking for amazing gluten-free fare and sending our family and friends about to do the same. Through our roaming, we have found some delicious new products and recipes that we are pleased to share with you in this issue.

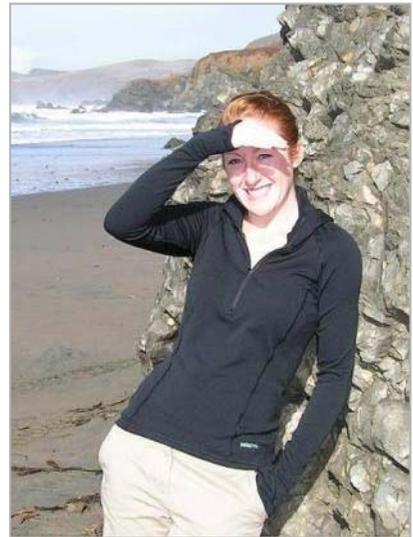
Another highlight of the year was this fall's Appetite for Awareness: A Gluten-Free Cooking Spree, produced by the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness, which we had the privilege of attending. This is the NFCA's capstone event each fall and brings in vendors, restaurants, and educators from all over. The food was wonderful, and the fellowship was even better. What a treat to go to a huge party where I could eat everything in sight!

As always, the *Easy Eats* team is scheming for the future, but it seems particularly appropriate given that New Year's resolutions are just around the corner. So once again, we are soliciting ideas, criticisms, celebrations, favorites, or just about anything you want to tell us. We do this for you and definitely want to hear what you think!

We look forward to seeing you in the new year, celebrating three years in Easy Eating.



Ellen Spiller Executive editor



Magazine News

PEN PALS

We continue to feature articles by some of the best writers in the gluten-free world. This issue, we have a returning contributor and a first-timer adding their talents. We so enjoy sharing the ideas and experiences we turn up; please join us in thanking our magic holiday helpers...

Kristen Oliveri

- Although she answers the call of financial journalist by day, this Manhattan writer's true calling may be as a budding food blogger. Her online home, Pasta's Kitchen, turns out fun articles on travel, food, and restaurants. As you might guess, Kristen's favorite cuisine is Italian, but after recently being diagnosed as gluten intolerant, she had to shift her writing and website accordingly.

- Today, she continues to experiment with pasta creations that are both gluten- and guilt-free to the delight of those that are fortunate enough to sample her delicious creations.



Kelli Leingang

- A graduate of Ohio State, Kelli works in Columbus, Ohio as a dietitian. She embarked on her gluten-free journey a year and a half ago and looks forward to expanding her area of expertise to help those with celiac disease.

- She loves running, relaxing, and most importantly cooking. Her favorite thing is baking, especially breads, cookies, and cakes because of the challenge involved in making them taste good.

WHERE TO FIND THEM

pg 11 – Kristen's feature, 'Fair Fare,' explores how a main stream food festival responds to gluten-free.

For more: pastaskitchennyc.wordpress.com.

pg 16 – Some baking recipes to try this winter, courtesy of Kelli.

For more recipes: thefckelli.blogspot.com.



From Your Pen Continued thanks for being our eyes and ears – we can't say it enough. Send us ideas and questions and we'll get back to you with stories and answers. Also, we'd love to hear about your travel experiences, so send those in.

Fluent in Food

It seemed to me to be much easier to eat gluten-free in Italy than the summer article (*Flying Afield*) made it out to be. It took me a few days to learn that "senza gluten" was the key phrase in Italian and that would get a gluten-free cone in most ice cream shops and gluten-free meals (including pizza and pasta) in restaurants, etc. No need to bring your own pasta – really yummy gluten-free pasta is readily available in grocery stores and pharmacies there.

There is good reason for Italians to have great awareness of celiac disease and the gluten-free diet. By the age of 6, all Italians are screened for celiac disease. Those who are required to follow a modified diet get a monthly stipend from the government to cover the additional cost of foods.

We visited Italy for ten days three years ago. While I was able to navigate dining on my own, I did even better when we spent a couple of days with some family friends who could speak fluent Italian (the wife and one child in this family are also on a gluten-free diet). While I can read the language somewhat, speaking it is a challenge to me. Again, the phrase "senza gluten" was enough for most establishments to understand what I needed.

Keep the gluten-free news coming; I love to read your newsletters! Best wishes!

- Kim Buckton

Hi, Kim!

Thanks for the note. It sounds like your trip to Italy went really well. Having a family member or friend who speaks the language always helps. Definitely coerce, prod, and beg anyone you know who is fluent to either go with you (maybe a tall order) or at least give you a crash course in key phrases. That can make a big difference – and it sounds like it did in your case. We are also impressed at Italy's screening regimen and will look at that in more detail.

Fact Checking

If this is a gluten-free publication, then the restaurant named *North* in Austin from the summer mailbag section in your recent publication is not gluten-free. They serve spelt pasta instead of regular pasta which they admit is "wheat-free;" however, someone on a gluten-free diet cannot eat spelt pasta. It took me no longer than 5 minutes to figure that out from the list the respondent provided. I live in Canada, and I have not been to Austin, so that is something you could have checked yourselves to ensure accuracy in your magazine.

Also, while I am e-mailing you, besides the World Cup, which is every 4 years, and the Tour de France and Tennis events that happen every year, there also were the Winter Olympics that happened in Canada, which shares this continent with you. How you could have missed that I am not sure, as there was plenty of delayed coverage on your news and TV stations – we get them all up here. I had a great time volunteering at both of the Olympics and had an even more exciting time actually being fed a gluten-free meal, which after 27 years of being diagnosed I have come to take as being second nature at times.

- Lynda Neilson VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Lynda - Thanks for alerting us to the possible mistake. We will try and be more diligent in noting errors in reader's notes. That being said, we didn't see the inclusion of anything on the menu that suggested a mix-up of any type, so we went with the local's insider knowledge.

As for sporting events, which we adore, you are correct that we omitted the Winter Olympics. For the summer issue, we focused on those events that were taking place at that time. I can assure you that we got our fill of giant slalom, triple toe loops, and curling while the games were being played last year!

We appreciate the comments and will keep improving.

Favorite New Finds: A Few to Try

We got to try scores of products and dishes at the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness's 2010 Appetite for Awareness in Philadelphia this fall. Here, we run down a few of the items we tasted.



Dietz & Watson paired up with **The Grainless Baker** to provide the event with proper fairground food – hot dogs. Wowser bedowser, these were good! They boast great texture that avoids the post-swallowing grainy feeling on the tongue. The buns are a little denser than a wheat bun might be, but they make up for it with a delicious sweet flavor to offset an all-angus frank (casein-free) and the zip of the mustard. I would definitely order this at a baseball or hockey game, enjoy one at a backyard party, or stir up some good, old-fashioned beanie-weenies on a bun. So good!

(thegrainlessbaker.com)

Chébé mixes offer great flavor, but we've been struggling to get the texture just right. It seems the recipe on the bag produces a dough that is a little plastic-like in texture. We like the focaccia the best, which has good rise when baked in the oven (note: avoid high-heat brick ovens as it doesn't bake through evenly) and a great herb flavor. Pile on some freshly chopped tomatoes and basil or root vegetables in pesto for a great hors d'oeuvre.

(chebe.com)



We love that these cookies are allergen-free, which makes them available to those of us who are gluten-free, casein-free, and dairy-free. They are a little sweet for our liking, with a bit of that gritty after taste that sometimes results from a reliance on fine flours. However, paired with a cup of coffee or hot tea, Lucy's cookies serve as great 'biscuits' at tea time.

(drlucys.com)

Curious about a product we found to be consistently delicious? It's **Pamela's Products Baking and Pancake Mix**. We tried it with eggs, as the recipe calls for, but also with egg substitutes – flax seed and bananas. All three times the pancakes were delicious with great rise, consistent texture throughout, and a light and fluffy feel. This mix turned out a great vehicle for fruit topping, maple syrup, or even peanut butter and jelly.

(pamelasproducts.com)





Photo by Keith McDuffee



Where's the Beef?

Burger Spots

Where to go for a handful of goodness

Scottsdale, AZ

At **Indulge Burgers**, you'll do that and more. If you're feeling adventurous, order the Vesuvius Volcano and tackle the molten cheese center. Otherwise, a slew of toppings make personalizing your patty painless. You also control the protein (Kobe upgrade?) and poundage. \$10-20 10392 N. Scottsdale indulgeb主rgers.com

Lawrence, KS

If you're in the mood for a buffalo, elk, or pork burger – no fear – **Local Burger** covers all the bases. With eight patty types, you'll be chowing down on whatever healthy variation your taste buds crave. Most of the product originates within 50 miles of the store. Hear! Hear! \$7-11 714 Vermont St. localburger.com

Atlanta, GA

One of our favorite culinary stars, Shaun Doty, is at it again. His latest is **Yeah Burger**, where natural and organic ingredients are the focus. We like that they use good buns (locally from Pure Knead) for both burgers and dogs – and the gluten-free fries, onion rings, and beer don't hurt their case. Try one or more of the fifteen sauces for dipping or spreading. \$7-12 1168 Howell Mill Rd. yeahburger.com

The cross-town competition, **Farm Burger**, preaches local sourcing and feels homey but hip. More exotic toppings (we tried cured lardo) lead to some interesting creations.

The verdict? Atlanta's burger scene is thriving. \$7-15 410B W. Ponce farmburger.net

Boston, MA

Burtons Grill is more upscale than your typical burger shack, but that's not a bad thing. You may be tempted by their calamari or risotto fritters, but don't let those stand in the way of the classic cheeseburger. There's nothing quite like that pure, delicious goodness. \$13-20 1363 Boylston St. burtonsg主rgill.com

San Diego, CA

A green-certified restaurant, **Burger Lounge** makes this list because gluten-free buns are slated to be hitting the menu soon. Five spots about town put this on the radar, but its grass-fed beef puts it on the map. Variety isn't their thing, but their quick expansion speaks for itself. \$9-15 406 University Ave. burgerlounge.com



Photo by Dirk Hansen

cityspotlight > San Diego

Sweeping the Nation

CUPCAKES

If your area of the country hasn't caught cupcake fever, just wait. Bakeries, specialty shops, and food trucks focusing exclusively on cupcakes have been popping up all over during the last year. Along with that movement, we've seen some gluten-free options appear, like those from **Cups La Jolla**, which is perched in San Diego's luxe La Jolla neighborhood. Of the ten or so flavors they offer each day, they include at least one gluten-free, one vegan, and one low glycemic option. Of course, if you can't wait for your favorite to find its way through the rotation, you can order two dozen of any flavor any time with a couple days turnaround. Their fun combinations include Coco Cabana, Chocolate Decadence, Bunny Love, and Limone Ricotta. Yum!

\$3-5 7857 Girard Avenue cupslj.com

Going Out on the Town

ENTERTAINMENT

Oftentimes, finding gluten-free food means hunting for a particular restaurant or making plans for food far in advance. As a result, it's wonderfully nice when you can be out and about and enjoy a treat without any trouble. Where might you encounter something like that? Check out a few San Diego spots where the main event is something besides the food.

At the top of the list is catching a **Chargers** game. Although they had an average year in terms of football performance, the spectator score is top-notch. A gluten-free concession stand near the main entrance is your zone for hamburgers, hotdogs, beer, and other treats. Gluten Not Included Bakery is supplying the bread that makes it possible to have a frank in the stands with all the other screaming fans. (A similar setup is available at PETCO Park, where the Padres play.)

\$10-20 Qualcomm Stadium

A little north of the city, **Legoland** is a great adventure for all ages, but especially children. Gluten-free options are becoming more and more prevalent, with pre-packaged items, good awareness in the cafes, and safe hotdogs and hamburgers available throughout. Seems like the building blocks for an easy day trip.

\$8-15 Carlsbad, CA legoland.com

Brunch has turned into a weekend institution in many cities, whether the see-and-be-seen crowd is preening or old friends are relaxing. If you're in the mood to brunch, head to the gluten-free buffet at the **Four Seasons**, offered on the first Saturday of each month. For \$29, you can enjoy an enormous spread of food (including appetizers, salads, and desserts), the size of which will make your head spin.

\$29 7100 Four Seasons Point fourseasons.com

cityspotlight > San Diego



Photo by Cyrus Bulsara

LEFT – The San Diego Zoo, one of the world's best, is a little behind in the rest of the city in terms of its offerings. The upside? You are allowed to bring your own food into the park, making a picnic with polar bears a distinct reality.

PREVIOUS – Southern California is known for magnificent sunsets and a beach life that is pretty easy-going.

Fair Fare

Gluten-free food festivals

.....
by KRISTEN OLIVERI



Photo by Tijmen Kielen

winterfeature

When I was diagnosed with a gluten allergy more than a year ago, I thought my future as a burgeoning food writer was over. How could I possibly write about food, restaurants, and culinary treasures if I couldn't taste and experience it all? Eventually, I learned that I didn't need to eat everything to write about food, and I thankfully came to discover that the food community was becoming increasingly more accepting of those with food allergies. This all came to fruition when I attended this fall's New York Food & Wine Festival, hosted by the Food Network.

Given the task of covering and exploring the festival, I vowed to leave no gluten-free product, meal, or restaurant unturned. Here are some excerpts from my trials and tribulations and some of the restaurant world's greatest influences I met along the way.

The TV chef and me

Ever wonder what some of the top chefs and television personalities really think about gluten-free eating and cooking?

At the festival, I tracked down every top chef and TV foodie personality I could find to ask about their favorite gluten-free recipes and the barriers they experience when cooking gluten-free for the masses.

I caught up with notable names like Bobby Flay, Amanda Freitag, and famous New York restaurateur Geoffrey Zakarian, who recently opened the Midtown Manhattan hot spot, *The Lambs Club*. Here's what they had to say:

Amanda Freitag understands gluten intolerance intimately – her niece suffers from celiac disease. Her sister and brother-in-law now eat completely gluten-free, and she often cooks for them, altering some of her classic favorites to fit their lifestyle. Freitag – who offered up some gluten-free treats at the *Chopped* party at *Landmarc* in the Time Warner Center – explained that she's noticed (even in her own cooking at the restaurant) that a fish dish that may call for a flour dusting doesn't necessarily need the coating since the fish won't lose any of its flavor. While working at *The Harrison*, she was more than accommodating and was happy to walk through the menu with diners who had food allergies. She also hinted that if you're looking for delicious gluten-free bread in New York, try *Le Garden Bakery* in the Finger Lakes region. And yes, they do ship their baked goods.

TOP CHEFS

Bobby Flay



Now a household name, this New York native and *Iron Chef* favorite has a string of restaurants and Food Network shows, many of which showcase his bold, southwest flavors.

Amanda Freitag



The former executive chef of *The Harrison* in New York and a frequent Food Network judge on *Chopped*, Amanda earned her stripes at revered establishments like *Vong* and *Arpege*.

Geoffrey Zakarian



Celebrated in New York circles and less known outside, this famous restaurateur draws on French cuisine in his modern American style. His book *Town/Country* offers dual recipes for each of his favorite 65 ingredients, one elaborate and one simple.

winter feature

I found Zakarian, frequent judge on *Chopped* and other food-centric television programming, at *Landmarc* doling out a tasty beef tartare. Zakarian noted that for him, it's about the quality of his ingredients. Two of his favorites on the *Lambs Club* menu are the heirloom tomato salad and the gazpacho. When a restaurant has fresh heirloom tomatoes, those dishes can speak for themselves and doesn't need any other preservatives, he explained.

I also stumbled upon the *Iron Chef* king himself, Bobby Flay, while at Rachael Ray's Burger Bash. In between stealing bites of other burgers, taking pictures with fans, and making announcements on stage with Ray, I stole a moment with Flay to ask about his favorite gluten-free recipe. While Bobby didn't have a recipe ready to share off-hand (I did take him by surprise, after all), he told me that one thing anyone who is gluten intolerant can enjoy is a topless burger. At *Bobby's Burger Palace*, you can order any burger without the bun and all of the meat is prepared on a separate grill, so there's no room for any cross-contamination. He also suggested holding a mini topless burger bash right in the comfort of your own kitchen. Not a bad idea, Mr. Flay.

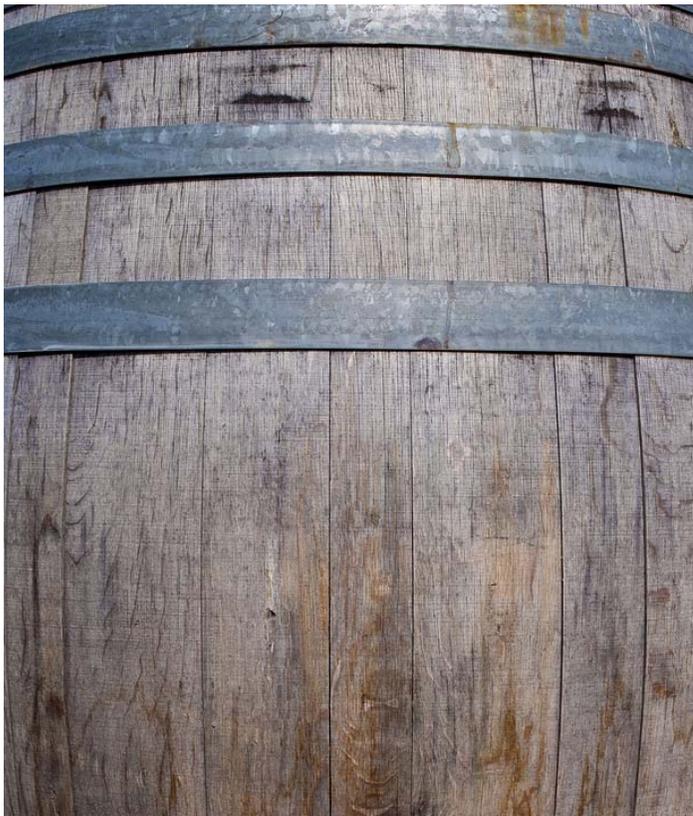
Gluten in my glass

Before I left for the festival, I tapped into my loyal Twitter community to get questions they'd like me to ask the top chefs and experts who crossed my path. A fellow food writer came up with a doozy:

What options does a gluten-free drinker have when choosing a Chardonnay (which can be aged in oak barrels that have been in contact with flour)? .

OAK

Aging debate



This question originates from the fact that some vineyards (in Europe, mostly) use a flour paste to seal oak barrels, and it got a slew of responses. While there was no single, cohesive answer, there was a lot of interesting talk amongst the wine experts. I learned that today, many vineyards use steel barrels, eliminating any gluten issues. The places that did use oak barrels swore that they did not have flour inside of them, just oak.

The jury is still out in my opinion. If you've gotten sick from a glass of wine, common sense says "stay away;" if you're highly gluten-sensitive and have had bad reactions in the past, try to find a wine you like that you know uses steel barrels and stick with that. There are lots of un-oaked Chardonnays and even more un-oaked white varieties out there! Of course, contacting the vintner and asking for more

winter **feature**

information about the specific production process of the casks is a research-based approach, but from the lively discussions I witnessed, the answer may not be a phone call away. At least you'll know just what you're getting into when you start filling your glass. Knowledge is power and, for those of us with food allergy, it's also about safety.

Meat and greet

Food Network's festival organizers know exactly what types of events draw people out, and those events require one thing – meat. Since meat can be prepared many ways (raw, cooked, smoked, cured, etc.), they had to devote two special sessions to it. I, of course, attended both.

On Thursday – the official kick-off of the festival – I trekked down to the Meatpacking district for the Tour de Beef at DeBragga & Spitler's meat facility. There, I sampled a trio of meats, including an Australian wagyu, a dry-aged porterhouse, and a wet-aged porterhouse. We were instructed to eat them in the order of wet-aged, dry-aged, then wagyu, but in my excitement I did the exact opposite.

The tasting was paired with Coppola wines from Sonoma – a merlot and a cabernet. Immediately thereafter, we were instructed to suit up in white coats, gloves, hairnets, and booties so that we could tour the unsettlingly cold meat locker. We saw the aging process of the meats from start to finish, viewed the areas where the meats are butchered, and were given a chance to get a feel for what the average meatpacking employee does during an evening's work.

Two days later, I found myself in the meatpacking district once again, but this time, in a much

PERFECT PORTION

Delectable morsels at Philadelphia's Appetite for Awareness



Photo courtesy of NFCA

winterfeature

warmer climate. *Macelleria* was the venue chosen for the event known as Charcuterie 101. There, I tasted my way through a plethora of cured meats, while listening to commentary from Gabriel Ross of Dickson's Farmstand Meats in Chelsea Market and Herb Eckhouse of La Quercia.

The day wouldn't have been complete without some charcuterie fun facts. I learned that charcuterie is French for "cooked flesh" and the Italian word is salumi, which directly translates to salt. I also discovered that charcuterie – like pate and terrine – can contain traces of bread or flour, so it's easier to stay away from them. Traditional cured meats like prosciutto, ham and salami are your safer bets.

Wrap party, *Del Posto* style

I couldn't think of a better place to end my festival shenanigans than at Mario Batali's *Del Posto* in the Meatpacking district. I entered the beautiful glass doors and descended down the marble staircase into the restaurant's private wine cellar. There, I was privy to a variety of cured meats (no pate or terrine) and a sampling of different cheeses, all sponsored by Murray's Cheese located in the heart of the West Village in Manhattan.

I came across some very thoughtful cheese-makers who explained that many cheddar and harder cheeses are completely lactose-free and are perfect for those who are lactose intolerant, of which I was unaware. The secret is the aging process – the longer it's aged and the harder the cheese is, the less likely it is to contain lactose.

As the Food & Wine Festival came to a close, I was amazed at the amount of understanding regarding gluten intolerance and the willingness of the food industry to keep up and adapt in order to make all diners feel comfortable dining out. It's easy to forget that chefs and industry leaders make this their life, so they often intimately understand the issues and are well ahead of the general learning curve. This allergy has never stopped me from enjoying a meal out – and it never will. I'm just glad everyone else is finally catching on.

QUICK PEEK

We attended the NFCA's Appetite for Awareness at the Philadelphia Naval Yard, too. Follow us through a quick tour of the offerings. Between the live cooking demos, children's zone, and beer garden, there was something for everyone.

1: Restaurants

Approximately twenty restaurants, chefs, and caterers set up stations and doled out delicious treats. Some of our favorites included the bites from *Butcher & Singer* and *El Rey*. Others, like *Pomodora's* pasta offering, were less brilliant. In the end, our gold star went to Philly's *Le Castagne Ristorante* for their utterly divine gnocchi.

2: Educators

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital helped sponsor the event and helped draw in medical centers, culinary schools, and private practitioners from around the area to teach and enlighten.

3: Marketplace vendors

The bulk of the participants were the fifty or so vendors giving out product samples and taste tests. This was like being a kid in a candy store. Quite literally, there were cookies and sweets at every turn. We loved the angel food cake (and bread) from Gluten Free Innovations. Others that really stuck out included Rudi's Gluten Free Bakery, Pamela's Products, and Bard's Tale Beer.

In the end, the fact that the food and drinks were flowing in an environment that was completely safe made this a smashing success.

Ladies and Gentlemen...

by **KELLI LEINGANG**

...start your ovens. It should be no surprise that as colder weather creeps in, we're racing to our kitchens to fire up the baking sheets and muffin tins. When warm treats from the oven are involved, what's not to like about pecans, pumpkin, cinnamon, raspberries, brown sugar, chocolate, and walnuts? Okay – maybe not all together, which is why we've parceled those ingredients into a trio of lovely ideas. We've got big plans to stir, pour, and bake our way into the new year with these crowd-pleasing three.

Perfect Pumpkin Coffee Cake

8 servings > *The sour cream and pumpkin give this coffee cake its soft, rich structure. You can also add a basic cream cheese glaze when it's cool – but we've never seen one last that long.*

- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons cold butter
- ½ cup chopped pecans
-
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup reduced fat sour cream
- ¾ cup canned pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

- 2 cups gluten-free flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Combine the first five ingredients and set aside.

In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar. Add the eggs, beating well after each addition, and mix in the pumpkin. Combine the last five ingredients in a bowl and alternately add these dry elements and the sour cream to the wet ingredients. Finally, stir in the vanilla.

Pour half the mixture into a prepared bundt pan. Sprinkle in half of the cinnamon sugar mixture. Pour the remaining batter into the pan and sprinkle on the remaining topping. Bake at 325° for approximately 50 minutes.



Photo by Corey Leopold



Photo by Jules Clancy

Raspberry Cream Cheese Mini Muffins

8 servings > Although any berry works in these, raspberries are a nice choice with their slightly acidic bite. Another good reason to choose this ruby fruit include its high dose of vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants.

- 1/3 cup low fat cream cheese**
- 1/3 cup softened butter**
- 1 1/2 cups sugar**
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- 2 large egg whites**
- 1 large egg**
- 2 cups gluten-free flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 cup low-fat buttermilk**
- 2 cups raspberries (fresh or frozen)**
- 1/4 cup finely chopped walnuts**

Preheat oven to 350°. Beat the cream cheese and butter; add the sugar and beat until fluffy. Mix in the vanilla, egg whites, and egg. Combine all dry ingredients. Alternately add the dry ingredients and the buttermilk into the mixture. Fold in the raspberries and walnuts.

Spoon the batter into a lined mini muffin pan. Make sure not to fill cups all the way up to the top to allow room for rising. Bake for 25 minutes.

You can also make these regular sized muffins; just remember to increase the baking time accordingly.

Note: In the test kitchen, we used a mixture of flours – half Bob's Red Mill and half Gluten Free Pantry Mix flour.

Chocolate Chip Heaven Cookies

8 servings > Everyone has their favorite cookie. Some surveys, like a 2009 poll from USA Today, show that over 53% of Americans put the famous chocolate chip variety at the top of their list. If you are among the morsel-loving mass, try these out. The hint of almond extract provides a subtle bonus. Also, don't forget the salt! Salt is the piece of the puzzle that provides that crucial balance in chocolate chip cookies.

- 3/4 cup butter, slightly softened**
- 1 1/4 cups packed brown sugar**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract**
- 1 egg**
- 2 1/4 cups gluten-free baking mix**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 12 ounces semi-sweet chocolate chips**

Cream the butter and sugar. Mix in the egg and extracts. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, salt, soda, and powder. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet in three parts. Once combined, stir in the chocolate chips, dispersing them throughout the batter. Chill the dough for one hour.

Preheat oven to 375°. Place tablespoon-sized balls onto a greased cookie sheet, two inches apart from each other. Bake for 10-12 minutes and voila!

Note: In the test kitchen, we used Gluten Free Pantry Mix flour for this recipe.