



CUSTOMIZED CULINARY SOLUTIONS™

THE RUBBER BAND DOOR KNOB

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INDUSTRY NEWS



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

Temptation

I was asking around about what I should write for this month's Rubber Band. The word "temptation" was mentioned several times. I don't know whether it was a hint for a Valentine's Day theme or because I have been really hungry and everything has seemed tempting to me. I have been on another cleanse program to support my family members who are trying to go through their annual reinvention, and it's been ten days now. I can tell you that all of this so-called "food porn" advertising on social media and TV can really make you look differently at the cheeseburger. This trend in advertising aims to plant a seductive and provocative image in your mind until you eventually are tempted to throw down the "green juice" for the sake of a ten-ounce patty of beef with bacon. Did I forget to tell you that the grilled onions, mayonnaise and slice of foie gras are really playing with my emotions? If you want to experience that firsthand, check out the bar menu at one of my favorite top-fifty Chicago restaurants, NAHA. Chef Carrie Nahabedian is a James Beard Award winner, and her restaurant is Michelin Star rated. The foie gras may not be on the menu, but I bet you could ask. She was one of my mentors years ago and taught me about adding luxury to food. The goal is to create temptation in your food so that people get sucked in.

Over the past several years, there has been a trend in the restaurant industry to reevaluate the use of photography on menus, advertising and print media. Domino's was the first major company to end its relationship with a food stylist. The company was highly concerned that the manipulation of food under the camera to make it appear seductive was counterproductive to consumer satisfaction. How many times have you gone to a fast food establishment or ordered a pizza, opened the box and found that what you got looked nothing like what you expected? Check out the social media phenomenon of customers going into the QSR chains and asking employees to remake their food so that it looks like the picture that was advertised. The stylist wants to make the food look tempting and stimulate your brain to spur your temptation, but is that really the food being produced in those kitchens? In another article, about kitchen design, I recently discussed how we need to consider including a



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Check out this great magazine, [Four](#).



Eater is the source for people who care about dining and drinking in the nation's most important food cities, like Chicago. A favorite of industry pros and amateurs alike, Eater has an uncanny knack for finding out what's opening where, who's serving what, and how it's all going down. Find out [what's new](#) in Chicago.

small section of the kitchen line with the correct lighting so that chefs can take pictures of their food as it comes off the line—an instant opportunity for them to hit the internet to seduce their next table of guests.

So I am glad to say that chefs don't need hair dryers, glycerin, dry ice and high-gloss lacquer to make food tempting. We already make it tempting with the tools we use every day. Our ability to write great menus, not just in our minds but also on paper. We then execute perfectly to make it sexy. Food and simple, unaltered ingredients can be highly tempting. Try sitting at a great raw bar and ordering six ice-cold oysters. They need to be shucked to order, and they come to you plump, glistening and tempting. Go ahead and touch them. Then taste the sweet, briny and sometimes alkaline tastes that stimulate your senses. Add a touch of mignonette, horseradish, lemon or Tabasco, and you add capicum, acetic acid and a bevy of flavor stimulants. Can you eat just three? Hopefully, you are sharing those with your loved one. It is Valentine's Day, after all.

There are so many ways that food stimulates our emotions. Food can bring back memories from childhood vacations, whether good or bad. When I cook, I want to stimulate your mind, not just your palate. It is easy to discuss and theorize about but sometimes much harder to do. It comes down to what you are trying to achieve. Are you trying to place an ingredient into the center of the ring, make you think differently or even jog a memory? The humble chicken can be sexy. Now, appreciate it for what it is, and handle it with delicate hands. Treat it with care when you butcher it. Removing the wishbone first and taking the extra time to remove the oyster from the backbone are tasks we often forget. Every part of the chicken cooks differently, so don't treat the chicken as one lump thing. This involves patience and being delicate. If you take the time, the results can easily tempt your family to come to the table. The same is true of the humble pork chop. How many times have you ever seen that thing come to the table sliced? Hardly ever, because most chefs are afraid of exposing themselves to the guests. Slicing a perfectly cooked piece of meat that shows perfect color and moisture retention is a skill—and one that a confident chef will shoot for every time. Next time you see a medium-rare steak sliced and covered with a sauce, you should question it. I would want to flaunt it if I could. That brings my thoughts to either Kate Upton for the guys or Channing Tatum for the other half of my readers. Got you thinking now! Tempting somehow and in some other life.

So don't throw food on a plate. Dress it up, or sometimes take off a few things if you need to. Think about all the other parts that go into the dish, from the words on the menu, the color and shape of the plate, and the little garnishes to your emotions when you are sending that plate out to the table. Sometimes you are not in the mood, and the food shows it.

So I have tried to keep with the mood of Valentine's Day, a

RECIPE

Roasted Chicken With Truffles



Check out this [roast chicken preparation](#) taken over the top with chef Daniel Humm.

time to appreciate your loved ones, find new loves or turn up the heat on your own. Think of temptation, and enjoy a meal, whether you cook it or go out to a restaurant. If the food is not coming from a passionate place, then you may need to reconsider.

- Chef John Reed, CEC, CCA, ACE

RECIPE

NAHA Restaurant



BEER

For Those Who Have Read 50 Shades of Gray...



Try the [Dominatrix Double IPA](#) before you check out the movie. It's available at Binneys

Take a look at the [bar menu](#). NAHA has one of the best Chicago Restaurant Week deals going.

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