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RANCH FOODS
DIRECT

September 2009

“Shake the hands that feed you.” — Author Michael Pollan

Food with class, at Colorado College

Classes are resuming this month at Colorado College. And thus begins the second year in which trailblazing sustainably oriented **Bon Appetit Management Company** will fulfill the food service needs at all campus eateries and most college functions.

Since Bon Appetit took over the food service contract, General Manager Beth Gentry says meals consumed in the main cafeteria have gone from 6,500 a week to more than 10,000. “Colorado College students and staff are spoiled to eating local, healthy gourmet food,” adds LeTina Matheny, Director of Catering.

But more and more community members are recognizing that the benefits aren’t reserved for the students: all campus eateries are open to the public and the catering department is available to do off-campus private events, everything from weddings to family gatherings to office parties and luncheons.

“Our catering department is full service, and one of our passions is bringing creativity to everything we do,” Matheny says. In August, they helped put on the first of three Starlight fundraising dinners at Venetucci Farm. They’ve created beautiful cheese, nut and fruit displays, elaborate Harry Potter-themed Wizard and Wine dinners for hundreds of generous donors at Bemis Hall, and teased palates with molecular magic like carbonated fruit and a salted caramel powder that re-hydrates in your mouth. But the best part is that Bon Appetit is committed to featuring locally sourced quality food, a rarity these days.

“With a lot of corporations, it’s just more work, and they don’t want to go there. That’s what makes us unique,” Matheny says. “We are a corporation but with a small business mentality.” Many food service providers and large chains require centralized ingredient purchasing, which keeps small local suppliers and farmers out of the game. Not so at Bon Appetit. “Each individual unit has the ability to purchase locally,” says Angelina Rice, the catering manager.

The Arkansas Valley Organic Growers, coordinated by Fowler farmer Marcy Nameth, helps consolidate purchases from an array of area farms. Executive



Chef Ed Clark, shown above right preparing fresh peaches in wine and a wheat and basil salad for the August fundraising dinner at Venetucci, meets with Marcy once a week to plan his menu, which will supply the dining halls, snack bars and as many as 50 catered events a day across campus. He came from Portland to help kick things off in Colorado Springs last year and decided to make the assignment permanent. Bon Appetit also buys a considerable amount of produce from the Colorado College Student Garden, which is about as local as you can possibly get. “We serve a lot of it at president’s house dinners,” Rice says. And of course Bon Appetit buys much of its meat from Ranch Foods Direct.



Chef Ed Clark created the beautiful canteloupe shooters, below, made with melons from Smith Farms.



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coloradocollege/catering

Don’t overlook Colorado College as a source of healthy sit-down or take-out meals on campus or for catering your next special event. On-campus eating options include the Rastall Dining Hall — with the natural burger bar, featuring Callicrate Beef — as well as Colorado Coffee, Benjamin’s, The Preserve, Local Goods and Chas Coffee Cart. Menus are posted weekly on-line at www.cafefonappetit.com/coloradocollege/cafes. Check ahead as hours of operation do vary.

Recipes

Southern Classics...

easily adapted to feature Colorado's seasonal gems

Brian Fortinberry and his mom Mary Boname with their *Top of the Range* cookbook, which includes the recipes on this page.



Fried Green Tomatoes

- 4-6 green tomatoes, cut into 1/2 inch slices
- 1 cup cornmeal, self-rising
- one-half cup plain flour
- 1 large egg, slightly beaten
- 1 c. buttermilk
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- Oil for frying

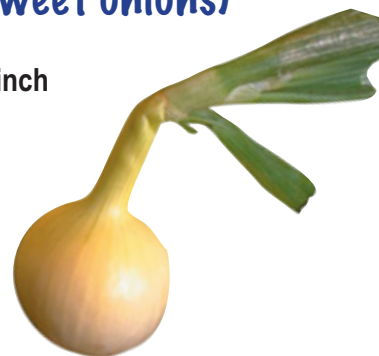
Combine egg and buttermilk; set aside. Mix cornmeal, flour, salt and pepper in a shallow bowl. Pour oil into a large deep skillet to about one-half inch. Heat to 375 degrees. While oil is heating, sprinkle some flour over tomato slices — dip in egg and buttermilk mixture and then in the cornmeal mixture. Slide slices into hot oil to fry for approx 2 min on each side, or until golden brown. Drain on wire rack. Sprinkle lightly with salt, if desired, and serve. NOTE: Don't try to cook all of the tomato slices at once. Give them room in the pan. Turn each slice over individually.

Parmesan Squash Medley

- 3 cups sliced squash (yellow, zucchini or both)
- 1 1/2 c. quartered and sliced onions
- 1 1/2 c. fresh tomato chunks (or substitute 1 can diced)
- 3/4 c. chopped bell pepper (any color)
- 2-3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 T. oil (olive or peanut)
- 1 T. bacon grease (or fry up a little chopped bacon)
- 1/4 c. grated or shredded Parmesan
- 1/8 tsp. dried dill or 1/4 tsp. freshly chopped dill

Vidalia Onion Pie (substitute Colorado sweet onions)

- 1 unbaked deep-dish pie shell, 9-inch
- 3 large onions, thinly sliced
- 3 tbsp. butter
- 2 large eggs, whisked
- 1/2 c. half-and-half
- 1/4 tsp. white pepper
- 1 c. grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 tbsp. sour cream



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Slice onions and sauté in extra large skillet with 3 tbsp. butter until translucent. While onions are cooking, whisk together two eggs, one-half cup half-and-half, the white pepper and sour cream. Stir in the cheddar cheese. Prick piecrust with fork. Place onions in pie shell; it will be full. Stir other ingredients together and pour over onions. Spread cheese so it will cover top of onions.

Bake at 350 degrees in hot oven for 30-35 min. or until firm. Serve warm.

Heat oil in a large saucepan or non-stick skillet and sauté onion and bell pepper until onion starts to turn translucent.

Add minced garlic and tomato chunks and simmer for another 2 to 3 minutes, while stirring.

Add squash, salt, pepper, dill and a little more liquid if needed (tomato juice is good.) Add bacon grease (or fried bits of bacon.) Stir to mix.

Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add Parmesan cheese and stir to mix.

NOTE: Makes an excellent side dish with beef or pork roasts!

A cookbook that's tops

Front Range Barbeque owner Brian Fortinberry's mom, Mary Boname, was a special guest of the Old Colorado City food scene last month as the two launched their first collaborative cookbook, featuring family favorites and many of the popular dishes served at Brian's award-winning restaurants. (See photo at left.)

As soon as you pick up a copy, *Top of the Range: A Recipe Collection* has you debating whether to make the whipping cream pound cake or Amy Graham's peaches-and-cream pie for dessert. Amy, by the way, now operates Smiley's Bakery and Café at 323 N. Tejon Street, where her pies have generated a huge following, and several of those pie recipes are included in the book.

Brian calls the collection "simple recipes with Southern flair." It took them three years to put it together, and they were diligent in finding the attractive binder design which lays open for easy use and the colorful but durable cover that should hold up well in the kitchen. They've also filled it with handy cooking tips and recommendations as well as fun tidbits and a rich sampling of family history. The full color cover art is a food painting by Brian's artistic grandmother Martha Smith.

Mary Boname is a vibrant attractive woman who visits her son from Birmingham, Alabama, once or twice a year. She's well familiar with Front Range supplier Ranch Foods Direct. "We need a Ranch Foods Direct in Birmingham," she said enthusiastically at the first mention of the name. For a special cookbook signing in August, she spent hours in the Front Range kitchen preparing a special menu of old family favorites including chicken tetrazzini and braised pork with root vegetables, recipes from the book. Brian says when she comes to visit she spends most of her time at the restaurant cooking. For her part, Mary says the restaurant crew has the family treasury of recipes down to a science, so much so that the classic dishes taste even better here than at home.

Lots of loving attention to detail is evident in the book they've put together. "We tested every recipe," Mary assures. "Our neighbors were thrilled when we said we were doing a cookbook. I've already sold 25 boxes of them in Birmingham." Here in Colorado Springs, they are available at both Front Range locations (www.frbbq.com) and priced at \$22.95.

Here, it's always Oktoberfest

East-siders in Colorado Springs are surrounded by chain stores, and individually owned eateries with character are hard to find. Fortunately, Anke and Mitch Verburg are now serving homemade hearty German meals out of a new strip mall north of Powers on Tutt Blvd (4037 Tutt, 719-573-2000.)



Schnitzel Fritz German Deli and Restaurant sources all of its beef and additional meat items from Ranch Foods Direct.

Back in October 2007, this newsletter featured their Fountain location, **Elke's German Deli**, which remains in operation and continues to provide a wide-range of popular German items.

Their recent expansion has them shuttling back and forth between the two shops, often stopping for a friendly chat with customers as they come and go. Their new deli opened on January 15 and hosted a grand opening back in June. They are now in the process of planning some special activities for October. Expect specials on bratwurst and sauerkraut and other traditional favorites.

Their daily specials include a meat dish and sides like homemade sauerkraut or shredded red cabbage and German dumplings. Their delicious "German hamburger" is a mix of ground beef and pork from Ranch Foods Direct that they serve on Wednesdays as meatballs with mashed potatoes. The dishes can be dense and filling but don't confuse that with a lack of healthfulness. "We do everything here from scratch," Anke says. "We don't have a deep fat fryer. We bake everything in the oven. We fry our potatoes in a pan. We don't do things to speed up the food. As a result, we get a lot of repeat customers."

Book eases language barrier on trips

Long-time Ranch Foods Direct customer and psychologist Dr. Pat Boone is introducing a practical convenient-sized book to help travelers communicate on trips to foreign lands.

She includes some handy short-cuts including what she calls the "Magic Sentence" for really busy people who only have time to learn one sentence and identifies 100 "foundation words" allowing any traveler to communicate their needs. Check out this one, and her other books, at www.drpatboone.com.

How To Get
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by
Dr. Pat MacDonald Boone



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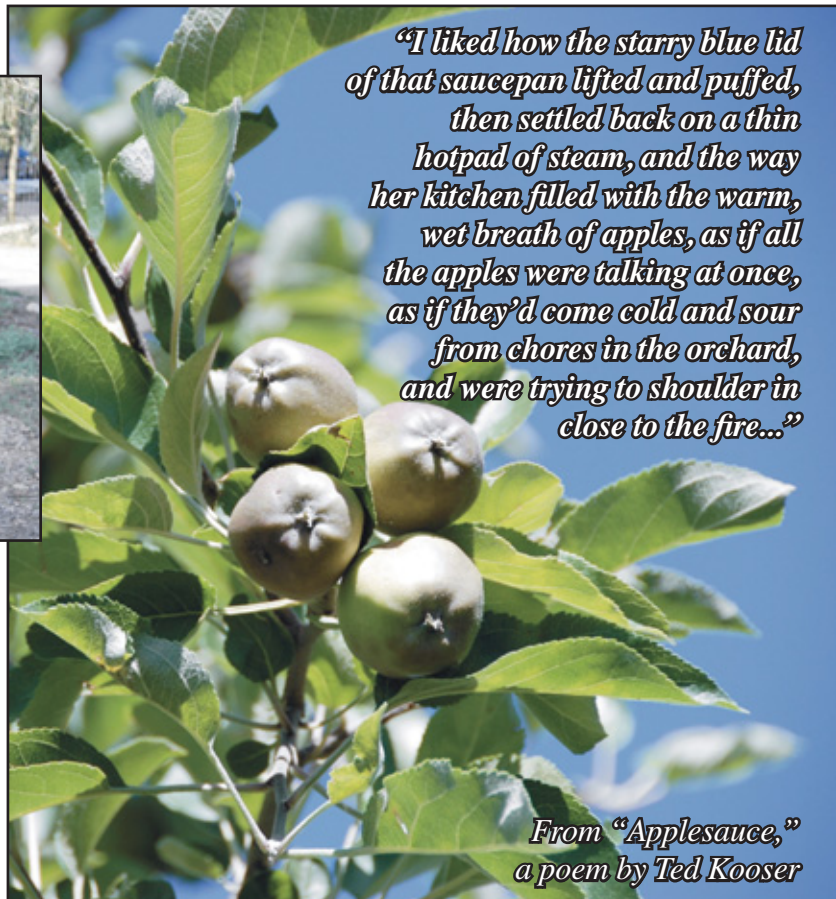
Celebration of local food this month

Susan Gordon, of Venetucci Farm, will offer a canning demonstration at Ranch Foods Direct on **Sat., Sept. 19** as part of **Peak to Plains Alliance Local Food Week**. The morning will include a trip to Venetucci Farm to pick-your-own produce, most likely beets and beans, which will be available for sale at wholesale (weather permitting.) Starting at 9 a.m., the picking trip, canning demo and lunch is \$20.



Susan
Gordon

Many exciting events are going on as part of Local Food Week, including a chance to “meet your local farmers” during a reception at Adams Mountain Café on Mon., Sept. 14. Several favorite restaurants will be offering discounts on local specials, including **Jake & Telly’s**, **Nosh**, **Pizzeria Rustica** and the **Margarita at Pine Creek**. Pikes Peak Urban Gardens will offer an educational program on Sept. 19 from 3-5 p.m. Get details at peaktoplains.org.



“I liked how the starry blue lid of that saucepan lifted and puffed, then settled back on a thin hotpad of steam, and the way her kitchen filled with the warm, wet breath of apples, as if all the apples were talking at once, as if they’d come cold and sour from chores in the orchard, and were trying to shoulder in close to the fire...”

*From “Applesauce,”
a poem by Ted Kooser*