

New York
RESIDENT

Ask The Chef: Bill Telepan

October 9, 2007- Dining

For the last year and a half, Chef Bill Telepan has brought greenmarket-inspired, sophisticated cuisine to the restaurant-starved Upper West Side. He mixes the best local ingredients with a solid technique he perfected at the now-defunct Judson Grill and changes his menu regularly to tickle his guests — a mix of Lincoln Center attendees and happy foodies.
— Sylvie Bigar



Any tips for entertaining at home? BT: Now, the restaurant is my second home and my friends often come to see me here, but I think the trick is either to make things that can be made ahead of time, or to put your friends to work. Open a bottle of wine, let people help out; that's the kind of casual atmosphere that can make for a wonderful evening.

Where is your favorite place to eat in New York City? BT: For BBQ, I love to go down to Daisy May's, but I also love the pizza at Celeste on Amsterdam Avenue. For a celebration, if I don't go away, I choose Le Bernardin.

What do you cook for yourself at home? BT: At home, I have a 6-year-old daughter so I cook what she enjoys: pasta with beans and broccoli, a salad, corn, even a quesadilla. But like any other kid, she also loves what we call white food.

Which ingredients should everyone have in the kitchen? BT: In the kitchen, you definitely need to stock up on extra-virgin olive oil and red pepper flakes to spice things up. But let's face it, the staple of the New York pantry is take-out menus.

What tool should everyone have in their kitchen? BT: The basic tool in the kitchen, be it at home or at the restaurant, is a fabulous set of knives.

When going out, how much do you tip? BT: When I go out, I give 20 to

25 percent depending on the level of service.

Any tips for getting a good dinner reservation? BT: To get a reservation, call the day of or even an hour before you plan to come. Sometimes, restaurants keep a few tables open. But you can also just walk in and get ready to wait a little.

What makes a good meal? BT: Good people make for a good meal.

What is the best/worst meal you've ever had? BT: I can't say what the worst meal was but I have had many best meals. One in particular was at Cibreo in Florence with my wife.

Do you have any memorable kitchen stories? BT: I remember my first New Year's Eve as a chef. It was a disaster. Everything that could go wrong went wrong. It was just a night like that.

What is the most common misconception about eating out? BT: I think people have to understand that they don't need to think of an evening out as something fancy and expensive. I love it when guests come to my restaurant and order grilled chicken and a salad.

RECIPE

Lobster Bolognese

Ingredients

2 11/4-11/2-pound lobsters
1 cup chicken stock or water
1 shallot, minced
2 cloves of garlic, minced
2 ounces extra virgin olive oil
1 14-ounce can tomato, squeezed dry
and chopped very fine
4 ounces white wine
1 ounce white wine vinegar
6 ounces white lobster or chicken stock
2 tablespoons butter
8 ounces spaghetti
2 tablespoons minced herbs (tarragon, chervil, parsley, dill and/or chives)

Method

Prep:

Ask your butcher to break apart the lobster into head, claws, and tail. Separate the tail and claws from head and set aside. Open up the head



by pulling down the bottom leg half away from the top. Scrape away and discard the feathery lungs and insides from the head, and using a chef's knife, chop the head into small pieces. Place the heads in a pot with the stock and bring to a simmer and cook 15 minutes, set aside for 15 minutes, then strain and reserve.

For the lobster:

Bring a pot of water to a rolling boil. Add enough vinegar to flavor the water and salt to taste like the sea. Let water return to a rolling boil, add lobster tail and claws, reduce heat to medium, and cook uncovered. Watch carefully and do not let the water come to a boil again. The pot should bubble occasionally but not simmer. Cook lobster tail for five minutes and claws for seven minutes. Remove from liquid and cool. Shell the tail, knuckles, and claws.

For the sauce:

Sweat shallots and garlic in extra virgin olive oil until soft, about seven to eight minutes. Add tomatoes and cook for about five minutes. Add wine until reduced almost dry, about three to five minutes. Add stock, bring to a simmer and cook for five minutes.

For the spaghetti:

Bring lightly salted water to a boil, add spaghetti and cook for seven to eight minutes, add to sauce with butter and cook until butter is incorporated into sauce, add lobster meat, warm on medium heat and sprinkle with herbs.