

February 4, 2014



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"Check out the menus  
I wrote for the  
newsletter [here](#)."

-Chef John Reed

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## INDUSTRY NEWS



American Culinary Federation  
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Culinarians, founded in  
Chicago in 2003, is one of the  
fastest-growing chapters of  
the American Culinary  
Federation (ACF). Click [here](#)  
for more information.

## The Perception of a Detox

I began this little project of drinking only juice for several days as way to figure out whether or not it would make any significant change in my body through cleaning/detoxing. I was a little skeptical that a 3-day regime could fix nearly 50 years of the American diet, and what I really mean by that is my own personal navigation of that diet. I have enjoyed plenty of smoked and salted meats, fermented beverages, distilled brown liquor and highly saturated animal fats in my time. Conversely, as a chef, I have spent many hours studying the principle of healthy cooking, figuring out what a proper portion size is and understanding the relationship between ingredients. However, the reality is that we live and die in the world of excess from butter, foie gras, pork belly and cream. These are all the things diners want when they go out to eat. Restaurant dining is and should be a luxury, and you *should* indulge when you occasionally partake. From a health benefit, these rich items are not the best. But, from an emotional perspective of the dining experience, they are *exactly* what I want to deliver to a guest.

There is a persistent argument in our profession that chefs serving food to paying guests are not responsible for the health and well-being of a diner. It is the diners' money, after all, and if they want to spend \$45 dollars on that 16oz strip with Foie Gras Butter and Bacon Hollandaise, then it's their choice. I am on the side that you can have both. What that should really mean is that luscious, indulgent items are combined with more nutritive ingredients, prepared in the hands of a skilled chef to maximize flavor potential, and handled in a properly orchestrated manner. Portions need to be controlled and sequenced according to their scope of flavor. There is a process when writing a menu, and putting specific dishes in order can cause a reaction or act as a transition between one course and the next.

I do not believe that I'm standing on a soap box preaching to a group of non-believers, here. I am a person who has spent a lot of time looking at food and plate construction, and I know a lot of you reading this have, too. There are places on the menu for "healthier" options, but they must be designed with a little more thought than menu items full of those rich, luscious flavors. After all, we know and love "fat" and have less interest in dishes without fat when we go out to eat. What are we doing to maximize the flavor of a restaurant dish, preserving both its indulgence factor as well as its nutritional integrity? This, to me, is **Modern Cuisine**. It is not something created in a sterile lab as with some of the new kitchens we have seen over the last few years. Some things are meant to be as is.



Recipes, reviews and resources for everything food and dining in the Chicago area. [Check out](#) what's happening this week.

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## COLD PRESS JUICE MACHINE

So, after the "juicing," what did I learn? It took me a couple of days to figure out that even in a juice diet, you don't just grab some greens, press out every last ounce of juice and gulp them down at will. You need to plan when and where in the course of the day you consume a juice blend. It is the same with writing a menu. I thought about the combination of ingredients and their functionality in the process of a detox plan. There are points in the plan when you need stimulation, re-fueling, refreshment and balancing. The "guts" of the program were green juices full of phytochemicals from kale, spinach, parsley, romaine and some other flavor-balancing agents such as apple, lemon and ginger. This plan breaks down the day into two sections based around the hours you are awake. Specific green juices are the start of each of these segments. These are designed to be high in protein (8 to 11 grams per 10 fl oz portion) and designed to stimulate digestive enzymes. Similar to an amuse bouche, this little bite is meant to stimulate the appetite. From a flavor profile, juices are pretty big, with kale being the dominant flavor. A couple hours later, you add some fruit and citrus-based juices to accentuate your body's natural alkalinity. There is a whole article there, but not in my future. I will save that for my nutritionist friends. However, the refreshing quality of these was a perfect transition from strong raw and bitter flavors to the cleansing and brightness of citrus, turmeric and even cayenne. Next you drink more green juices, each packed with chlorophyll, designed to stimulate red blood cell reproduction and start the process of detoxing by eliminating hard metals and toxins in the blood.

I want to personally thank my long-time friend, Jeffery Pandolfino, owner of [Green & Tonic](#), who provided me with the juices and information on the program (Check out his blog, [Green Slate](#), for some great info). On day one, I was deprived of caffeine and had a massive headache from being so. I then came to the point of the program where I met what I called my "friend" of this program, the "Green Monster." Before we talk about that, I should mention that all of these juices are cold pressed! They are not processed in a traditional juicing machine (which can create heat). Instead, all of the ingredients are gently pulped and then subjected to pressure and squeezed of all of their moisture. This little guy was equivalent to drinking 6 salads with almost 1.25 pounds of raw fruits and vegetables, and it kicked my butt. All of this concentration of vitamins, nutrients, etc. hit me hard. I was lightheaded and my system didn't know what happened to it. This was payback for all those times I made it run out and pick up adult beverages for after work. Yes, juicing *can* have an effect.

I struggled through the afternoon. Then came the juices made from root vegetables, such as beets, carrots, and sweet potatoes, among others. They help bring up the blood sugar and give you that little boost of energy. These blends had flavor profiles that were easier to define and all well-balanced. My wife and I have adopted parts of these juicing blends and now make juices for morning snacks and/or breakfast. We use beet, carrot, apple, ginger and kale as our base and modify it with a variety of other fruits and citrus juices. Finally, after about 12-14 hours of only juice, I got to have dessert. In this program, you get to have a nut milk-based "juice" after dinner, packed with some



If you are interested in purchasing or trying a cold press juice machine, click [here](#) to check this on out.

## GREEN & TONIC



This is my long-time friend Jeff's business, [Green & Tonic](#). If you are on the east coast, whether you are interested in a juice cleanse or not, check him out and give him some support.

## BLOG POSTS

### What Would I Serve at Dinner?

Click [here](#) to check out my most recent blog post on my approach to healthier cooking at home.

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### Healthful Dining: Proceed with Caution

Click [here](#) to check out this recent article on the debate of responsibilities when it comes to restaurants and customer's health choices.

more proteins and additional nutrients to help your body while you sleep. This was like the little petit fours of the program. You want that little something to finish the meal.

So, as far as my research, I have come to the following conclusions. Remember, this not a highly scientific project, just one man's personal experience.

- Juicing is not for everyone, but substituting parts of your diet with lots of nutritive vegetables, fruits and raw ingredients is beneficial. Those nutritive items are also needed on a regular basis, not just during a cleanse. They act as a tune-up for your body.
- When writing your menus, remember to incorporate balance. Take a look at your menu: How many fried items do you have on your appetizer menu? Can you substitute something healthier that is packed full of flavor and stimulates the appetite instead of just filling you up with carbohydrates and fats?
- Practice portion control and use real ingredients that both have functionality *and* make sense. Instead of serving a massive sundae made from high-fat chocolate and real cream, serve a perfect scoop of real ice cream and chocolate sauce made from high quality 60% cocoa. It still tastes great and is better for guests than the massive sundae plopped down on the table like a bucket with 4 spoons and a straw.
- From juicing to fine dining think about, experience and accumulate knowledge of your ingredients and how they work together. Making flavorful meals is the key. Your palate and your brain are the best ingredients in the kitchen.

Now, all of this is nothing new... this information is out there every day. This process of taking a break from processed foods and an unbalanced diet is a wakeup call. I had mine when I was finished and realized I was feeling good about where I was. Running a foodservice operation is a business, but cooking and eating is an emotional experience. So, after consuming only juice, losing 5 pounds and keeping it off by really paying attention to what I eat, I realize there has been a true "cleansing" of my body and brain. I look at everything going on my plate and think about its place on it, and in my body. I am more focused on eating real foods packed full of flavor and in proper portions. I hope this little personal test helps you to do the same.

Have fun, and make sure you really taste the next meal that's put down in front of you.

- Chef John Reed, CEC, CCA, ACE

