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INDUSTRY NEWS



American Culinary Federation
Windy City Professional
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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.

December 3, 2015

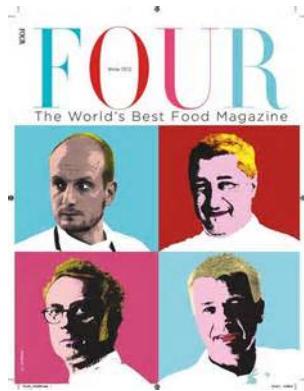
20 Minutes of Silence

As turkey season comes to an end, I start thinking about this month's host of social events. The holidays are here, from the after work cocktail parties to get-togethers with the neighbors to the big family meal. This is a time for food, drink and fun. I love the whole idea of cooking great dishes for my friends and family. For me, this time year is not about the Black Friday Deals, the size of the box under the tree or even the pile of receipts on my desk trying to figure out how we are going to pay for them. It is about sharing my gift of cooking to those who mean the most to me. However, it can be a lot of work and I generally can't wait for January 3rd. Think about it, all the extra time you put into the month. From the cook's perspective, you work so hard for the 20 minutes of table silence when mouths are full and everyone is tucked into a plate of food. It can be pretty anticlimactic.

Do you ever really figure out how many hours you put into that special meal? The shopping, the late nights prepping, marinating, keeping the fire lit on the smoker at 3 a.m., the dishes and the last minute liquor store runs because the cook is out of beer! It's crazy right? Welcome to my world. It's also the life that professional chefs live for. It takes a certain type of person to put themselves into this chaos. It is a rare breed that enjoys the thought of diving into a cooler full of 30-40 whole turkeys, trays of tenderloins and cases of vegetables. It is the process that drives us. We want to grab a knife and start boning out birds, making stock, grinding trim to make sausages and making roulades. This takes days of planning and production all in the quest to satisfy our guests and put out that special meal that we think is the best thing they are ever going to eat. I know the cooks out there have all had the same thought, "Do you know how much time I put into making that smoked turkey breast, or how long that salami has been curing and you come along and eat that in about two minutes and not a peep of appreciation."



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



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.

Cooking at the professional level can be cruel! We don't necessarily have control of who is coming into our operations. There are many times, especially at this time of year, guests are just mailing in their attendance, especially work related events. They have to go because it's a work brunch. You know they have other things to do. Being on the other side of the catering world for many years, you can see a really ugly side of entertaining. It can be really frustrating to put in all that work of cutting, cooking, wrapping, shipping, displaying serving, just to see something that you put your heart and soul into sit on a tray and get the cold shoulder. The guests are more concerned about slamming a few light beers and getting out of there. They got crap to do. Really!

We would like to handpick the guest list with only those who want to eat really good things, talk about food and beverage pairings and compliment you on how well the Lamoure linens and plates really speak about the theme! Not happening! This is not about the business world, but the escape to normality in our private lives. So take the approach I do: If you love to cook and entertain, don't necessarily worry about the masses but cook for yourself. When you are surrounded by your loved ones at your holiday table and that 20 minutes of silence rolls around, take a breath and look around the table. You will know that all the accolades you need will be in their smiles and empty plates.

I am going to imagine you in a holiday sweater, stressed out hair, caffeine in one hand and a glass of something else in the other after cooking all day. You need to repeat this several times when approached, "It's the holidays damn it and you are going to like it!"

Happy holidays and a Happy New Year!

- Chef John Reed, CEC, CCA

MAKE RESERVATIONS

This is One of the Keys to Great Entertaining:



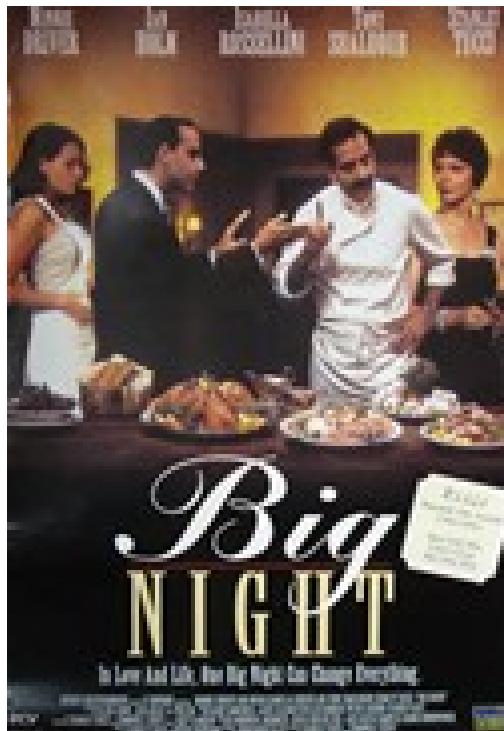
The Cicerone Certification Program certifies and educates beer professionals in order to elevate the beer experience for consumers.
cicerone.org.

BEER

Something to Drink



Session beers are a great way to keep you on task from breakfast to lunch.



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