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INDUSTRY NEWS



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

A Trip, a Cocktail and a Grain of Rice

One of the greatest treasures I have is my chef's jacket-but not in the literal context of a double-breasted white jacket with long sleeves. Being a chef is about your ability to connect with people, because chefs have a unique core. A chef always has his coat. It is a state of mind. Putting on the coat, whether it is the traditional white jacket or a custom t-shirt and cool apron, is about learning and sharing. I have always believed that the greatest skill a chef has is sharing things with others.

I have always gravitated toward the kitchen ever since I was a child. I love the kitchen and cooking, and the best part of that is taking someone to a place or providing an experience they have never had through food before. It is not about the stars or diamonds. Those accolades are merely the result of taking care of someone through food. Even at social events when I was simply a guest, I found myself around the food, watching and learning what the chefs were doing-always checking out menus, watching, reading and tasting.

I was just at the Catersource Conference and pizza tradeshow in Vegas. After a long week of work, I wanted to chill and walk the strip. My wife Rosemary and I were almost done for the evening, and then my chef coat came out of the closet-I had to take her to a cool food experience. At the



Cosmopolitan Hotel, José Andrés runs **Jaleo**, one of several restaurants under that brand. It was late and toward the end of service, but I wanted Rosi to see the paella station. The cool thing about it is that they cook with real wood, one fire at a time. They don't make it in a sauté pan to order in small batches. That is the corporate food cost-driven method. They make paella. It's the real deal.

Trib Food

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.

We ordered a delicious cocktail, and then the chef coat took over. It was like front-row tickets behind home plate. The process enthralled me, and I started asking questions, watching and learning (all in my head, of course). I wanted to see the whole process. It was



like the Krispy Kreme experience of watching the first donut come off the line. What a sight-two people sitting at the bar watching wood burn and rice simmer. I could have watched my money go down the hole on the blackjack table, but this was more exciting. Then the other chef coats in the room saw us. They knew we weren't typical guests. By the time they had finished the last paella of the night, the restaurant was empty. As a reward for watching, they served us a plate on the house. It was paella verduras, a seasonal vegetable paella with a zippy aioli and a simple green salad made of tiny whole vegetables with their tops. It was simple but incredibly satisfying from the chef's coat perspective.

Inevitably we started talking to the young chef. She was very passionate and excited about being out front cooking with fire. The sous chef showed up, and of course, what happens when two chef coats get together? A conversation and invite to come watch and learn, not from the bar, but in the kitchen!



So needless to say, I spent my next day off in the chef's coat, watching and learning about making paella. It is an art-a dish to practice and master. It is about control, patience and feel. This is why I always have a chef's coat waiting in my mental closet. You never know when a trip, a cocktail and a grain of rice can make you very happy.

By the way, my wife (the other chef in the house) was first to put on her chef's coat and start planning our first summer event-the opportunity to light a fire and ask everyone in attendance to put on their chef's coats and join us for an experience.

Buen Provecho

- Chef John Reed, CEC, CCA

Matiz Valenciano Premium Bomba Paella Rice

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

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WHAT TO DRINK?

This is really an outdoor dish, so the obvious choice is Sangria, but I'm a beer guy.

Here are two brews, depending on your budget:

If you are going to make paella, you need to use this type of rice. Get it [here](#).

The Mediterranean Beer



Inedit



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