

# THE FOOD CLUB

SPRING 2013: CITRUS





**#THENEWBLACK**

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



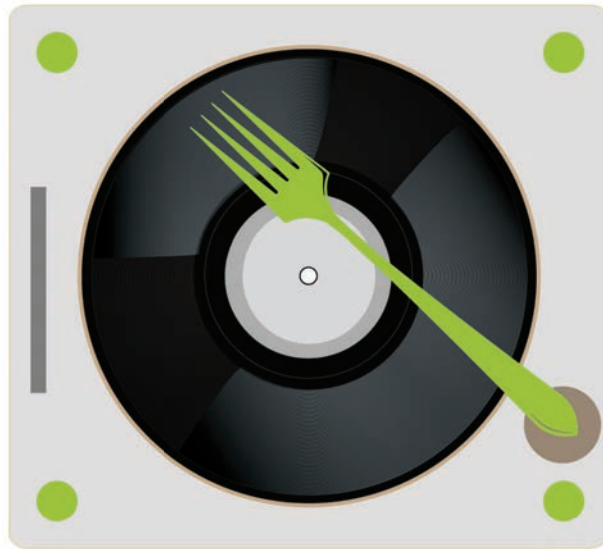
To all of the winos, foodies, chefs, rappers, DJs, and anyone else that is involved in any of these industries, this magazine is for you! This is the beginning but we will continue to share with the world everything that involves food, wine, and hip hop. To our readers, you may find out something new or read about someone locally to you that is doing something great in the world. To our followers, we thank you for making us want to eat great food, have a glass or two, dance; without bands, as well as make us think, and feel when we should appropriately be doing so and sharing it with you!

Enjoy The Food Club Magazine with exclusive access to influential columnists in culinary, fashion, wine, music, the arts, and urban culture. As member of The food Club, subscribers benefit from all of our news, features, editorials, and analysis as well as several other interactive features via our Food Club mobile app. Download today via Google Play and iTunes and stay in touch using any of our social media platforms. The Food Club Magazine, Where food, wine, and music meet in the heart of the kitchen!

**F**ood, wine, and music are some of the few things that can transcend to all languages, all cultures, and all societies. Every emotion or feeling can be portrayed through these things and nothing is more beautiful than the artistic expression through food, wine, and for our generation; hip hop.

There are some dope people that are able to evoke these emotions through the passion that they have for what they do every day. In this first issue, we have featured a few of these people as well as spring ideas and recipes from yours truly, chef and wine maker, India Ramos.

Cheers,  
Chef and Wine Maker India Ramos  
Editor in Chief  
The Food Club Magazine



# THEFOODCLUB

FOOD WINE N HIP HOP

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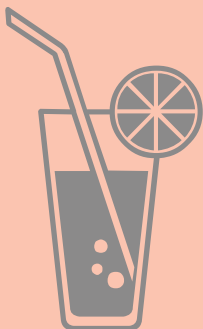
# FOOD

# WHAT'S COOKING IN 2013?

by Joi Disroe



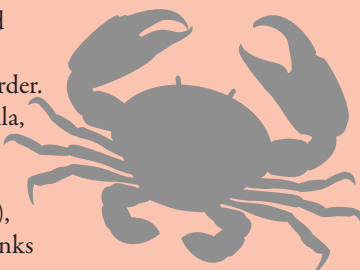
**Beer**—We're seeing more chefs brewing their own beer and Seattle area-based chef John Howie says he plans to brew his own beer at a restaurant he's opening in Bothell Washington next year.



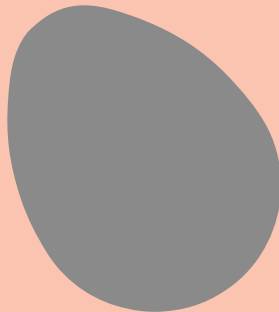
**Game Meat**—Game on! Game Meat that is, expect to see a growing number of restaurants adding Game meat such as elk, wild boar, and venison to the menu(s). The burger lounge in San Diego will be adding game burgers to its menu with options rotating every two months for almost a year.



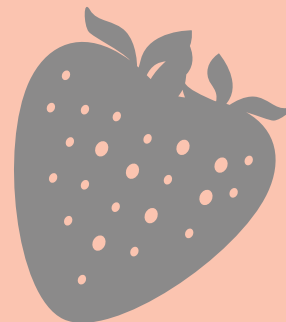
**Drink**—I love me some grapefruit - turns out The Paloma, not the Mararita, is Mexico's most beloved cocktail and its making traction north of the border. It's a simple mix of tequila, grapefruit-flavored soda (Jarritos is the brand of choice, Fresca will work), and ice. A refreshing drinks this spring.



**Crab**—Move over Georgia shrimp, main Lobsters, and Carolina Blue crabs; Dungeness Crab is the new kid on the crustacean block. Dungeness is the Diva of Crabs. Chefs across America have caught on and tossing it with pasta, piling it on grilled toast, and my fav, smoking it. You can order some now for \$20 at [www.southbeachfishmarket.com](http://www.southbeachfishmarket.com)



**Duck**—Duck, Duck, Goose, Duck, Goose, Duck - remember playing that game as a kid. Well, the Duck wins this time. A goose is just a larger duck, so move over chicken and make room for the Duck Eggs. You can find them sunny-side up with patatas bravas at Superba Snack Bar in Venice or cooked in a jar. Duck eggs are slightly larger than a normal chicken egg, have a brighter yolk, and come in a beautiful robin's egg blue shell. Lower in fat too! Find at local Farmer's Markets, Whole Foods, or by visiting [www.duckeggs.com](http://www.duckeggs.com)



**Fruit**—"In 2013 chefs are changing the game when it comes to fruit," states the Sterling-rice group. Lacing up fruit with savory flavors brings the natural refreshing and sweet touches of fruit to appetizers, soups, veggies and meaty entrees. Think fermenting, pickling, drying/dehydrating, salting, grilling, frying, baking, and manipulating fruit to get new bold flavors out of what we are used to eating raw.



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SWEET CHICKS  
CUSTOM CUPCAKES



# FLYING DRAGON CITRUS NURSERY

by India “Chef Ramos” Ramos

Photography by Christina “C-Rocka” Rimstad

If you Google the history of citrus you will never find the story we are about to tell. The average American goes about their day getting their daily dose of vitamin C from their favorite brand of orange juice. Bartenders and chefs quickly slice and dice lemons and limes to serve along with “today’s special” but no one ever questions where these common sweet fruits come from. Florida? Yes and no. There is an unknown conspiracy and political pressure that governs the world of citrus production. You’re about to read how citrus growers got started and learn why your favorite 100% fresh Florida juice may only contain 10% of what they actually advertise. Caught your attention? We’d thought so. The Food Club Mag crew recently visited the Flying Dragon Citrus Nursery in Jacksonville, Florida. From Atlanta it’s the closest nursery that grows, delivers, and plants citrus trees for homeowners. Servicing the North and Central Florida areas with the inability to ship out of state, they stock a wide selection of trees that grow well and produce a large volume of sweet ripe fruit. Their main product line consists of bountiful trees of oranges, grapefruits, mandarins, lemons and limes. Run by father and son combo, we were welcomed, embraced, and invited to sit down and chat with 95-year-old M.W... Barwald and when asked the question “can you tell us about the citrus industry?” sat back, chuckled and said...



“Let me explain the citrus industry to you, the industry is divided into three distinct groups. From the 1880’s to the 1900’s; it was in one location growing one kind of tree, one kind of people, with one kind of market. In 1900—BLAM—it ended. And I’ll explain why in a minute. It started again in the 1920’s in central Florida with different trees, different people, different market, everything about it was like it was born all over again, a whole new world. It was there until 1980. Wham, it ended in 1980. That’s when it moved to south Florida new people, new crops, new everything; distribution, management, marketing just like out of space, a whole different culture. Most people that don’t understand that particularly your age people, when they look back into history or they think about citrus, they think that it was one continuous flow, that it was here, stayed here, and grew. That isn’t the way it happened at all.”

“In the 1880’s it was here in Mandarin. That’s basically where it started in Saint Augustine in the 1500’s but it wasn’t an industry it was just people growing them in their yards. In the 1880’s Jacksonville became a destination for tourists. It was the biggest tourist destination on the east coast of the United States. We had three of the biggest hotels there were in the Unites States, here in Jacksonville. The Saint James, the Windsor, and the Continental down at the beach. At the same time some modern things came about, to bring on this tourist industry. The



railroad came here, accommodations were here, food was good the climate was good this was all new and exotic up from the tropics sort of thing.

If you lived up in New Jersey you never saw an orange in your life. Combine that with something that came out brand new that revolutionized the whole state was called ocean bathing. Prior to the 1800’s women and men did not go into the ocean to bath or swim. One it exposed your body and people were really upset about that and two it was thought to be unhealthy, don’t ask me why.

In the 1880’s all that changed around and all those things helped Jacksonville become a destination. When people get on the boats to go to the Bahamas that’s how they came to Jacksonville. And we had steam boats on the river and did sightseeing and then they went to the beach and did ocean bathing and they had alligator farms which people never heard of and they had ostrich races which were all exciting and all of these things and the tourist industry learned about citrus from here. It was not really a big thing. I mean in terms of production and the reason is that it was before electricity. Electricity and the automobile transformed everything. This was before that so now you have a citrus grove here in Mandarin and you have 10 trees. In the 1880’s. Now a citrus grove is thousands of trees.”

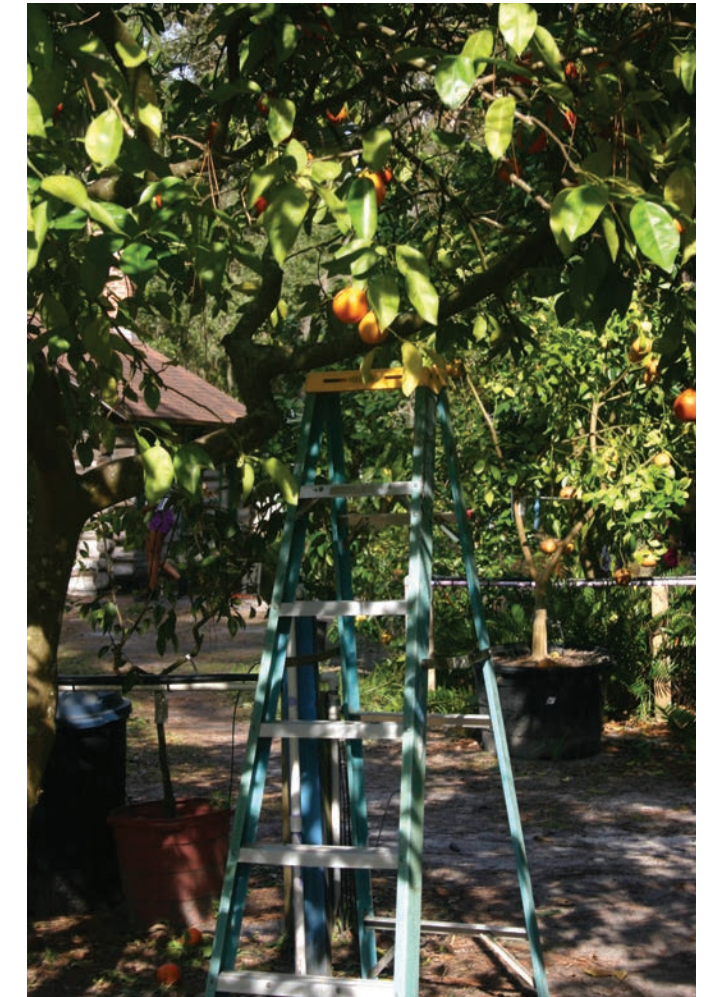
M.W. Barwald continued on about his experience within the citrus industry and its changes over the years. How industrialization effected his company as well as consumers in the Southeast United States.


“We have five inspectors every month. They come in here looking and praying that they can shut us down. Cocoa cola and Pepsi cola do not want homeowners to have trees. Most people think of that because they are worried about competition, they’re not worried about that at all. What they do is take the view that all the problems in the industry are brought in by home owners smuggling in trees or fruit with diseases on them, so if they could stop homeowners from coming in with fruit from trees from Mexico or wherever would be a huge help and that’s why they don’t want it. At one time there were 333 citrus nurseries like this in Florida, about 10 years ago. Now there are [only] 24. They gradually forced them to shut down and they would like us to shut down too. Anything they can do to make it difficult for me, they do. Not in a cruel sense but in a political sense. They use politics to control what we do.”

“Our nursery is called the flying dragon citrus nursery, which you’ve got to admit by any standards is a peculiar name. Flying dragon is the name, well not the name but the English translation of a Japanese word that the root stocks of the trees had grown on in Japan where there was snow on the ground and it gets extremely cold and they grow a dwarf tree no more than 6 to 8 feet tall but it will withstand the cold. So when we started this nursery we started it to sell trees from Jacksonville north to Norfolk Virginia and that was our market. And then the Coco Cola people heard about it and went to George bush and said this absolutely wrong we can’t have this. So George



Bush got the agricultural department to ban Florida from shipping trees or fruit out of state. And if you take an orange from our grove and you go out of here and cross the state line and that agricultural man find you, you are going to jail. We're not allowed to ship out of state—fruit or trees—nothing. We had to change our whole marketing strategy and now we grow trees for north Florida on a line from Pensacola to Saint Augustine and about 20 to 30 miles further south. The trees we grow here don't do well further south and we're not allowed to go further north so that's that and that's basically the citrus business. And you won't read that in books but that's what's happening.



The whole industry over the years has completely changed. For example if you go out there and ask for a honey bell tangelo which is one of the desired fruits and if you turn the clock back say 10 to 15 years its real name is a miniola tangelo and they sold for 10 cents apiece. The citrus commission a few years ago decided to publicize this fruit so now they call it a honey bell tangelo and sells for a \$1 apiece. That's the America way. And everything about this industry is like all industries, just like the automobile industry, the automobile industry doesn't make a car for you, it makes a car for them and then they convince you to like it. Just like the clothing industry if they want you in high heels, whether you like it or not you gonna be wearing high heels because they are gonna convince you you're a dog if you don't have high heels on but that's that... “ 17

# TASTE TEST: ORANGE JUICE

by India “Chef Ramos” Ramos

Ever wonder why commercial orange juice—even the premium, not-from-concentrate, “100-percent pure” tastes the same each time you buy it, but doesn’t taste exactly like a freshly peeled orange?

Turns out there are a lot more to making juice than simply squeezing some citrus. As part of the mass-production process, big-name brands like Tropicana, Minute Maid, Simply Orange, and Florida’s Natural add artificial flavoring in order to make sure your juice tastes consistent from carton to carton—and to make sure it tastes like oranges.

Pasteurized, not-from-concentrate orange juice takes up a lot of storage space. In order to keep it from spoiling without adding chemical preservatives, the companies “deacrate” (or strip the oxygen out of) the juice. Another surprise: During production, deacrated juice often sits in million-gallon tanks for as long as a year before it hits supermarket shelves.

But when they remove the oxygen, they also remove much of the natural flavor of the oranges. So in order to have OJ actually taste like oranges, drink companies hire flavor and fragrance companies, to create these ‘flavor packs’ to make juice taste like, well, juice again.

Tropicana (owned by PepsiCo), Minute Maid (Coca Cola), Simply Orange (also Coca Cola), and independently owned Florida’s Natural all add the flavor packs. Since the artificial flavor is technically derived from naturally occurring orange essences and oil, it doesn’t have to be listed as an ingredient. So what you see is on the label is “100 percent orange juice”—even though that’s not all there is inside the carton. Ironic that all these mass produced juices are all 110 calories. Things that make you go hmmm. Your safest bet; Juice your own fruit.



## Florida’s Natural Premium Home Squeezed Orange Juice

Florida’s Natural Premium Home Squeezed Orange Juice (\$3 for 64 fl. oz.) Taste testers were impressed with its “classic,” “pleasingly fresh-squeezed flavor.” However, a couple of tasters noted a slight bitterness. 110 calories per 8 oz. serving



## Odwalla Orange Juice

A few volunteers thought Odwalla Orange Juice (\$3.29 for 15.2 fl. oz.) had an artificial flavor, while they all agreed that it tasted “sweet and sugary.” 110 calories per 8 oz. serving



## Simply Orange

Several participants found Simply Orange (\$3.79 for 59 fl. oz.) “Too thin” and “a little metallic” tasting, but tasters agreed on its pleasant balance of sweet and tart. 110 calories per 8 oz. serving



## Tropicana Pure Premium Some Pulp

Taste testers deemed the pulp level ideal in Tropicana Pure Premium Some Pulp (\$3.49 for 64 fl. oz.), but many disliked its slight acidity. One tester said it “tastes like it was made from concentrate.” 110 calories per 8 oz. serving



Just about every taster commented on the bitterness and “strange aftertaste” of Minute Maid Original (\$3.29 for 64 fl. oz.); however, some enjoyed the “smooth texture.”

110 calories per 8 oz. serving

## FOOD



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1) GIR (Get It Right) Spatula: 22.50 Green/Yellow [www.productofgir.com](http://www.productofgir.com) | 2) Bella Dots 12 Cup Coffee Maker—Orange, Target \$34.99 [www.target.com](http://www.target.com) | 3) Salsabol Mojito Green by Needo Designs | 4) Stem, Citrus Spritzer, \$4.99 [www.quirky.com](http://www.quirky.com) | 5) Retro Yellow Toaster by Ella James, \$300.36 [www.notonthehighstreet.com](http://www.notonthehighstreet.com) | 6) Orange Juice Maker (24oz), \$24.99 [www.takeyausa.com](http://www.takeyausa.com) 7) Calla Green 5pc Set by QSquared \$12, [www.squarednyc.com](http://www.squarednyc.com)



# LEMON RECIPES

“Lemons on the chain with the V-cuts // Lemonade in shade with my feet up // Lemon pepper wings and a freeze cup // Lemons in their face, watch em freeze up” – Gucci Mane - Lemonade

## Salmon With Lemon Cream Beurre Blanc & Sauteed Vegetables: Serves 2

### Ingredients—

#### Lemon Cream Beurre Blanc:

- 1/2 tablespoon shallot, minced
- 1 teaspoons olive oil
- 3 oz. white wine
- 4 oz. heavy whipping cream
- 4 oz. butter, cut into 1 oz. portions and chilled
- juice from 1 lemon
- 3 sprigs thyme
- Salt and pepper, to taste

#### Salmon:

- 2 6 oz. salmon fillets
- 1/2 cup flour, for dredging
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

#### Vegetables:

- 1/2 lb. haricot vert (French green beans)
- 2 carrots, peeled and julienned
- salt and pepper, to taste

- 1.) Start by making your beurre blanc. Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and saute shallots until translucent. Add wine, lemon juice, and thyme and reduce mixture by half.
- 2.) Add the cream and bring mixture to a boil. Reduce by two-thirds.
- 3.) Remove from the heat, but keep warm. Whisk in the butter, an ounce at a time, moving back to the heat if necessary. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Strain mixture and hold warm.
- 4.) Season salmon fillets with salt and pepper on both sides. Dredge salmon in flour, patting off any excess.
- 5.) Heat olive oil in a large saute pan and add salmon, skin-side down (or presentation side if you’ve removed the skin). Cook to desired temperature and set aside.
- 6.) Season your vegetables and saute under medium high heat (you can use the same pan as the salmon, if you’d like - make sure to wipe out any excess grease).
- 7.) To plate, place a mound of vegetables in the center of the plate. Top with salmon fillet and beurre blanc.



## Kale & Lemon Pepper Chicken Pizza: Makes 1 Large Pizza

### Ingredients—

Homemade or Store bought pizza dough  
3 tsp olive oil + more for greasing baking pans  
2 cups kale, chopped  
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese  
1 chicken breast  
1/4 cup lemon juice  
Salt/pepper to taste

- 1.) Preheat oven to 500 and grease two baking pans with olive oil, making sure entire surface is coated in oil.
- 2.) In a pan, cook kale on medium-high heat with a dash of salt until leaves are just wilted. Set aside.
- 3.) Season chicken with salt and lots of pepper. Soak chicken in the lemon juice for about 10 minutes.  
Cut into bite size pieces, then set aside and start prepping the pizza dough.
- 4.) Take your pizza dough, lightly flour both sides, and then stretch and smooth into the desired shape/thinness into the baking pan.
- 5.) Spread 1 cup mozzarella, cooked kale, and chicken bits evenly on top of the dough.
- 6.) Sprinkle remaining cup of mozzarella on top of the chicken/kale mixture.
- 7.) Bake for 8 minutes, or until cheese is bubbly



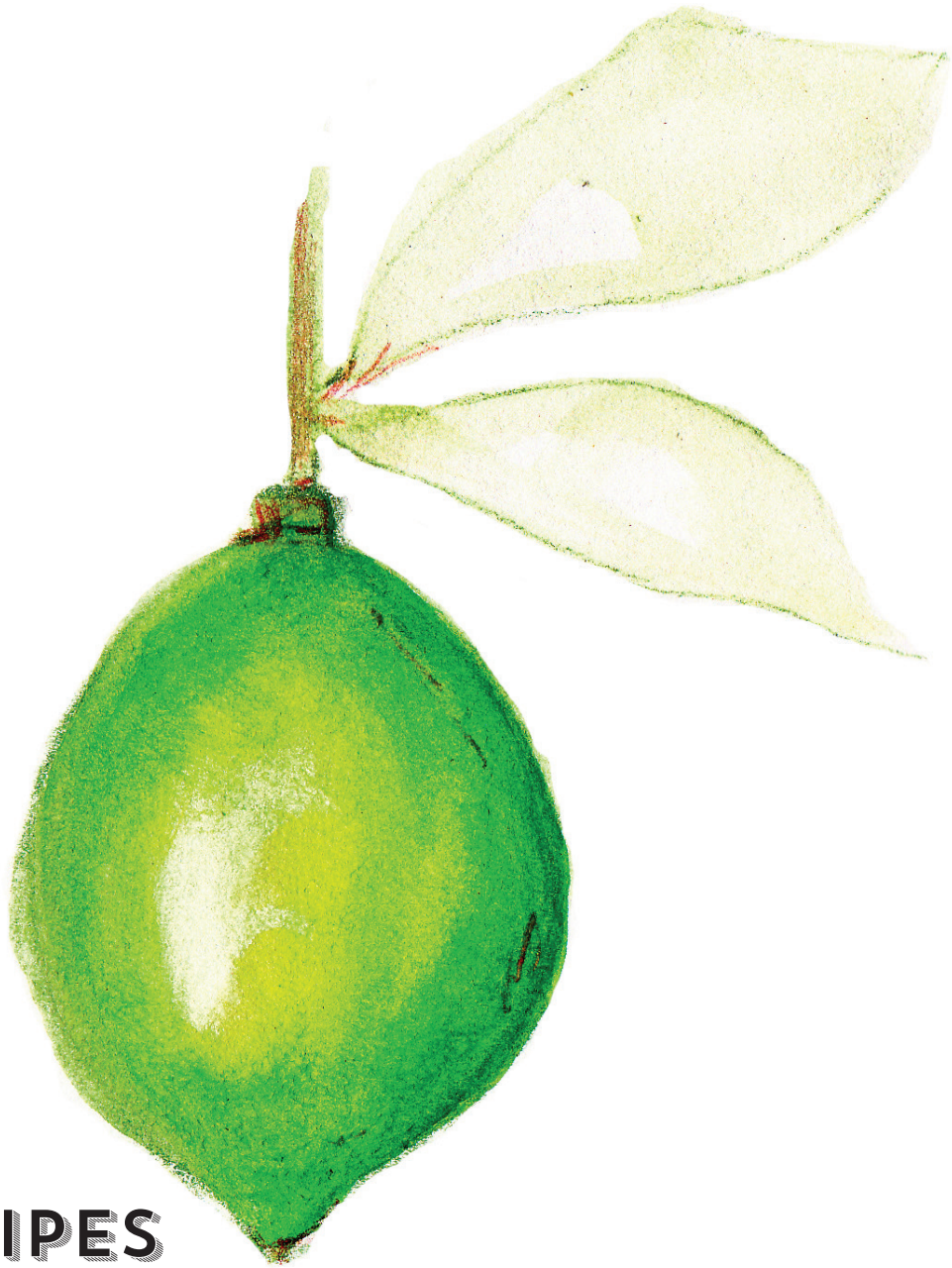
## Lemongrass and Sweet Corn Soup: Serves 4

### Ingredients—

3 corn cobs  
1 Tablespoons butter  
1 small white onion, finely chopped  
½ cup plain flour  
1 liter milk  
5 sticks lemongrass, finely chopped  
salt and pepper, to taste

- 1.) Using a sharp knife, carefully cut the corn kernels from the cob. Set cobs and kernels aside.
- 2.) Gently heat the butter and add the onion. Sauté until softened but not browned (about 5 minutes). Add the flour, stir and cook for 1 minute. Add the milk, lemongrass, corn and the cobs and stir, bringing to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
- 3.) Discard the corn husks and blend the soup in a food processor until smooth, then pass through a sieve and season.





# LIME RECIPES

“Whatever feels good, whatever takes you mountain high // Keepin’ it surreal, not sugar-free // My TV ain’t HD, that’s too real // Grapevine, mango, peaches, and limes, the sweet life” Frank Ocean - Sweet Life

## Flank Steak Tacos with Cilantro Lime Marinade: Serves 4



### Ingredients—

For the marinade:  
1 {2 lb} Flank Steak or Skirt Steak  
1/3 cup Olive Oil  
Juice of 1 Lime  
1 Garlic Clove, smashed  
A handful of Cilantro  
2 teaspoons of Honey  
1/2 teaspoon of Cumin  
1/2 teaspoon of Ancho-Chili Pepper  
1/2 teaspoon Red Pepper Flakes  
Kosher Salt and Fresh Black Pepper, to taste

For the Steak Tacos:  
2 lbs. prepared Cilantro-Lime Mari-  
nated Flank Steak, sliced thin  
10-12 Soft Flour Tortillas  
Iceberg Lettuce, shredded or sliced  
Pico de Gallo ( Fresh or store bought)  
Monterey Jack Cheese, freshly grated

- 1.) In a food processor; place the cilantro, garlic and lime juice and pulse quickly until chopped. Toss the remaining ingredients in with the cilantro/garlic and pulse until combined.
- 2.) Marinate flank steak for 30 minutes on the counter top, bringing the meat up to temp before grilling it.
- 3.) Grill the flank steak 6-10 minutes per side on medium-high heat. I found that on my grill, on medium-high heat, 6 minutes per side is good for a medium-well done steak.
- 4.) To assemble tacos, heat up some warm soft flour tortillas, layer with thinly sliced trips of the cilantro-lime steak, shredded ice berg lettuce, pico de gallo (see my recipes) and top with shredded Monterey Jack cheese.

## KEY LIME CREAM CUPLETS: Makes 12

### Ingredients:

For graham crackers cuplets:

¾ cup graham cracker crumbs

3 TBL sugar

3 TBL unsalted butter, melted

For lime cream:

6 TBL fresh key lime juice

4 TBL sweetened condensed milk

Zest from one lime

1 cup heavy cream

- 1.) Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine crumbs, sugar and butter in a small bowl. Scoop a rounded tablespoon of a graham cracker mix into the cup of a 2” muffin tin. Using fingers, press the crumbs evenly on the bottom and the sides of each cup.
- 2.) Bake for 12 minutes. Take out and allow to cool completely.
- 3.) Stir together the lime juice, condensed milk and half of the lime zest in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, whip the cream to soft peaks. Gently fold the whipped cream into the lime mixture.
- 4.) Pipe whipped lime cream into the individual graham cuplets. Garnish with remaining lime zest.

## Tequila Lime Shrimp Pasta: Serves 4

### Ingredients—

1 1/4 cups packed fresh cilantro leaves, plus 1/4 chopped

1/4 cut (scant) chopped green onions

3 Tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 garlic cloves, pressed

1 Tablespoon chopped seeded jalapeno chile

1/2 cup plus 1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 pound linguine

1 pound uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

3 Tablespoons tequila

1/4 cup crumbled Cotija or feta cheese

red pepper flakes (optional)

- 1.) Blend 1 1/4 cups cilantro leaves and next 4 ingredients in processor until coarse puree forms. With machine running, gradually add 1/2 cup oil. Season generously with salt. (Pesto can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.)
- 2.) Cook linguine in large pot of boiling salted water until tender, but firm to bite, stirring occasionally. Drain.
- 3.) Meanwhile, heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add shrimp and cook until almost opaque in center, about 3 minutes. Remove skillet from heat; add tequila. Return skillet to heat and stir until sauce is syrupy, about 30 seconds. Add pesto; stir to coat. Remove from heat.
- 4.) Add pasta to sauce in skillet; toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Divide pasta and shrimp among 4 plates. Sprinkle dish with Cotija or feta cheese, chopped cilantro, and red pepper flakes (if you choose) and serve.



ORANGES RECIPES

“I want chicken, and orange juice, ‘cause that’s what’s on my rider  
And my occasional potato by Oreida  
Don’t forget my pastry make sure they’re tasty  
I’m not the type to be pushy or hasty” Tribe Called Quest – Rap Promoter

Calypso Shrimp with Black Bean-Citrus Salsa

Ingredients—

Shrimp and Marinade  
2 teaspoons grated orange peel  
¼ cup orange juice  
½ teaspoon seasoned salt  
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 lb uncooked large shrimp (21 to 30), peeled, deveined  
1 tablespoon canola oil

Salsa  
1 can (15 oz) Progresso® black beans, drained, rinsed  
1 medium orange, peeled, divided into segments, membrane removed and cut in half  
¼ cup of salsa  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro  
1 teaspoon grated lime peel  
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

- 1.) In 8-inch square (2-quart) glass baking dish, mix orange peel, orange juice, seasoned salt and 4 cloves chopped garlic. Add shrimp; turn to coat. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate up to 2 hours to marinate.
- 2.) In medium bowl, mix all salsa ingredients. Cover; let stand until ready to serve (or refrigerate if longer than 30 minutes).
- 3.) In 10-inch nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Drain shrimp; discard marinade. Cook shrimp in oil 2 to 3 minutes, stirring frequently, until shrimp are pink.
- 4.) Among 4 dinner plates, divide salsa. Arrange shrimp around salsa.



**Drunken Citrus Salad: Serves 6-10**



**Ingredients—**

- 3 tablespoons sunflower seeds
- 1 tablespoon Minced shallot
- 2 teaspoons apricot preserves or marmalade or good quality honey
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons citrus vodka
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Romaine hearts, cleaned and dried and torn
- 4 sprigs fresh tarragon, leaves stripped and roughly chopped
- 2 mandarin oranges, peeled and sectioned

- 1.) Combine the shallot, preserves or honey, Dijon, juice and vinegar. Whisk in the extra-virgin olive oil to emulsify and season with salt and pepper.
- 2.) On one end of a romaine heart, combine the tarragon, orange sections, and dress with the seeds and dressing just before serving.

**Candied Orange Muffins: Makes 3 Dozen**

**Ingredients—**

- 4 cups flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 Tbs baking powder
- 1 1/3 cups butter at room temp
- 3/4 cup shortening
- 1/2 cup milk
- 5 large eggs
- 1 1/4 cups orange juice

- Candied Blood Orange Slices
- 2 blood oranges
  - 1 3/4 cup water
  - 1 3/4 cup sugar

- 1.) Mix together all the dry ingredients.
- 2.) Add the butter, shortening, milk, eggs and orange juice. Mix thoroughly. Spoon batter into greased muffin pans until 2/3 full. Bake in a preheated 375 degree F. oven for 20 to 25 minutes.
- 3.) Thinly slice the blood orange. Bring water and sugar to a simmer in a saucepan, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Add blood orange slices and simmer on low. Turn orange slices after 30 minutes. Simmer for a total of 45-60 minutes, or until the peels become translucent. Remove slices carefully from hot liquid with a slotted spoon and cool on a wire rack.
- 4.) Top muffins with a candied blood orange slice and serve.

# SOIGNE SYRAH

By Sabrina Eberhardt, Wine Educator

## Grape Profile: Syrah (*Sur-Rah*)

Syrah is rumored to be one of the world’s oldest type of grapes. This grape is voluptuous, known for its full body, deep color & soft notes of black fruit, such as blueberry or blackberry. With good tannin structure, Syrah ages well. When young & spicy, Syrah has notes of black pepper. More savory, meaty notes develop as Syrah matures.

## Old School

Northern RhôneValley is the top noteworthy region for serving up Syrah that is just so soigné (Swän-Yay). The steep narrow valley is located in France between Vienne & Valence. The number of cultivated Syrah vines is increasing in the South of France to improve blends. Regions that have not historically planted Syrah in the past have been adding this variety to vineyards. The upcoming region of Priorato in Spain was known for making wine with super-high alcohol levels from old vine Garnacha and Cariñena. Priorato was upgraded to DOC status by producing quality Syrah and other international varieties.

## Hot

Hot climate Syrah/Shiraz is earthy & has a fuller body, with a soft tannin structure. Spicy notes of licorice & anise can develop in Syrah from warmer climates.

## New School

Syrah has an Australian & South African alias. Syrah a.k.a. Shiraz (Shih-Raz), is the most widely planted grape in Australia. While Australian & South African Shiraz have pizzazz, California is a New World region that is not typically known for producing Syrah. California claims Syrah for the most planted typical Northern Rhone varietal in the state. Located northwest of the town of Healdsburg, the land in the Rockpile Appellation in Sonoma, California is strikingly similar to Côte Rôtie in France. The region of Rockpile produces some of California’s finest Syrah. South America is also producing some sexy Syrah, in Argentina & Chile.

## Cool

Cool weather Syrah tends to raise the tannin levels. The hints of blackberry may be spiced up more than typical Syrah, with pronounced flavors of black pepper & occasionally mint.

## Status Matters

AC Status = Top Notch Wine: Appellation d’origine Contrôlée translates in English to Controlled Designation of Origin. Basically seeing AC status on a wine label means that good stuff is inside the bottle. AC status on a wine label ensures the consumer that assured attributes have been passed to produce a high quality wine. In the Southern part of the Rhône Valley—the region of Châteauneuf-du-Pape is key because that is where the concept of Appellation d’origine Contrôlée (AC) was founded setting geographic boundaries and certain viticultural standards. AC status is the highest tier of the French Wine Classification hierarchy setting certain qualification standards in order to put a prestigious AC Regions on a wine label. Various regions have different requirements regarding quality in order to achieve AC status. For example, it is mandatory that the grapes are harvested and sorted by hand to gain Châteauneuf-du-Pape AC status. No machine harvesting allowed!

Only certain types of grape varieties are allowed to be grown in particular AC regions. For example, Syrah is the only qualified grape able to achieve Côte Rôtie AC or Hermitage AC status in Northern Rhone. If you see a label boasting Côte Rôtie AC or Hermitage AC you know that bottle contains some of the world’s finest Syrah, even though the word Syrah, will not likely be stated on the label.

In Northern Rhône Valley, when it comes to Syrah, Côte Rôtie AC & Hermitage AC are the regions that pull the most cred with historical prestige. Cornas AC is also an excellent choice for Syrah while the chateaux of Saint-Joseph AC and Crozes-Hermitage AC offer even more affordable options, with traditional style.

## Low End Theory

South of France: It Pays to know about Vin de Pays. On the lower end of the French Wine Classification System is the Vin de Pays concept. Vin de Pays a.k.a. Country Wine is a Table Wine that has a geographical description. Vin de Table (Table Wines) are the lowest of the French wine hierarchy being generically sourced. The Vin de Pays (VdP) system in the South of France was introduced to allow for viticultural innovation in contrast to the confining restrictions of the AC concept. VdP regulations are a bit looser than those of the AC system. When it comes to grape variety and production methods and tighter reins when it comes to harvest yield control. VdP qualifications include standards such as minimum alcohol content. The largest VdP in the South of France is Vin de Pays D’Oc it is split into four departments; Gard, Aude, Herault and Pyrenees-Orientales. Keep an eye out for Vin de Pays D’Oc when looking for an affordable Southern French Syrah. The grape variety and vintage appear on the label within the VdP concept. Vin de Pays range from affordable everyday wines to high-end cult status “super” VdPsselling at premium prices. If you see Vin De Pays on a wine label you are most likely getting a casual wine that won’t break the bank!

## American Viticultural Area (AVA)

An AVA is a designated wine-grape growing region in the United States. No specific viticultural practices are required within the AVA system. At least 85% of the grapes must be grown in a specified region in order to have that certain AVA stated on a wine label. The Rockpile AVA located northeast of Healdsburg, California was established in 2002, the 12th officially designated appellation in Sonoma County.

## In the Mix: Samples and Blends

A musical sample from a classic record can enhance a hip-hop track by combining many parts to construct a whole song. Just as blending juice from various grapes can create a complete wine with beautiful balance. With profound color and solid tannin structure Syrah is often added to a number of blended wines to add backbone and body. In Southern Rhône, Châteauneuf-du-Pape is Grenache based but created by blending up to 13 grape varieties—including Syrah. Adding a touch of white Viognier to black Syrah is traditional in Côte Rôtie setting a trend for a number of international winemakers. Another blend that is commonly used is combining Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon, in Australia.

## Label Lingo

Watch Out for these Appellations and Regions

**France //**  
Cote Rôtie AC, Hermitage AC, Cornas AC, Châteauneuf-du-Pape AC

**Spain //**  
Priorato DOC, La Mancha DO

**Australia //**  
Barassa Valley, Hunter Valley, McLaren Vale, Coonawarra

**California //**  
Rockpile AVA - Sonoma, Monterey, Paso Robles

**South Africa //**  
Paarl, Stellenbosch

## Old School Mix

**Northern Rhône //**  
Côte Rôtie AC—Syrah and Viognier

**Southern Rhône //**Châteauneuf-du-Pape AC—Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre and more—up to 13 grape varieties.

**Bordeaux //** 9th Century Bordeaux wines were blended with Syrah from Hermitage AC for extra body and complexity.

## New School Blends and Trends

**South-Eastern Australia //**  
Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon Blending Shiraz and Viognier is becoming more popular.

**California //**  
Syrah Blends with various Black Grapes, Syrah and Viognier Blends, Rosé of Syrah, Sparkling Syrah



WINE

# VOGUE VIOGNIER

By Sabrina Eberhardt, Wine Educator

## Grape Profile: Viognier (*Vee-Oh-Nyay*)

Soft, full-body White Wine that can be compared in texture to Chardonnay but with more fruity aromatic characteristics like peach or pear. Viognier feels silky in your mouth with traces of honey and minerality. Some vintages can have a floral bouquet such as violet or honeysuckle.

### Old School:

Old World Wine is sourced from traditional European regions. Historically, the best Viognier hails from the Northern Rhone Valley in France, where some vines are at least 70 years old. Older vines produce more complex fruit; mature vines start culminating at 15-20 years of age. In the 1960s Viognier vines were an endangered species, due to an influx of phylloxera & the expense of harvesting on the steep slopes of Northern Rhone. The mighty micro-regions of Condrieu & Chateau Grillet garnered interest in replanting. The trend then spread to Southern France and beyond the borders of France.

### New School:

Don't call it a comeback! But, in this case, Viognier has come back; strong! Argentina, Australia, California, Chile and South Africa are among some of the New World areas that have success in producing quality Viognier. Status Matters!

AC Status is among the top tier of the wine classification system.

### Label Lingo:

Condrieu, AC  
Chateau Grillet, AC  
Vin de Pays—Languedoc—Rousillon  
The Languedoc/Rousillon Region can offer a great value for quality Viognier. Innovative viticulture practice is allowed in Languedoc, due to looser control requirements than the strict label requirements for AC status.

### Hot:

Viognier is becoming quite the vogue vino.

### Cool:

Many affordable Viognier choices are available as alternatives to the prestigious AC status of Condrieu and Chateau Grillet.

### In the Mix:

*Blends*—Viognier is often blended with other White Wines to add aromatic notes. Viognier is even added to Red Wine to soften & round out the vintage.  
*Old School*—Northern Rhone —Viognier, Marsanne & Roussane, sometimes Syrah  
*New School* —Viognier and Chardonnay



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# SPRING WINE & FOOD EVENTS

by India “Chef Ramos” Ramos

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## 39th Annual UNLVino

Las Vegas, NV  
March 22-24

“Take A Sip For Scholarship” at the 39th annual UNLVino, an event founded and sponsored by Larry Ruvo and Southern Wine & Spirits of Nevada to benefit UNLV’s William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration scholarship fund. The weekend’s events include “Bubble-licious” featuring champagnes, sparkling wines and more at the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, “Sake Fever” at the Mirage Pool and the Grand Tasting at Bally Bally’s Las Vegas. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [www.unlvino.com](http://www.unlvino.com)

## Pebble Beach, CA — Sixth Annual Pebble Beach Food & Wine

April 4-7

This four-day gastronomical event will bring together distinguished wineries and chefs from around the world to the California coast for a variety of luncheons, dinners, cooking demonstrations and wine tastings. Experience delectable meals and exclusive cooking demonstrations from a variety of world-class chefs. The event includes 75 celebrity chefs and 250 wineries in a selection of luxurious venues throughout scenic Pebble Beach. Highlights of the event include the Lexus Opening Night Reception at The Inn at Spanish Bay, and a series of decadent five-course meals prepared by world-renowned chefs. For information and reservations visit [www.pebblebeachfoodandwine.com](http://www.pebblebeachfoodandwine.com) or call 866-907-3663.

## 35th Annual Scottsdale Culinary Festival

Scottsdale, AZ  
April 9-14

Foodies and culinary connoisseurs flock to sunny Scottsdale year after year to attend this long-running Southwestern festival celebrating the art of food and wine. Now in its 35th year, the festival kicks off with the Friends of James Beard Dinner on March 7, featuring winners of the prestigious award who will demonstrate their talents in a collaborative multi-course dinner hosted by The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa. The diverse roster of events also includes the Shaken and Stirred cocktail events showcasing the latest in mixed drinks, Bubbles and Bliss—a chic tasting event at the W Scottsdale and the Wine Country Brunch. Bringing the festivities to a delicious end is Best of the Fest, a five-course wine-paired dinner created tableside by some of Arizona’s best chefs, to be held at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort & Spa. For individual event prices and tickets, call 480-945-7193 or visit [www.scottsdaleculinaryfestival.org](http://www.scottsdaleculinaryfestival.org)

## 14th Annual Heart’s Delight Wine Tasting & Auction

Washington, DC  
May 1-4

Master winemakers and top chefs gather to play and bid at the yearly wine tasting and auction that benefits The American Heart Association. The event kicks off on Wednesday with an evening featuring the best American wines. Thursday will offer intimate wine dinners with an international flair all over the city. On Friday, folks can enjoy an exclusive Vintners Dinner at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, while on Saturday you can take a virtual tour of Bordeaux. The wine weekend then rounds out with a seated tasting, seminars, food, and live and silent auctions. Participating wineries include Chateau Pontet-Canet, Chateau Haut-Bailly, Colby Red Wines and many others. Tickets range from \$250-\$2,000. For more information, call 703-248-1720 or visit [www.heartdelightwineauction.org](http://www.heartdelightwineauction.org)

## James Beard Foundation Awards

New York City, NY  
May 3 & 6

Considered the “Oscars of the food world,” the James Beard Foundation Awards Ceremony & Gala Reception is one of the most prestigious events in the food and beverage industry. This black-tie event will be held at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center in New York. On May 3, the winners in the categories for book, broadcast and journalism awards will be announced, while the chef and restaurant awards will be given on May 6. For more information and tickets, visit [www.jbfawards.com](http://www.jbfawards.com)

## Eighth Annual Kentucky Bluegrass Wine Auction

Lexington, KY  
May 2

The Kentucky Bluegrass Wine Auction & Derby Gala is a unique event held during one of the most exciting weeks of the year in Kentucky — Derby Week! The auction is held at the beautiful Donamire Farm. In seven short years, this event has raised over 7 million dollars in support of the Foundation’s mission in the fight against cancer. The evening begins with an exclusive vintner pouring and silent auction, followed by dinner and a live auction. Participating vintners include Blackbird Vineyards, Alpha Omega, Skipstone Rance Vineyards, Hess Collection, Carter Cellars and Duckhorn Wines. Tickets are \$700 per couple. For more information, call 888-388-2620 or visit [www.lexingtonfoundation.org](http://www.lexingtonfoundation.org)

## Culinaria Wine and Culinary Arts Festival

San Antonio, TX  
May 16-19

Set against the backdrop of San Antonio’s unique Spanish Colonial architecture and celebrated River Walk, the Festival explores the city’s Latin and European culinary and cultural roots in the company of wines with world-class credentials. On Wednesday, take part in Sip, Savor and Walk at The Shops at La Cantera, enjoy winemaker dinners at restaurants across the city on Thursday, taste the Best of Mexico on Friday night, be dazzled at The Grand Tasting on Saturday night and kick back with Burgers, BBQ and Beer at The Pearl on Sunday at noon. Tickets range from \$35 to \$125 per event. For more information, visit [www.culinariasaa.com](http://www.culinariasaa.com)

## New Orleans Wine & Food Experience

New Orleans, LA  
May 22-25

Experience the rich cultural heritage of New Orleans through its local cuisine paired with wines from around the world. This four-day vinicultural and culinary experience kicks off with Ella Brennan Award Dinner & Auction. At the center of the event are the Grand Tastings, featuring 175 wineries and over 75 chefs, as well as a cooking demonstration stage. A variety of seminars will be offered, and not to be missed is the Royal Street Stroll on Thursday, an evening outdoor event showcasing the lively city’s art scene and architecture alongside live jazz and wine offerings. Event tickets can be purchased individually; or take in almost everything with the 2013 “Grand Taster” package. For tickets and more information, call 504-583-5550 or visit [www.nowfe.com](http://www.nowfe.com)



# CULTURE CIGARS

by Christina “C-Rocka” Rimstad

people new to cigar smoking start out with a mild to medium cigar in terms of strength. Something like the Don Pepin Cuban Classic or the CAO Cameroon. Better yet, infused or flavored cigars like the Acid Kuba Kuba or the Java Latte are a great place to start.

In terms of smoking the cigar, once you’ve clipped the end or used a bullet punch to puncture it, the next thing you have to do is light it. You want to “toast” the foot of the cigar before putting the flame directly to it. Toasting is warming the foot with indirect heat; and once that’s done that you can light it just as you do anything else. You generally want to take 2 to 3 puffs per minute. A big mistake people make is overheating the cigar by taking too many draws. When cigars are overheated it kills the flavors. You want to get cool smoke in your mouth, enough to taste but don’t inhale. The enjoyment comes from the flavors, the aroma, the texture of the smoke and the ritual itself. Once you’ve smoked one from beginning to end you’ll see what all the hype’s about.

**FC:** *As a cigar connoisseur, what is your favorite type of cigar on the market now?*

**SN:** The Carlos Torano Exodus 1959 has been a favorite of mine for the past few years. It has just enough pepper for an experienced smoker and complex flavors such as coffee and cinnamon that would draw beginners in. However, I’ve recently ran across a few very good sticks that I’ve added to the rotation; such as the Padron Thousands Series, the San Lotano Oval and the Nub 460 Maduro. I’ve come to realize that we all have our favorites for the moment until we try something new and get blown away.

**FC:** *If you could smoke any cigar, no matter the price, what would it be?*

**SN:** I have yet to try any of the Cohiba Brand Cigars, so probably the Cohiba Behike BHK 52—Cigar Aficionado’s 2010 “Cigar of the Year.” It has beautiful construction and the reviews I’ve seen

describe some very appealing flavors. Plus I’ve never had a Cuban before (laughs). Cohiba’s tend to be kind of pricey but price doesn’t necessarily make it better. I’ve had \$5 cigars like Sancho Panza that I could smoke everyday and I’ve had \$15 cigars like the Maker’s Mark 650 that you couldn’t pay me to smoke again! In a sense cigars are like relationships, when it’s good it’s really good but when it’s bad there’s no bigger let down.

**FC:** *Is there a distinct difference between Hand-Rolled cigars and Machine Made? And how does the shape and size affect the flavor?*

**SN:** Yes and that’s a good question. Premium Hand-Rolled Cigars are made with long filler tobacco; which is generally anywhere between 3 and 7 different leaves rolled up together. The size of the leaves determine the length of the cigar. Machine Made cigars like Phillies are basically filled with scraps; or unused parts of larger leaves (short filler) and held together by a paper like wrapper.

The shape of the cigar can change the flavor of the cigar slightly. As the size of the cigar changes so does the ratio of filler to wrapper. So the bigger the cigar, the more flavor you get out of the filler because it requires using more tobacco inside.

**FC:** *At The Food Club we’re all about paring different flavors with our meals including our beverage choice down to our garnishments. Question: How do you pair your cigar with your beverage (Wine/Beer/Alcohol) beverage? Does the flavor/blend of cigar really make a difference when making your choice?*

**SN:** Well people think that if you have a strong cigar then you need to have a strong drink. Actually you want to pair it with something sweeter or milder. Kind of like when a chef makes a dish with ginger or crushed red pepper then adds honey to balance it out. I had a really strong peppery cigar the other night (Cain F Straight Ligero), and instead of breaking out the whiskey I paired it with some sweet red wine, Lambrusco Reunite to be exact.

**FC:** *Do you have any other suggestions on what cocktails to accompany with a specific cigar(s)?*

**SN:** Wine is great with stronger full bodied cigars because it coats the mouth and keeps the harsh flavors away from your palette. This allows you to enjoy some of the other flavors that usually play the background. I enjoy cigars with beer as well as whiskey, it just depends on your palette. But don’t get me wrong though everyone’s tastes are different and there is no right or wrong answer when it comes to pairings. If you enjoy it, that’s the ultimate goal.

**FC:** *Any cigar tips and tricks?*

**SN:** As far as tips I would just say do your homework. Read as much as you can about the do’s and don’ts. There are plenty of useful informative videos that can be found on YouTube or through Google just by searching a question you may have. Get familiar with who makes your favorites smokes and the other people they may blend for. And if you find a brand you like, you will save a gang of money buying 5 packs, 10 packs, Samplers or boxes of 24 online as opposed to buying single sticks from your local tobacconist.

Check out more of Starr Nyce at [www.StarrNyce.BandCamp.com](http://www.StarrNyce.BandCamp.com) to catch up on my latest projects; and search Starr Nyce on YouTube for official music videos.

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# SPEAKERFOXXX

Wordz/Photography by Christina "C-Rocka" Rimstad



## MUSIC

We recently met up with one of Atlanta's top female DJs, Speakerfoxxx, at her weekly resident gig—El Bar Friday's. As we entered the bar—which is a room the size of a shoebox, it was already filling in nicely and we were welcomed with hugs. Speakerfoxxx has been on the rise not only in Atlanta but LA and NYC, she's the DJ for Gangsta Boo (Three 6—Mafia), East Village Radio DJ, is known for her infamous Dopegirl Anthem mixes, and now fashion! Speakerfoxxx is breaking all boundaries with her 'can't stop won't stop' attitude and is an inspiration for all women out there trying to make it in a man's world.

**FC:** *We love food and heard you do too, what are a few of your favorite restaurants Atlanta and beyond and what is your favorite thing to order off that menu?*

**SF:** Ria's Bluebird is my favorite breakfast spot and I always have to order the vegan options because they never fail--the tofu scramble & BBQ vegan riblet are always staple options for me.

Nicks Greek to Go is great for a quick bite for Falafel & is super close to my house.

Holeman and Fitch by far is my all time favorite dinner restaurant for bone marrow dishes, kale/seasonal veggies, pickled veggies, sweetbreads, deviled eggs & the cheeseburger is phenomenal--believe the hype.

Stir It Up in Little 5 Points is an excellent Jamaican restaurant and I highly recommend their



jerk chicken, their calalou & their sorrell (traditional Jamaican drink made from Hibiscus).

**FC:** *What is your favorite dish to prepare? How do you prepare it?*

**SF:** I love simple, raw recipes. I was vegan/vegetarian for years so my favorite recipes tend to be vegan/vegetarian and raw.

I make a with spinach salad with arugula and kale mixed together with a little olive oil, fresh Parmesan cheese, sliced Roma tomatoes or sundried tomatoes, chopped carrots, a little raw garlic and flax seed on top.

I also love making fresh juice. I got an awesome juicer and love making juice with kale, celery, carrots, beets, apples, garlic and raw ginger. I love wheatgrass but don't have a wheatgrass juicer however, I have an Arden's Garden close by so it's convenient.

**FC:** *We are women behind the scenes here at The Food Club Mag, how do you feel other women are when it comes to women supporting women in your world and in general?*

**SF:** Honestly the concept of "women supporting women" is something that I have come to value more and more the longer I work in a male-dominated industry. I think it's not only important but it's necessary for women to work together rather than against each other especially in male dominated industries. By instinct, most women are nurturers and more connected to our emotions (on a biological level we are wired to be that way to further our DNA in our ability to read the nonverbal communication cues of an infant) so when our creative power combines by working together it has a lot more soul, more feeling. I get so inspired working with other women DJs because everyone has their own story to tell, their own set of experiences that shaped them and influenced their sound. It feels good.

**FC:** *Do you have a competitive spirit? If so does it just feel amazzzzzzing when you can put those boys to shame after spinning an amazing set?*

**SF:** Hell yeah I have a competitive spirit but I would say that its more with myself than with others. I test myself and push myself by setting goals and trying to execute them and aim high. At first when I started djing I of course wanted to be as good as the



male DJs I had looked up to and grown up listening to.

**FC:** *Any words of encouragement for women out there trying to make it in a man's world?*

**SF:** Don't let anything hold you back and don't let anyone tell you what you can or cannot do: society, your family, your partner, pop culture. This is a very exciting time in history to be a female— it is becoming more apparent that there is nothing, no field we cannot undertake and perform well in, make an impact in, and live out our dreams.

There is a quote by Nelson Mandela that I have held onto for years & has really propelled me through life and into my career: "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually,



*who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."*

**FC:** *Zone 6-East ATL! Tell us about your love/hate for the area? Does it define any part of you, how/why?*

**SF:** Well I was born and raised in Brookhaven & Sidney Marcus area but moved down to Virginia Highlands when I started high school and have lived in & around the zone 6 neighborhoods since 10th grade. Essentially, that is the area of my hometown where I became an adult: that's where I got high, where I did artwork & painted, that's where I got in trouble, where I was arrested, that's where I had a lot of fucking fun and had a lot of hard times. Zone 6 is where I was raised, where I was reborn and then set my life straight so I will always have respect for that area of Atlanta because it both shaped me and set me straight so that I could pursue my dreams.

**FC:** *We know you kill it on Friday nights at El Bar and you've recently took up a residency at the Strip Club Stilettos but where else can we catch you spinning live?*

**SF:** Thank you! I love my weekly gigs at El Bar and Stilettos! I can only commit to two weekly gigs so that I am free to play at other venues the rest of the week and I have a full-time day job as a stylist at Van Michael Salon. Other venues that I play at often include MJQ, Graveyard, Soundtable, the W Hotels, Halo, Star Bar, The Basement and other parties around ATL and in New York. I keep all my shows updated on my twitter @SPEAKERFOXXX and my facebook fanpage at <http://www.facebook.com/speakerfox>. 🎤



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# SFC

Interview by Christina “C-Rocka” Rimstad  
Photography by DJ Acrojam

**T**he Soul Food Cypher is a hip-hop/spoken word monthly meet up at Wonder Root in East Atlanta. The Soul Food Cypher (SFC) crew includes Alexander “Cost” Acosta—President, Majorca “DJ Acrojam” Murphy—Operations Director, Mark “MarkMont” Montgomery—Art Director, Wahid “DJ Source One” Khoshnavani—Communications Director, and Eric “Zano Bathroom” Ludgood—Membership Director.

The team uses the art of rap is a way to not only promote a creative environment/lifestyle but as an education tool when it comes to health. The concept behind the Soul Food Cypher is to showcase individual’s talents and to push the envelope when it comes to the art of emceeing. Membership is extended to individuals who embody their mission: To provide Atlanta’s lyricist community with a safe and nurturing environment



where their voice and artistry can grow.

**FC:** *When did it officially start?*

**SFC:** The first Soul Food Cypher was held February 26th, 2012 at Wonderroot in Atlanta, Ga.

**FC:** *Any specific meaning behind the name?*

**SFC:** When most people think of “Soul Food” they think of hearty meals that took time to prepare and whom they share that experience with are usually people they consider family. As apposed to what we thought was “Fast Food” being pushed on the masses, the here today gone tomorrow artists in Rap, we wanted to provide something that was going to be filling and satisfying. In addition, our events are on Sunday and the name Soul Food alludes to the

cypher being similar to a dinner table and which we’re serving “food for the soul.”

**FC:** *Do you feel within the art of Rap that the freestyle element has become lost?*

**SFC:** Yes, unfortunately. Before there was Sugar Hill Gang, King Tim III, or Def Jam, people were standing on the square sharing rhymes that they created on the spot. We wanted to keep the oral tradition alive that stems all the way back to the “Griots” in parts of Africa.

**FC:** *Let’s talk food, what is your team’s favorite dish? Why?*

**SFC:** Ha, well it seems we all love breakfast foods for we meet



at a diner every week to discuss plans and waffles are king. Who can go wrong with that? We also have our favorites like Cuban cuisine, hamburgers, and vegetarian dishes.

**FC:** *Do you feel the need to raise awareness within the Hip-Hop Community promoting a healthy lifestyle? They do say it helps out with the creative process.*

**SFC:** There is a tremendous need to shed light on health issues in this community because we lost Big, GURU of Gang Starr, J Dilla, and almost lost Hip—Hop great, DJ Kool Herc. We watched a friend/MC Homeboy Sandman gravitate to a “Raw Foods” diet for health and his writing process. Since then

dropped “The Good Sun” and has the most thought provoking lyrics I have ever heard in Hip-Hop to date. He attributed that to his healthy diet, “Eat to Live rather than Live to Eat”. At SFC we are not food police but hope that people do a better job educating themselves on what is happening, especially the GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) crisis spawned by Monsanto, a tyrant in the agriculture industry.

**FC:** *With your bi-weekly meetings do you promote a healthy lifestyle as part of the creative process/lifestyle?*

**SFC:** We at Soul Food Cypher are not licensed Lifestyle Coaches or Nutritionist (yet). We try to lead by example to use



our influence to make sure that we continue to show our members and patrons that there are better options. In the near future we will continue to expand upon this.

**FC:** *As a first timer to an event, what would one expect?*

**SFC:** Bars! Clever lyrics and great energy and of course a welcoming environment.

**FC:** *Do you see Soul Food Cypher Project as a form of activism within the community?*

**SFC:** Perhaps more in the lane of outreach. We want to reach out to those that are experts and activists that can share knowledge about

what is directly affecting the African-American community and those involved with Hip-Hop culture. We want to provide the platform to where this can happen more frequently.

**FC:** *What can we expect from Soul Food Cypher in the future?*

**SFC:** We will be expanding to Georgia State University and doing another cypher ran by SFC members that attend the school. We hope to host more panels and expand to other cities in the nation with our brand, sharing rhymes and positive energy.

**FC:** *Any words of wisdom for the young folks out there?*

**SFC:** Love and Know Thyself. 🎤



# A DIFFERENT WORLD (SAME DIFFERENCE)

Written by Afu Okosun

*"I'm not saying I'm gonna  
change the world, but I  
guarantee that I will spark  
the brain that will change  
the world." – Tupac Shakur*

**T**hey say the first line is always the hardest. Now with that out of the way, here we go.

The year 2012 was one that embraced extreme contrasts in the world that is hip-hop. It welcomed the emergence of Southern artists like 2Chainz and Future whose popularities grew from their catchy one-liners, features on damn near every hit song and affinity for "big booty" women. On the other hand you had artists such as Mississippi native Big Krit and Compton-bred Kendrick Lamar whose underground appeals mixed with real world, good angel/bad angel lyrics left us in a world of contemplation and moralistic nostalgia after each song. It was a year that embraced a variety of artists, new and old, with contrasting styles yet similar foundations. From T.I. to Trinidad James, ASAP Rocky to Andre 3000, the culture continued its transformation into one that embraces its differences, yet draws guidance and direction from its foundation. And in the same vein, the same can be said for many of us. Last year was one of introspection that has ultimately lead many on paths of self-realization for true purpose in life. And personally, while on this path I was introduced to the world of Urban Vines.

Welcomed to a world governed by the rules of hip hop, nourished by mother nature's fruits and brought to relaxation by an ageless liqueur. #FoodWineNHipHop I saw this hashtag while perusing the profile of Ms. Rachele Lovett, CEO of Urban Vines Wine Company and immediately after our brief Twitter encounter it sparked an interest in me. A lover of all three, I was curious to see who was behind this, what it was and where it was going. Ever so fortunate to make her acquaintance, she introduced me to the world that is Urban Vines and oh, what a world it is. Food, wine AND hip hop. These three things, all different in matter, have found a way to mesh so perfectly here. Pair this with the intrinsically gifted individuals that are associated with Urban Vines and you find one glaring commonality. Their *differences*.

From reggae to gospel rap, fried chicken to fried calamari, moscato to Merlot, the world that is Urban Vines doesn't discriminate. It didn't dictate that as a man I couldn't like Moscato nor did it say that a lady couldn't hold her liquor, brown liquor at that. It didn't look at me crazy for ordering a glass of Cabernet Sauvignon in the club nor did it turn its nose up at me for "turning up" to Trinidad James or Kendrick Lamar as I pulled up to my 9 to 5. So in the short time that I was immersed in this world I viewed this relationship as being one-sided, with me being the recipient of an abundance of life's gifts that I would use in my future endeavors. But upon reflection, I was reminded that Urban Vines in itself was indeed a reflection of myself. "I'm different, yeah I'm different!" These Tity Boi (2 Chainz for those of us who are somewhat new to this) lyrics really speak volumes, if you're listening. We're all so very different. Just as identically dissimilar as everything under God's sun. The hip hop culture that governs our style, makes home in our subconscious and dictates the taboo in our everyday lives has evolved into one that begs for the unusual. It yearns for individuals who shun monotony and thrive in creativity thus creating a culture full of young people trying to "be different" and all for good reason. But what's crazy is that during my stay here in the world of Urban Vines, I noticed something. As different as this world may be, it is a byproduct of individuals who accept that they are everything but. They understand that intrinsically they are all the same. Don't let me lose you, I'm going somewhere I promise.

What makes Urban Vines & The Food Club so different is that they aren't trying to be, *they just are*. And by doing so have created their own world with their own rules full of individuals similar in spirit, thought, and ambition and different in just about everything else. What Urban Vines has reminded me is that we all have been given distinct qualities that makes us unique from every other person walking the Earth. It's just up to us how we use these qualities in our everyday lives. Want to be different? Be yourself. Or just fall in line with all the replicas of people perpetuating everything but the person they were created to be. As a member of this generation, I've made it my life's duty to impact and inspire, invoking change with my words and hopefully more with my actions. A graduate student of counseling psychology, aspiring author and self-proclaimed generational activist, the lenses through which I saw the world while growing up on the Southside of Atlanta are far different from the ones I use today. My childish dreams of grandeur, fame and fortune have been upgraded with the emphasis being on *changing the world*. Changing our world, our people, our culture. One can only hope that these words can stir up thoughts that will motivate action and materialize into God knows what. I'd like to think that's what Mr. Shakur felt while dancing background and being a roadie for Digital Underground waiting on his moment in the sun.

By being himself, Tupac Shakur, as an individual, inspired an entire generation. But understand that 'Pac's impact was felt because of his ability to connect with people. He understood that he was no different than the next man, and his actions showed it. What world famous, platinum selling artist do you know that'll pour up with you at the neighborhood house party? Very few, if any. 'Pac exuded a love and a passion for his

people that, till this day, has yet to be matched. The very "thug life" aficionado that offered hasty threats to anyone with even a semblance of a problem was the same individual who studied at a school of performing arts, performed in Shakespearean plays, and openly admitted that he was indeed: sensitive. To understand this man was to understand the various and complex aspects of his personality. Definitely more than met the eye. You couldn't pigeonhole Tupac Amaru Shakur due to the fact that he wouldn't allow it. And the same can be said for us all.

It is only when we realize that in order for us to see how *different* we are, we have to accept who we were *made* to be and not who we think that we *should* be. We made the culture, the culture didn't, nor does it, make us. How can we allow a creation free reign over its creator? Backwards if you ask me. In a search for the new, the groundbreaking and the different, we mustn't lose sight on the ideals this hip-hop culture is rooted in. The very ideals that saw our mama's and daddy's set the stage for a President Obama. The very ideals that said a former dope boy can rise to the level of CEO and rub shoulders with dignitaries here and abroad. The very ideals that draw strength from a history of oppression only to burst out of an imposed box and push limits in every field imaginable. Folks, let's not get *sadity* and forget where we come from. Because whether you believe it or not, no matter how many renovations you make to a house, the foundation *always* remains the same.

In the search for your purpose, or in whatever you have already chosen, understand that what makes you unique is the fact that you alone possess things that none of us do. Yes, we all may have similar talents and gifts, but your gift has YOUR name on it, your touch, and your flavor. And that alone makes it *special*. So as you enjoy this newfound world, I challenge you to embrace who you are. Embrace your goals, visions and dreams, understanding that while you may share a passion similar to others, can't nobody do you, *like you*. 🎤



ARTIST PROFILES



Atlanta based MC Senor Kaos who dubs himself “The Most Interesting Emcee’ joined us for a live taping of the food club and to answer a few questions for us. An inspriation to many with his out going personalailty, work within the community, and his love for music really do make him one of the most interesting Emcee’s we know.

**FC:** *How/when did you get involved in hip-hop?*  
**SK:** Wow that’s tough question. Honestly since birth. My father was a DJ & a B-Boy. I wanted to be a B-Boy first, I was dancing when I was 8 or 9 years old. Then I started to get into emceeing around 11, and a little into DJing around 16, but ended up sticking with emceeing. To

put things into perspective, my first album was released when I was 16, while I was still in High School, so yeah it seems like I’ve been involved in Hip Hop for as long as I can remember.

**FC:** *What other artists do you find inspiration in and why?*  
**SK:** I find a lot of inspiration in Stevie Wonder. Why? Cause I’m always baffled how a man that’s blind can write songs so vivid. It’s amazing too me.

Hip Hop wise, Emcees who take their craft seriously and push the boundaries but still make fly music inspire me. When I was a teen I discovered some of the groups in the ATL indie scene like Binkis Recs, Mass Influence, and Micronauts. The 3 different crews had 3 totally different sounds but they were all great. I learned something from all of them. Right now Homeboy Sandman inspires me, what money can do a 16 bar verse is amazing. I’ve been blessed to work with him on a few tracks as well.

**FC:** *Do you feel with your music you are helping preserve/ reinvigorate the old school style of hip-hop?*  
**SK:** I do definitely feel my music is helping “Boom Bap” true-school sound of Hip Hop alive and kicking. However I don’t feel people really appreciate it as much. It’s kind of a shame.

**FC:** *Do you see your work as a form of activism?*  
**SK:** I see my work as a form a art first, then a form of entertainment, and lastly a form of activism. My lyrics are primarily very witty and clever. Their designed to make you think deeper about something, or make you laugh, or say “wow I can’t believe he said that.” It’s hard to include a form of activism in music these days. I felt I did a great job of that with the “Girls Rock Too” record around the time the Don Imus situation was going on, and everyone was blaming Hip Hop and saying we couldn’t make music to uplift. That song did JUST that.

**FC:** *What are you working on now?*  
**SK:** I just launched the Señor Kaos mobile app for droid and iphone. You can find it in your marketplace on your phone. I’m still running my blog (thekaoseffect.com) and next month will mark the 6 year anniversary of my site. Also working on collaborating with people I’ve known for years but haven’t made music with yet. Also working on a project with fellow partner in rhyme 4-ize entitled “Ultra Beast.” We’ve already released a few tracks under this name, as well as few videos. The video for our “Hard To Quit The Rhyme” track with Anthony David was even featured on CNN when they interviewed Steve Stoute about his book.


**FC:** *What are you listening to right now?*  
**SK:** Well seeing as it’s February I always listen to a lot of J-Dilla, Big L, and Big Pun cause they all passed in February. Always try to find a track by them that I didn’t know existed. Every year I find something that was unreleased, a remix or something cool.

But as far as new albums I’ve been listening to Kendrick Lamar’s “Good Kid Mad City” project which I think is one of the best albums of 2012. Big Boi, Little Dragon, Sean Price, Coldplay, Homeboy Sandman, Nas is some of the stuff I keep in rotation. I like to listen to a little 2 Chainz, and Rick Ross especially when I’m working out or running.

**FC:** *When it comes to food we know you can eat but what is your all time must have food in Atlanta? Outside of Atlanta?*  
**SK:** I’m actually a very picky eater, but I do pig out a lot. In ATL I gotta have my soul food, fried chicken, baked mac n cheese, BBQ baked beans, corn bread, etc.

When I’m back in NYC I gotta have my Pizza, and when I’m in Chicago I GOTTA have some Garrett’s Popcorn.

**FC:** *Wine of choice?*  
**SK:** Wine??? Naw I’m more of a Rum guy, get me a bottle of the finest Brugal you can find and I’m good! If I do wine though it has to be the good stuff, nothing cheap, otherwise I’ll get a crazy headache.

**FC:** *Best thing about The Food Club?*  
**SK:** The best thing about the food club is seeing how food can bring people who’ve never met each other together and over a plate a food can become cool. That infused vodka was pretty legendary too.  —Christina “C-Rocka” Rimstad



**D**on Trip became known after his hit single, “Letter to My Son” that dropped in 2009. Since then, he has been signed to Interscope Records; named XXL Freshman Class of 2012, and has worked with Dr. Dre, Wale, and Cee-Lo Green. Not too impressed with the “hype,” he keeps it real while painting a very vivid life story through his songs. With lyrics about everyday struggle(s) like trying to feed his family, Don Trip is a very relatable rapper that chooses to have a mixture of club anthems with thought provoking lyrics. The Food Club Mag had a chance to chat with the 27-year-old Memphis native about his hip-hop influences, his motivation, and his future.

**FC:** *How did hip-hop influence you?*

**DT:** It let me know that we weren’t the only people that were poor. Back then, everyone that I knew that was making rap music was pretty much from the same social class. It’s different now; everyone balling out. But back when I fell in love with hip hop that’s what it was about.

**FC** *How has your music evolved since “Letter to My Son”, “Good Morning”, and even now your most recent mixtape?*

**DT** I’ve grown. I’m getting older and I’m experiencing more and no matter what project I’m working on I try to make sure that it shows growth. It’s not the same thing. I try to look at my mixtapes like making movies.

**FC:** *In your interview with The Source in 2010, you stated that hip*

*hop was missing honesty. Do you still feel like that 3 years later?*

**DT:** I think people started telling more relatable stories. For the most part, they’re still stories. No one is giving their life, they just giving you what they want to hear.

**FC:** *Is hip-hop a genre or a lifestyle/culture?*

**DT:** It’s pretty much both. The genre of music is broad-more than black folks find refuge in it. As far as the lifestyle, it’s a little more peculiar. I guess you can say both.

**FC:** *You have a song “Hold Back Tears” and you speak about your relationship between you and your fam. How has it changed since the song?*

**DT:** We’re older now and it’s a bit different. It made them more aware of what went on. We haven’t had a falling out since then so I guess it’s doing well.

**FC:** *In another interview, you also mentioned that you don’t listen to other artists’ music. If you don’t listen to other music how do you know your competition?*

**DT:** I’ve gotten a little bit better with listening to other music, but I’m not competing with a particular artist or group. As much as hip-hop is like sports it’s also not. If Wayne has a #1 spot on a billboard and I’m trying to make a record to be #1 I can’t make the same record he made. I can still own that spot-maybe not at the same time, but I can still accomplish that. I’m not in it for competition—I’m in it to feed my family.

**FC:** *Since being signed to Interscope what has been your toughest challenges?*

**DT:** Men that don’t communicate with men like men-I’m not used to emailing someone I just got out of the car with. I’m ok with the paper trail and emails but a regular convo shouldn’t have to be emailed. Certain things shouldn’t have to be emailed. That’s different-I’m still not used to that.

**FC:** *How do you feel like your music helps raise kids?*

**DT:** I give you the full picture. Of course, I have thought provoking records and records about my real life. No matter what I try to show both sides. If you in school stay in school

**FC:** *What’s next?*

**DT:** “Step Brothers 2” is on the way. We work fast you won’t have to wait that long for it. It may come out around April. It’s coming out this year.



—LaJanee Alford

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## // THE GETAWAY: JAMAICA //

*by India "Chef Ramos" Ramos  
Photography by Rachelle Lovett*

The Grand Palladium Jamaica Resort & Spa is located in the beautiful Hanover parish located 40 minutes south of the Montego Bay Airport. The hotel is well equipped and has around 11 restaurants and 13 bars, thus making it the ideal location for pure relaxation. This luxurious all-suite resort offers the ideal setting for family vacations and active tropical getaways allowing you to swim in the pristine turquoise waters of the Caribbean. At the Grand Palladium Jamaica, you get the best the country has to offer. The facilities you find at any Palladium property make for an unforgettable experience, and Jamaica is no different. The resort also features the largest pool in Jamaica and a first class spa and fitness center. The resort also has its own casino and shopping center!

Its beach front views are breath taking with endless blue water of the northern Jamaica coast. This brand new resort features modern design that is in perfect harmony with the spectacular, natural surroundings of this remarkable country, noted for it's people, reggae music, beautiful beaches and mountains, and hospitality.

The Grand Palladium Jamaica Resort and Spa also offers daily activities for all ages. Surf-side activities at the resort include kayaks, snorkeling, catamarans, windsurfing, and paddle boats. The world renowned

"Johnny Walker Championship Golf Course" is available to guests, as is a whole bunch of other activities including aerobics, ping-pong, darts, water polo, miniature golf, tennis, basketball, volleyball, and more. And for the night owl, the Boogie Woogie night club has shows and live music to keep the fun going after the sun goes down.

**If your idea of a perfect vacation is sipping great local coffee while listening to local reggae music on one of the world's most beautiful beaches, then the Grand Palladium Resort and Spa is the place for you to be.**

## ADVENTURE



Photographer// [www.GregoryPrescott.net](http://www.GregoryPrescott.net)  
Make Up Artist // Demetrius Cooper  
Model // Danere  
Location // Los Angeles, Ca.

