

Maribeth Maloney: You're quite the cuvée yourself! You blend master cooking skills with unparalleled wine expertise, holding both a degree from the prestigious Culinary Institute of America and a first-level Sommelier's Certificate from London's Court of Sommeliers. Do you subscribe to any food and wine pairing "rules" or is that passé?

Chef Bob Iacovone: The "red with meat and white with chicken and fish" rule is a good base point to stick with, but I tend to taste the wine first and then decide what food will go well with it.

MM: You began your culinary career at the PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach. Would that be categorized as a good, bad or ugly experience?

BI: It was a great experience because I learned a lot – I learned that corporate environments aren't for me. I don't do well with bosses, so having several of them standing over my shoulder wasn't any good. Too many bosses kill the dish.

MM: The irresistible lure of New Orleans beckoned you – first to the Windsor Court Hotel's famed Grill Room, then your heart found its home at Cuvée, where you opened the restaurant in 2000 as Chef de Cuisine before taking over as Executive Chef in 2003. Your contemporary Creole-Continental cooking has since catapulted you into the national spotlight



with **Bob Iacovone**
Executive Chef
Cuvée, New Orleans



Chef Iacovone will be at *The White Elephant's* "Chef & Shop" Series November 16-18

Cooking Demo is at 3 p.m. on Saturday
Call 508.325.1320 for Reservations

with such kudos as *Esquire* magazine's "Chefs to Watch" and *New Orleans* magazine's "Best New Chef," not to mention a nod from *Bon Appétit* as one of the city's Top Six restaurants. Do you ever feel the need to pinch yourself?

BI: I consider myself extremely fortunate. I'm 36 years old and know many people my age who still don't know what they want for a career.

MM: Mercifully, Cuvée was left intact by Katrina, but you were left without a staff, fresh water, clean uniforms... You rallied nonetheless and were one of the first restaurants to reopen – wine served in paper cups, itinerant workers onboard and water supplied from pots boiling on the stove. Tell me about the mood in the dining room those first few weeks.

BI: It was like a party – people came in to escape for a couple hours from the hell that was outside. Cuvée is known as a fine dining restaurant, but when we reopened, we couldn't even wash dishes so we served everything on paper plates; we called it "the Cuvée Picnic."

MM: Some of the old, beloved New Orleans mainstays have yet to reopen due to lack of insurance and capital to rebuild. Cynics have said Katrina merely sped up predetermined destiny – the inevitable transition from authentic soul food to "foie gras with grits." What do you say?

BI: Most of the old nooks and crannies actually have reopened and it would be like losing a piece of history if they didn't – it would be tragic. I think the fine dining establishments have their roots in the techniques and ingredients of the old restaurants.

MM: As serious as your food is, your menu reflects your sense of whimsy: "Spaghetti and Meatball" – a sea scallop with caper berries, tomato brunois and spaghetti squash, and "Chicken with Waffles" – a playful riff on coq au vin blanc. What might Iacovoned "Fish & Chips" look like?

BI: How about potato wrapped cod

with malt vinegar butter sauce?

MM: How about it indeed!

MM: I'm in need of a new, utterly useless kitchen gadget. Got any suggestions?

BI: A garlic press.

MM: Thanks. I'll keep it next to my egg separator.

MM: What's the best way to attack a bowl of crawfish?

BI: I like big, down-home crawfish boils where you cover the table with newspaper and dump out a bucket of boiled crawfish, andouille sausage, red bliss potatoes, corn on the cob and whole heads of garlic.

MM: But isn't there a specific eating process that involves ripping the crawdad's head off?

BI: Oh – twist, peel and suck!

MM: That's it!

MM: If it's true that only the good die young, when would you like to go?

BI: As far off as possible.

MM: Is that because you're bad?

BI: Yeah.

MM: I'll be the judge of that.

MM: How many sommeliers does it take to screw in a light bulb?

BI: Ha! I'm saying one. That way there'd be no arguing about how it's done, what color the bulb should be or what it reminds them of.

MM: Reminds them of as in "oaky, buttery, citrusy?"

BI: Exactly. When I was going for my Sommelier's Certificate, I once said a wine reminded me of dirty ashtrays.

MM: The fact that you know what dirty ashtrays taste like is marginally bad.

MM: Got any strong feelings about turducken?

BI: It makes a great Christmas gift for a family of 20.

MM: If ever there was a time to be a chef, it's now. Chefs are the new rock stars, minus the propensity to become human train wrecks. What's the downside to the celebrityization of the culinary world?

BI: Some of the new television programs bother me – they aren't showing good examples of professional chefs. They have long hair flying all

See *DISH*, page 29

FANTASTIC YARD SALE

OUTSTANDING MERCHANDISE

From

Estates, Nantucket Retail Stores & Relocation Projects

Furnishings for every room
in your home & garden!

GREAT GIFTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

Men ~ Women ~ Children

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18

10AM - 4PM

~ Early Bird Special ~
Get in at 9am for only \$10.

at the
Jared Coffin House,
29 Broad Street



To benefit the
NANTUCKET LIGHTSHIP BASKET MUSEUM

La Dolce
Notte

Italian Night
Every Tuesday

STARLIGHT
theatre & café

**Catch the Afternoon Football Games on the Big Screen
THIS WEEKEND**

LUNCH & DINNER SERVED 7 DAYS A WEEK
Lunch Served 11:30am ~ 5pm
Dinner Served 5-9pm Sun-Thurs, Fri and Sat 'till 10pm

"NANTUCKET AN ISLAND LIFE"
Slideshow by Photographer Cary Hazlegrove 11:30am & 1pm Wed-Sat

MOVIE HOTLINE: 508.228.4435 DINNER RESERVATIONS: 508.228.4479
All movie dates and times are subject to change without notice.

I NORTH UNION STREET WWW.STARLIGHTNANTUCKET.COM
MOVIE TICKETS RESERVED WITH DINNER RESERVATIONS