

TIP OF MY TONGUE

# Local celebrity chef pens new book

Laurie Figone's cookbook is finally here and it promises to be an excellent holiday gift. A Petaluma food celebrity, and all around incredible person, you cannot help but like Laurie when you meet her. But take one bite of her food and you'll fall in love.

The release of "Cooking with Laurie Figone" just hit the shelves of Hunt & Behren's at 30 Lakeville St. Yes, the feed store, because that is how Laurie rolls. She has a country

elegance that translates beautifully into her recipes, with creativity that melds fancy flavors with comfort food favorites.

Even though Laurie performs on a national stage, she never loses touch with her Petaluma roots, always incorporating local food purveyors into her recipes. At this year's Sonoma County Fair, Laurie always had a venerable local producer at her side, in order to showcase their wares. Her guests included Petaluma Hills Brewing Company, Stemple Creek Ranch, Sonoma Spice Queen, Three Twins Ice Cream, Spring Hill Jersey Cheese, D.G. Langley Farms and F. A. Ninos.

On the national stage, Laurie has won the World Food Championships dessert category, and has appeared on TNT's "On The Menu" with Emeril Lagasse and Ty Pennington, NBC's Today Show, and is a regular on KTVU. When not too busy cooking up a storm around the country, Laurie judges the Great Petaluma Chili Cook-off, Sonoma County Big Q, as well as many other local food events and festivals. She will be scheduling holiday book signings once she returns from the World Food Championships, where she is currently competing.

## Burgers

Super Burger's Penn-grove location suffered smoke and water damage in a fire earlier this year, and is now setting up shop in Cotati. Well respected throughout the county, I

always enjoy trying whatever wild game burger is on their menu, especially when it is the phenomenal duck burger.

Speaking of burgers, during a recent "Wine Wednesday" at Seared we could not resist re-trying

the grass-fed bacon cheeseburger. It was actually better than I remembered, if that is possible. Seared tops incredibly flavorful Stemple Creek Ranch ground beef with caramelized onions, jack cheese,

house pickles and sauce, and Neuske's slab bacon.

The burger meat is so flavorful that, in this rare instance, I suggest eating the slab bacon separate from the burger. Stemple Creek's grass-fed beef is just that good and should be enjoyed front and center. Save the slab bacon for "pre-dessert."

## Washoe House

As long as we are on burgers, the news is now out that Larry Peter (of Spring Hill Jersey Cheese and the Petaluma Creamery) has purchased the Washoe House. I remember getting great buffalo burgers there as a kid and hope Larry brings back the quality that once came out of the Washoe House's kitchen.

Fans of the recently shuttered Mister McGoo's will be happy to see its former owner, Tony McGaughey, running the bar at the Washoe House and Tony's mom greeting guests. Stop in and say 'hi' to three Petaluma institutions, all under one roof.

## Spaghetti feed revisited

The Petaluma Woman's Club annual spaghetti feed scholarship fundraiser has changed dates to Friday, Dec. 4. Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m. with antipasto, salad, spaghetti with homemade red sauce, bread, dessert, wine, beer and soft drinks. This event helps the Woman's Club give \$1,000 scholarships to three female Petaluma area high school graduates.

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