

ABOVE THE BRIM

Plenty of fun this weekend to celebrate mom

First and foremost, I want to thank all of you for not only reading my first column but also for all your positive feedback. Even though I could never replace Frances Rivetti's column, I recognize that I have some pretty big shoes to fill in order to keep her readers interested, engaged and entertained. From the positive feedback I received from so many of you, I assume I am off to a good start.

Many of you contacted me with tips about new shops, restaurants, tasting rooms, etc. that are opening in town. I greatly appreciate this because although I am around town regularly, I can't be everywhere at once nor can I stay on top of every change to ownership or new restaurants that open in town. So please keep the notifications coming.

Several exciting new changes are on the way to Petaluma in the food department.

Great Petaluma Chili Cook-off, Salsa & Beer Tasting: 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 9:

Mom's Day is this weekend and what better way to treat her than a visit to this Saturday's Great Petaluma Chili Cook-off, Salsa & Beer Tasting. Proceeds go to

support Cinnabar Theater's Young Rep Program. You will not find a wider selection of world-class chili, salsa and beer anywhere, but don't worry about the heat. The competitors know that burning your taste buds isn't in anyone's best interest and instead offer up an incredibly flavorful selection, often with exotic ingredients. With 22 breweries, this event is as much a brew fest as a chili cook-off, only it costs less than most brew fests and it includes all the food you can eat.

The local celeb judges include the mayor, food writers, radio DJ's, and food goddesses Frances Rivetti and Laurie Figone. Laurie is the 2014 Dessert World Food Champion, and has brought a "Gold Ticket" to the event, which will entitle this year's Grand Champion to attend this fall's World Food Championships in Florida without having to go through any other preliminary rounds.

Mother's Day Tea: 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 9

If chili isn't your mom's thing, check out "A Special Tea for Mom," put on by Petaluma People Services Center and Petaluma Sunrise Rotary. This is held at the PPSC Senior Café (211 Novak Drive) and is a tribute tea for the moms in Petaluma that may be alone on Mother's Day. Whether you bring your own mom, or are without a mom, your attendance will brighten the day of those in attendance.

Call Petaluma People Services Center at

765-8488 for information or tickets.

Sauced BBQ in the Theatre District

Sauced BBQ is slated to open shortly in Tres Hombres' old location. Sauced BBQ is located in downtown Livermore; Petaluma will be its second location. Several friends and I stopped into their Livermore location during a recent wine tour of Concannon winery and were able to try a good portion of their menu, as well as a few of their beers. Everything was delicious, although their beer may need to step up in order to compete with local favorites like Lagunitas, Petaluma Hills, 101 North and Hen House.

Nopalito on Bodega Avenue and Eastman Lane

Nopalito is Spanish for "cactus" and is a delicacy in Mexican cuisine. It is also the name of the new restaurant at the corner of Bodega Avenue and Eastman Lane, where Uruapan used to sit. Although the new owners are the same people who started Uruapan many years ago, they have been running a restaurant in Healdsburg for the past few years. In their absence, Uruapan's food suffered. But they are back to rave reviews. I have yet to eat there, but from what I am reading online, Nopalito is dishing out some great food.

(I look forward to your feedback, as well as hearing about any Petaluma food news that you choose to share with me at "Above the Brim" on Facebook or abovethebrim@houstonporter.com.)



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