

## Dining “*Chez Vous*”

With in-person events cancelled, members of the Bailliage of Greater Washington took to their kitchens and embraced take-out and delivered meals, ensuring they would continue to eat well. Staying at home became trendy, making *Chez Vous* the hottest “restaurant chain” in the region. Below are the at-home culinary adventures from *Chez Vous* locations across the region.

### Stay-at-Home Essentials Chez Kirsh

When word of the stay-at-home order came out, Vice Échanson Ellen Kirsh did what everyone did – she stocked up on the essentials. No, not toilet paper and Clorox wipes, but Moët Champagne and caviar! Ellen and husband Tony Clifford show us how to do a lockdown *Chaîne* style!



### Capitol Hill Fare Chez Gilluly

Chevalier C.W. Gilluly and Dame de la *Chaîne* Marny Gilluly are eating well, reporting that the Capitol Hill Club does an excellent job with take-away (with the additional benefit of six-packs of beer for \$5 and various wine at \$15 per bottle) and that Bullfeathers, the classic Capitol Hill tavern directly across the street from their home, does nice take-away, too. Their home cooking has included this pan-roasted butterflied leg of lamb seasoned with olive oil, basil, rosemary and thyme accompanied by brussels sprouts roasted in a hot oven with olive oil and a little salt and pepper, and sweet potato cooked in an InstaPot. With a bottle of sangiovese and a candle on the table, it was a *Chaîne*-worthy feast for two.

## Pasta Chez Carroll

Chevalier Pat Carroll and Dame de la Chaîne Julie Carroll shared the creative process behind two varieties of homemade ravioli – mushroom and crab – with pistachio sauce that they made at a cooking party with their daughters. Delicious!



## Cookies Chez Villarreal Go Viral

Vice Chargé de Missions Ray Villarreal fired up the mixer and oven to make batches of cookies that look deliciously – or perhaps disturbingly – like a virus. A glass of cold milk or a nice cup of coffee would go great with these infectiously tasty treats.



## A 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Chez Rumschik

From Chevalier David Rumschik and Dame de la Chaîne Allison Rumschik:

We completed our first virtual dinner with friends from Syracuse, NY one weekend. We celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup>



wedding anniversary with a webex session in which we cooked together and toasted to good friends, good food, and great wine. We began our evening with a meat and cheese plate as well as bottle of Veuve Clicquot Brut Champagne. Our dinner featured a filet topped with a homemade Bobby Flay Bar Americain steak sauce, roasted spicy cauliflower, and baked sweet potatoes. The steak paired wonderfully with a bottle of 2016 Caymus vineyards cabernet sauvignon. Three and half hours later we remarked on what a great experience this was and how we will likely continue these types of virtual dinners in the future.



We later extended our anniversary celebration with a virtual wine tasting "at" a Sonoma vineyard we are members of, Seghesio Vineyards. We spent an hour over a zoom conference with a set of great friends from Syracuse, NY, and two Seghesio employees. Prior to the event, we compared our wine list with our friends and settled on a horizontal tasting of three 2015 Seghesio Zinfandels.

We began our journey with a 2015 Dry Creek Valley Cortina Zinfandel, which was lighter bodied and easy to sip on during a rainy Virginia afternoon. We then moved on to a 2015 Rockpile Zinfandel, which was a bit more bold and earthy tasting with a peppery finish. We rounded out our tasting with a 2015 Alexander Valley Home Ranch Zinfandel, which was the crowd favorite of the day. The Home Ranch is Seghesio's flagship Zinfandel and comes



from the vines originally planted in 1895 by the founder, Eduardo Seghesio. The winery has been getting tremendous traction with the virtual tastings and is already discussing ways to incorporate this into their normal operations going forward. We had a fantastic time and would highly recommend a virtual tasting with any of your favorites wineries who are offering this.

*Happy Anniversary to you both (with extra credit for wearing your ribbons chez vous)!*

## Appreciating Chef José Andrés Chez Cleary

*Dame de la Chaîne Kathy Cleary shares her discovery of the best of José Andrés:*



I was riding my bike a few weeks ago and stumbled upon the Zaytinya side kitchen where they are selling hot meals. I took home a warm chicken tomato orzo pasta that was delicious. I decided the next week to see what was being offered at the Jaleo side kitchen. The José Andrés restaurants with these side kitchens are offering a limited menu that changes daily, not a full menu offered through Uber Eats. The meals are very reasonably priced and free if you cannot afford to pay for it. Anyway, back to the Jaleo meal.

The menu is printed and posted on the side of the restaurant where you wait in line. I ordered the butternut squash bisque (\$6) and hanger steak with cabrales blue cheese sauce, mashed potatoes, and green beans (\$12). I took a cue from fellow Chaîne member Nicole Schiegg and plated the meal for a photo. Every bite was delicious and satisfying.



Even more satisfying though is knowing that José Andrés is helping to feed DC and the world through World Central Kitchen. He is a true humanitarian and leader. He was featured on 60 minutes recently and has developed a model of using restaurant kitchens for multiple purposes including keeping staff employed, continuing to take advantage of the restaurant supply chain, and feeding hungry groups of unemployed citizens and healthcare workers on the front line. The segment mentioned he has subcontracted with Maydan to prepare meals as well.

## Time to Cook Chez Reynolds

*Chevalier Bruce Reynolds updates us:*

Even though my consulting work is part-time, it's no longer done at the client's office, so I have more than usual time to make an organized dinner. I've been going through a massive stack of clipped recipes and seeing what looks interesting. (This has also had me doing some pantry and freezer archeology.) But the home-cooked meals I've most often related to are in the comfort food line – such as the one in the photo. It started with a mixed salad of mesclun greens and baby beet greens with a home-made balsamic vinaigrette. The entrée was chicken Florentine (made with a thigh rather than a breast), accompanied by rosemary-roasted baby potatoes and simply nuke-steamed asparagus. “Florentine” – white wine, mushrooms, shallots, heavy cream, a little grated parmesan cheese, and spinach: what could go wrong with that?



Unlike what I've read about quarantine baking causing a flour shortage, I haven't been that “into” baking desserts, but I've always had an interest in odd herbs and spices in cookies, so I've tried out a recipe for curry-and-cardamom cookies and mincemeat cookies. (That last one intended to use up that jar of mincemeat leftover from Christmas that lurked in the back of the pantry cabinet.) Both good, but oddly, neither tasted all that different from a common applesauce cookie. But the expression you get from people when you tell them you're making cookies flavored like that is amusing.

## International Specialties Chez Runnels

*Dame de la Chaîne Jane and Corey Runnels have been busy baking and cooking international favorites with their daughters. Jane writes:*

We miss all of our La Chaîne friends and we hope you are all safe and healthy. We look forward to dining with you once again...in a restaurant! My, how extravagant that sounds right now! In the meantime, we have made the best of times at home by cooking and trying new recipes and cuisines.

Corey enjoys baking breads, whether bagels, pretzels, or crusty round bread. But most of all, he enjoys making baguettes. Of course, flour is hard to come by, so we are somewhat limited in his creations! So we have ventured to different countries and cuisines while residing in our own home. We've brought our 13-year-old and 9-year-old daughters into the kitchen with us, and we've made Columbian arepas, Panamanian beef empanadas, Polish pierogies, and Swiss fondue to name a few.



The photo represents our take on the Vietnamese summer rolls we enjoyed with La Chaîne at Rice Paper in March of 2018. Just as we did that evening, we each built our own version of shrimp and pork summer rolls. Cheers from Jane and Corey Runnels!

## Tropical Treats Chez Gfloeller

Fresh young mangoes from Chevalier d' Honneur Tatiana Gfoeller's Miami Beach villa garden, the Villa du Cap St. Sebastien, were a wonderful dessert after lunch under sunny Florida skies. Large, mature mangos can be seen on the tree behind the ambassador.

Tatiana wishes everyone "Happy eating!"



## Coq au Vin Cook-Off Chez McCormick

*Chevalier Dick McCormick writes:*

Our "Chez Vous"/Stay-at-Home dinner on a recent Saturday was a coq au vin "cook off" between the classic Julia Child recipe and a more modern recipe. I – but of course – worked for hours to prepare the recipe from Julia's *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, the vintage recipe from the 1966 edition (boy does that make me feel old)! The pearl onions and the mushrooms were prepared consistent with their individual recipes, and then combined with the chicken.

Beth's sister Lauren, a great cook who enjoys making both classic and adventurous recipes, did the *America's Test Kitchen* recipe for the coq au vin. Both entrees were divine and showcased our love of food and wine. Beth also ensured our dining room table and our hors d'oeuvre of cheese and pate transported us to somewhere in France, even though we were "quarantined" in Arlington, Virginia.



*The obvious question is then, who won the cook-off? Beth declares a winner:*

Candidly, both dishes were excellent. Julia's classic recipe had a slight edge, but then not everyone is going to invest the time and energy that Dick did. Her recipe is a bit "fussy," but well worth the effort! We had a great time, under the circumstances of this pandemic.

## A Levantine Feast Chez Cleary

*Dame de la Chaîne Kathy Cleary reports on her discovery of Albi, near Nationals Park in the DC Navy Yard neighborhood:*

Albi is Chef Michael Rafidi's first foray into restaurant ownership. His distinguished pedigree includes executive chef at Arroz and Requin. Further back he worked alongside Michael Mina in San Francisco and had stints at the Blue Duck Tavern and even the internationally acclaimed Noma in Copenhagen.

Albi opened its door about four weeks prior to the DC COVID-19 shutdown. I had a reservation for Thursday March 19 and was able to order take out in lieu of the dining in. Albi is offering both family style package dinners that feed 2-3 or an ala carte menu. Even though I was dining alone, I decided to treat myself to a family style package. They did not have delivery service arranged at this point, but lucky for me, Albi is a 5-minute drive to the Navy Yard.



The Levantine-inspired family package included 3 starters, a smoky brisket hummus, a charred cucumber hummus, beet and feta hummara along with homemade zatar spiced pita. The entrée was a full roasted chicken, roasted on their open fire pit, seasoned with honey turmeric and lemon. Sides included fresh tabouli, chick pea potato and green olive saute and grilled asparagus. Chocolate tahini cookies for dessert. Alcoholic beverages were available as well; I did not take advantage of those, even though the wine cellar is curated by Brent Kroll, proprietor of Maxwell Park. A second Maxwell Park location opened next door to Albi in the Navy Yard.

The hummus and warm spicy pita would have been meal enough, the brisket so tender with a smoky sauce and I never would have dreamed a charred cucumber could taste so good. The chicken was enough for four meals and I thoroughly enjoyed the leftover treats in the fridge for many days. I was pleased to have the two veggies, beets and asparagus. The chickpeas were a bit firm but I managed to eat them up, the sauce was delicious. I would go back just to get a deli portion of the tabouli, super fresh and not minty. The most amazing part of this feast was the price, \$70! Before tip. And Yes, I have been back since and will likely go again during the DC shutdown as Albi is changing their menu weekly. When they are able to reopen, I hope to take advantage of the chef table located in the kitchen which seats 14 people, hoping a group of Chaine friends will want to dine with me.

# The Chez Vous Buffet

a collection of mouth-watering photos from around the bailliage

## Baking Chez Mazza



Bailli Judy Mazza's chocolate chunk hazelnut  
pecan mondel brot...



...pear tart, and...



and French  
country bread



### **Roasting Chez Morelli**

Commandeur Ruth Morelli's spectacular roast lamb

### **Luxury Chez Gutierrez**

Vice Conseiller Gastronomique Honoraire (Boston) Camilo Gutierrez treated himself to uncured smoked salmon, poached eggs topped with ikura (salmon caviar), capers, and chevre, paired with a French sparkling rosé. Cheers!



## Fishes and Loaves Chez Babash

While at home, Dame de la Chaîne Whitney Babash and Vice Chargé de Presse Bill Babash have enjoyed Whitney's homemade bread, Bill's pan-roasted halibut with wild rice, and seared scallops with potato gnocchi and fresh English peas from Chef Jon Krinn's Clarity restaurant in Vienna.

