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DAILY POLL



Daily photo by Patrice Stewart

You can learn how to cook Executive Chef Michael Swann's Pan-seared Chilean Sea Bass with Roasted Beet Sauce at the new cooking class series at Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville. He shared the secret to pan-searing: Get the pan between 400 and 500 degrees with enough extra virgin olive oil to make sure the fish won't burn.

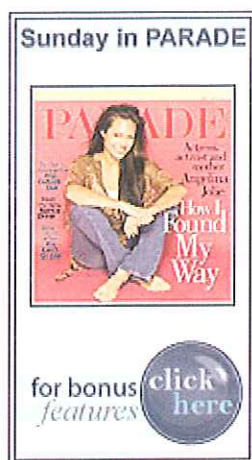
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Get hooked at Cooking Under Glass series at Nashville resort

By Patrice Stewart
pstewart@decaturdaily.com · 340-2446



Executive Chef Michael E. Swann likes to find combinations "that will create that three-dimensional explosion in your mouth."

He put sea scallops, Southern watermelon and Asian ginger together for that type of combination at a Cooking Under Glass class, which is planned weekly throughout the summer at Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville.

The latest food trends involve designer ingredients and multiple cooking methods, said Swann, with Latin and Pan Asian dishes at the forefront.

"We're giving items a new spin," he said. He cited "deconstructed Beef Wellington," a reverse offering of ingredients for this classic dish, as an example.

Swann's cooking style "was influenced by a guy in California named Wolfgang Puck, when I worked in the original Spago restaurant for 18 months," he said.

He also studied at the Culinary Institute of America in New York and the Hilton Hotels culinary program.

He was executive chef at South Seas Resort and Yacht Harbor in Florida and the Stouffer Dallas Hotel before joining Gaylord in 2004. Now he leads 15 chefs and feeds 7 million people a year at banquets with his restaurant-style philosophy for creating memorable meals.

The key is to use simple, fresh ingredients "and create a flavor profile," Swann said.

For this Cooking Under Glass session, Swann started with seafood and added colorful fruits and vegetables to create Pan-seared Chilean Sea Bass with Roasted Beet Sauce, Fingerling Potatoes, Roasted Asparagus and Bell Peppers, plus Seared Scallops with Watermelon Salsa and Blue Ginger Vinaigrette.

"Chilean sea bass has become so mainstream, and it is firm and full of flavor, with a high collagen level," he said.

He likes to season it with lemon, sea salt and chicken stock or broth, "so it won't be so fishy." He also prefers natural sauce reductions, instead of a lot of flour and roux.

"I'm a sea bass guy," Swann said, and he often likes his

flavored with Asian-style miso.

He shared the secret to pan-searing: Get the pan between 400 and 500 degrees with enough extra virgin olive oil to make sure the fish won't burn.

When preparing scallops, fresh is best, he said, so look for the opaque color that indicates freshness and a smell "like the ocean."

"If seafood is not fresh, it doesn't work," said Swann, who doesn't recommend the fresh-frozen type.

You may find the fresh product you want at stores such as Publix.

For his Watermelon Salsa recipe to serve with the scallops, he said to remember to remove the seeds from the jalapeno peppers.

"Bruise the cilantro ever so slightly to break it up and release the flavor," said Swann, who recommends making the salsa first so the flavors will have time to meld.

"I'm passionate about food and about service," said Swann, who holds dual citizenship in the United States and Canada and had a parent working in each. "I love hockey, but not as much as food."

Home cooks, don't be afraid to experiment. Swann said some of his dishes are accidental results.

"Once I was supposed to serve risotto with the entrée, but I forgot to make the risotto, so I pulled out some garlic mashed potatoes, and it was great," he said.

Here are his recipes:

### **Pan-seared Chilean Sea Bass with Roasted Beet Sauce, Fingerling Potatoes, Roasted Asparagus and Bell Peppers**

Four 6-ounce Chilean sea bass filets  
2 ounces pureed beets  
2 ounces heavy cream  
2 ounces chicken broth  
8 fingerling potatoes, cooked and quartered  
Asparagus, blanched and grilled  
Roasted yellow and red bell peppers (one of each)

2 fresh lemons  
Salt and pepper  
2 ounces extra virgin olive oil  
4 ounces white wine

Place olive oil in a well-heated skillet until it begins to smoke. Season sea bass with salt, pepper and lemon and sear for approximately 3 to 4 minutes per side. Remove fish from pan and place on a holding plate.

Deglaze pan with white wine and chicken broth and reduce by half. Add heavy cream and beet puree and cook for one to two minutes. Place a portion of cooked and quartered fingerling potatoes, roasted asparagus and peppers on a serving plate and place fish on top.

Drizzle sauce around the base of the fish. Makes four 7-ounce servings. Serve with Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc wine.

### **Seared Scallops with Watermelon Salsa and Blue Ginger Vinaigrette**

**For the salsa:** 1 cup watermelon, peeled, seeded and cut into small dice  
1 jalapeno chile, seeded and minced  
Juice of 3 fresh limes  
2 tablespoons grapeseed oil  
1/8 cup chopped cilantro  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger

Mix together and let rest for one hour prior to serving.

For the Blue Ginger Vinaigrette:

1/2 cup soy sauce  
1 ounce sake  
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced  
1 teaspoon fresh garlic, minced  
1 large shallot, minced  
1 ounce rice wine vinegar  
1 ounce sesame oil  
1 ounce shredded Daikon radish  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 tablespoon crushed red pepper  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
Mix together and let sit overnight.

*For the scallops:*

12 jumbo U-10 sea scallops  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
Salt and pepper  
Juice of 1 fresh lemon

Season the scallops (Swann likes large U-10 Georges Bank Diver Scallops, when available) with lemon, salt and pepper. Sear the scallops for approximately 2 to 3 minutes on each side, or until deep golden brown.

Divide Watermelon Salsa between four serving plates and place three scallops on top on each plate. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of Blue Ginger Vinaigrette over the top. Makes four 4-ounce appetizer portions. Serve with Pinot Noir or Chardonnay wine.

## Meet celebrity chefs in Nashville

Gaylord Opryland's new focus on cooking offers Nashville resort guests and day-trippers an opportunity to sample its restaurant specialties and rub elbows with celebrity chefs.

Cooking Under Glass classes, taught by Executive Chef Michael Swann, pastry chefs and others, are planned at 3 p.m. every Saturday through September as a new feature of the SummerFest celebration.

Also, a Celebrity Chefs Series will bring in Food Network stars and barbecue competitions.

Register for Cooking Under Glass and you'll learn how basic dishes turn into culinary delights. Some classes will center around themes such as "Date-Night Dinners" and "Tuscan Traditions."

International recipes to be presented include Lobster Thermador, Steak and Guinness Pie, Tapas and Paella.

The basic fee for Cooking Under Glass is \$35; for \$45, get priority seating and a copy of the Gaylord Hotels collection of recipes.

Here are the topics coming up this month in the Delta section's Chef's Corner:

**Saturday:** "Classic and Contemporary Cake Decoration," with Assistant Pastry Chef Jesus Ornelas.

**June 16:** "Taste of Tuscany," with Chef Maurizio Bussolino

of Ristorante Volare.

**June 23:** “Out of the Frying Pan and Into the Fire,” with Chef Jeffrey Quasha of Old Hickory Steakhouse.

Also, the Amoretti 2007 National Pastry Team championships will be July 2-3.

Fees vary for these Celebrity Chef events:

**July 6-7 and Sept. 21-22:** Campfire Café featuring open-fire gourmet cooking by RFD TV’s Pamela Alford and Larry Wiseheart.

**Aug. 18:** Alton Brown, host of Food Network TV’s “Good Eats.”

**Sept. 28-29:** Fiddlin’ Brewin’ Bar-B-Q’n Cook-off, the third annual Tennessee state championship, with Iron Chef Bobby Flay.

Call (888) 999-OPRY to reserve a cooking-class seat or event package, or check [www.gaylordopryland.com](http://www.gaylordopryland.com).

## CHEF’S TIPS

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**THE DECATUR DAILY**  
201 1st Ave. SE  
P.O. Box 2213  
Decatur, Ala. 35609  
(256) 353-4612  
[webmaster@decaturdaily.com](mailto:webmaster@decaturdaily.com)  
[www.decaturdaily.com](http://www.decaturdaily.com)