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Galveston After Ike

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March 19, 2009

Hotel Galvez & Spa chef cooking up a storm after Ike



When it comes to culinary creations, the Hotel Galvez & Spa executive chef Jerry Helminski isn't about to let a hurricane stop the show.

Six months after Hurricane Ike, Helminski performs a balancing act of preparing gourmet dishes for Bernardo's Restaurant in the hotel, as well as for room service, private parties and large ballroom gatherings.

Helminski was trained under ChampionsGate Chef Bernd Mueller in Orlando, and studied at both Elgin Culinary School in Illinois and Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in California.

But the 37-year-old Chicago native is quick to point out that his skills were developed through his life's experiences. He explained:

I worked in four different states and visited Spain and Morocco and France. Those experiences influence the food that I cook, the things that I do. It all factors into the presentation and the background. It's not just all cooking.

Helminski said he sometimes regrets that he did not receive a culinary degree in school, but knows that his on-the-job training and ferocious work ethic more than make up for the difference. Here's what he said:

I have always had a creative side to me. I love to express my art through food and I enjoy watching guests' reaction as well as the instant gratification of serving a great meal.

Dinner at Bernardo's, 2024 Seawall Blvd., is indeed a mouth-watering experience. For starters, dinner guests may choose Pan Seared Crab Cakes, Calamari Haystack, Pan Roasted Sea Scallops or Steamed Black Mussels.

If there's still room left for the main course by that time, guests may decide on Filet Mignon, Grilled Bone-In Chicken Breast, or Bernardo's Signature Steak - dry aged for 28 days under strict temperature and humidity controls.

For seafood lovers, there's Baked Jumbo Gulf Shrimp, Bernardo's Fisherman's Stew, Simply Grilled Fresh Catch or Galvez Shrimp & Chicken Pasta.

With more than 20 years of cooking under his belt, Helminski said his passion has been driven by one simple rule: "Learn something new every day."

Bernardo's Restaurant is open Monday through Sunday from 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. In addition to regular dining at the restaurant, the Hotel Galvez & Spa is widely known for its extensive Sunday Brunch held weekly from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Brunch is \$32 for adults, \$28 for seniors (60 years or older) and \$19 for children ages 6 - 12. Children ages 5 and younger are complimentary.

For more information about Hotel Galvez, call (409) 765-7721, 800-WYNDHAM, or visit www.wyndhamhotelgalvez.com. For reservations at Bernardo's Restaurant, call or send an e-mail bernardos@wyndham.com.

Posted by Robert Stanton at March 19, 2009 09:58 AM

Comments

I recently came across your blog and have been reading along. I thought I would leave my first comment. I don't know what to say except that I have enjoyed reading. Nice blog. I will keep visiting this blog very often.

Sarah

<http://grillsblog.com>

Posted by: [Sarah](#) at March 21, 2009 04:35 AM