



Official e-Newsletter of the American Personal & Private Chef Association
May/June 2010

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From Candy Wallace, Executive Director

FRANCE is magnificent. If you ever have the opportunity to travel there and experience the beauty of the country, the sane pace of life, the flavor of foods not grown in chemicals, the jaw-dropping architectural splendor, and the humor and charm of the people, DO IT.

Almost a dozen APPCA members and a few civilians recently had the chance to spend two weeks in France, half in the South of France on two barges cruising the Canal du Midi as a group, and almost a week in Paris, where we were able to explore and experience on our own. We had two very different experiences of the same country. One was slow, idyllic and pastoral, and one truly cosmopolitan and urban. I enjoyed both.

We survived a national train strike that trapped us in Lyon in an underground train terminal for a day, and forced us not once, but twice, to rent cars, pack up luggage for 12 travelers and drive across the country. We saw fields of brilliant lavender flush against the blinding yellow of mustard fields that crashed into green, green fields of peas and beans. The countryside is lush, meticulously maintained and watched over by ancient hilltop castles and elegant chateaux. We were all glued to the car windows snapping shots with cell-phone cameras. If it weren't for the 12-plus hours traveling in small cars, it would almost have been worth not being able to travel by bullet train to get back to Paris.

I sent a travel blog each day of the first week of the trip with photos. If you haven't seen it, here is a link to it: <http://www.personalchefnews.com/cruise/index.html>.

We'll be posting more photos in the Forums, and you may have already seen some of the photos taken by some of our group that are posted on their individual Facebook pages, but here is a photo of a dish served at lunch on one of the barges that caused all of us to run for our cameras and cell phones so we could capture it and share it with you. The produce we saw, purchased, ate and cooked was astonishing visually, as well as flavorful, but this simple dish of roasted peppers stayed in my memory.

Recipe: Roasted Multicolor Peppers



The key to this recipe is an anchovy fillet. It disintegrates during the roasting process, leaving a tangy, salty "sauce" comprised of the fillet, minced garlic, olive oil, salt and pepper and a splash of fresh lemon or lime juice. It makes your tongue sing.

Slice colored bell peppers lengthwise (including through the stem) and clean out the bowl of seeds and pith.

Place an anchovy fillet in the bottom of each pepper "boat." In a bowl, combine garlic, olive oil, salt and pepper and the fresh lemon or lime juice, and toss in some multi-colored cherry tomatoes to coat.

(I recently made this same dish using blanched

baby carrots, sugar snap peas and baby zucchini along with the colored cherry tomatoes. It was gorgeous.)

Place the coated goodies into the bowl of the pepper, season with salt and pepper, and place the peppers in a SHALLOW roasting pan.

Place the roasting pan in the upper space of a preheated 400°F oven and roast until they reach your favorite roasted consistency and shade of darkness. I like it just when the tomatoes burst.

Chef Liz, on the barge EMMA, served these beauties with BIG leaves of fresh basil inserted into the "boats" at the last minute. They were not only beautiful, they were delicious! You can use favorite vegetables that you like because this dish will always be a winner.

Bon appétit!

Personal-Chef Training through November 2010

The personal-chef segment of the foodservice industry has expanded enormously and blossomed into a recognized career path, with demand for high-quality food and service growing each year throughout the country. Join us at one of the following scheduled training sessions, where APPCA will deliver a dynamic one- or two-day, high-intensity “Jump Start” seminar or Webinar providing the best tools and educational materials in the industry with which to build a successful personal-chef business. Also, new, in-depth half-day sessions on specific business areas are now offered. Visit www.personalchef.com for complete information.

- June 5-6, L'Academie de Cuisine, Gaithersburg, Md. (greater Washington, D.C.)
- June 26-27, San Diego
- July 17-18, Tri-State (N.Y., N.J., Conn.)
- August 15, Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo, Los Angeles (1 day, accelerated)
- August 28-29, San Diego
- September 12, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show, Orlando (1 day, accelerated)
- September 25-26, Memphis, Tenn.
- October 2-3, L'Academie de Cuisine, Gaithersburg, Md. (greater Washington, D.C.)
- November 6-7, San Diego

[Click here for more](#)

A Tribute to Karen Tursi

By Candy Wallace

I promised that I would write a few words of tribute to our recently deceased friend and colleague, Karen Tursi, in this issue of “a la minute.”

This is one of the most difficult things I have had to do in a long, long time. Karen’s death hit many of us like a ton of bricks, because Karen was an intelligent, talented, mischievous, frank and vibrant woman who clearly relished her life as a personal chef and shared that joy with us generously. Her loss to us is almost palpable.



It is often said that life as a personal chef is deeply, personally satisfying and reflects the choices and strengths of each one of us who ply this craft. Karen was a shining example of that statement. Karen’s joy in not only creating and producing delicious, wholesome meals for her clients, but in making a huge contribution to her clients’ well-being, was who she was. Karen truly told the people she encountered in this world that she loved them through her food, and in this way, she showed her concern for the quality of their lives. She was also able to balance those personal concerns with the skills and focus of a canny businesswoman.

If you were fortunate enough to have Karen for a friend, you had a fiercely loyal friend for life who could stop you in your tracks if you were off course, make you laugh till you screamed or could

make you feel the strength of her support when you needed it by phone or e-mail as if she were sitting next to you.

I could go on for days, but I think Karen said it best in her blog, which is clearly a gift left for those of us who knew her and mourn her passing. It is a moving read written by a brave, gracious, generous woman: <http://theendthoughts.wordpress.com>.

Karen, I shall miss your dry wit, your quick, intelligent conversation, your true heart and fierce warrior spirit. You made each of us better for having known you.

Goodbye, Tallulah. I love you.

Note: Tursi was co-founder and president of Chicagoland Personal Chefs, a chapter of the APPCA.

Save up to 40% on Three Essential Tools from Fagor America in June Only!

Considered one of the most eco-friendly products for its energy efficiency, the Fagor Portable Induction Cooktop cooks faster than gas or electric cooktops, reducing 50% of the cooking time. Heating and temperature adjustments are immediate, allowing you to go from a simmer to a rolling boil in a few seconds. The cooktop surface remains cool to the touch because only the pot is heated. In addition, there are no open flames, smoke or gas emissions, making this an extremely safe and convenient portable cooking solution. It also has an automatic safety shut-off feature for an added element of safety.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR APPCA MEMBERS: SAVE \$\$ in JUNE!

Fagor is the No. 1 induction-cooktop producer in the European market. Fagor America, Inc.—the nation's leading manufacturer of pressure cookers—and the American Personal & Private Chef Association have partnered to bring APPCA members an extraordinary deal on three of Fagor's popular items through June 30, 2010, only:

- Fagor Portable Induction Cooktop. Retail, \$199.99. **APPCA COST: \$160.00**
- Fagor Duo 8-Quart Pressure Cooker. Retail, \$109.99. **APPCA COST: \$65.00**
- Fagor 3-in-1 Electric Multicooker. Retail, \$119.99. **APPCA COST: \$99.00**

No shipping and handling charges! (Allow six to eight weeks for delivery.) Because of the incredible savings, only one of each unit per person, please. [Click here](#) to download the order form from Fagor. Remember, this offer expires after June 30! For detailed descriptions of qualities and cooking solutions provided by the above three items, visit <http://www.fagoramerica.com>.

Take advantage of this exceptional offer from Fagor America, Inc.—the latest among many valuable benefits of APPCA membership.

Wallace Honored with FENI's 2010 Medallion of Excellence

Candy Wallace, founder and executive director of the American Personal & Private Chef Association, recently received an honorary medallion from the Chicago-based Foodservice Educators Network International (FENI).

"This year, FENI has selected to recognize and award medallions to individuals who are enhancing the quality of culinary education and attributing to the success of our Summit," says Daniel von Rabenau, FENI executive director and publisher of *Chef Educator Today* magazine. "The FENI Medallion of Excellence symbolizes Chef Wallace's creative and continuous efforts to advancing culinary-arts education through her excellent work as emcee of the FENI Summit."



Wallace served as master of ceremonies to upwards of 300 foodservice educators from schools nationwide at FENI's most recent annual Summits in Chicago and Las Vegas.

"I'm extremely honored to be recognized by FENI," Wallace says. "Just as I founded the APPCA to serve the needs of an emerging and viable career path for aspiring personal chefs, FENI was first to recognize and fulfill the need among foodservice educators for professional development and peer networking. The partnering of our two organizations, given our parallel visions, is a natural fit."

In addition to Wallace, FENI awarded 2010 Medallions of Excellence to Christopher Koetke, CEC, CCE, dean of the School of Culinary Arts at Kendall College, Chicago, and vice president of culinary arts for Laureate International Universities, Baltimore; Jacquy Pfeiffer, academic dean for student affairs and cofounder of the French Pastry School, Chicago; Linda Rosner, CEC, CHE, culinary-arts director at Lexington College, Chicago; Marshall Shafkowitz, vice president of academic affairs and student services at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Chicago; and noted author and TV personality Fritz Sonnenschmidt, CMC, AAC, former dean of cooking at The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y.

Wallace founded the American Personal Chef Association in 1996 as the first significant national effort to recognize the impact of personal chefs on Americans' evolving lifestyles and to provide career and management training to those who aspire to become personal chefs with their own businesses. She led the positioning of personal chefs as culinary professionals, culminating in 2002 with a formal partnership with the American Culinary Federation to award certification to qualified personal chefs. The following year, she was honored with the International Association of Culinary Professionals' (IACP) [Entrepreneur of the Year Award](#).

Wallace earned additional industry accolades in 2006 by formally acknowledging the contributions of private chefs to society and addressing their specific professional needs by restructuring her organization to become the American Personal & Private Chef Association.

In recent years, Wallace has forged relationships with professional culinary-training programs in colleges and universities nationwide to bring the opportunity of culinary entrepreneurship to aspiring cooks seeking a certificate or degree.

Most recently, Wallace was named Entrepreneur of the Year in the [2009-2010 Cordon d'Or - Gold Ribbon International Culinary Academy Awards](#). She was honored at a commemorative

reception and dinner hosted by Cordon d'Or - Gold Ribbon and the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association at the Don CeSar Resort in St. Pete Beach on April 30.

About the Foodservice Educators Network International (FENI)

The primary purpose of the Foodservice Educators Network International is to provide a focal point for culinary educators to network and better prepare for those they educate and influence. Through Chef Educator Today magazine (www.chefedtoday.com) and the annual FENI Summit (www.fenisummit.com), culinary educators and others allied to the field have a continuous opportunity to expand their culinary knowledge, present papers and analyze the latest technical and theoretical concepts. FENI acknowledges the dedication of its past members, sponsorship and institutional partners, the funding of Talcott Publishing (www.talcott.com) and the leadership of its executive director, Daniel von Rabenau.

Pictured: Wallace speaks to culinary-degree students at Robert Morris University on the personal- and private-chef career paths during a visit to the downtown Chicago campus in May.

Egg Salad with Zucchini, Capers and White-Truffle Oil

A palate-specific recipe from Candy Wallace, founder and executive director, the American Personal & Private Chef Association, San Diego.

Yield: 24 portions

Chef Wallace shares her signature recipe for egg salad, in a quantity yield for summer entertaining. Minced fresh parsley, snipped fresh chive or fresh marjoram may substitute for thyme.



Beans:

36 hard-boiled eggs, diced fine
1½ cups mayonnaise
¼ cup grainy deli mustard with turmeric (Hebrew National brand preferred)
¾ cup diced raw zucchini
¾ cup capers
¼ cup finely minced fresh thyme leaves
White truffle oil, as needed
Salt and pepper, to taste

Method:

1. Blend all ingredients, including a slight drizzle of white-truffle oil. Season with salt and pepper.
 2. Scoop and serve atop crisp mixed greens lightly tossed with balsamic vinaigrette and roasted beet slices, inside endive or radicchio leaves or in peeled avocado halves.
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From the Ground Up

For personal chef Mimi Reed, the inspiration for her business, [Garden to Plate](#), starts at the farmers' markets. *By Lisa Shames*

Watch out Las Vegas—personal chef Mimi Reed is on a mission to make Sin City a healthy city.

And with a 20-year professional culinary background that includes working in top restaurants around the country, teaching, creating the food program for a college and a stint as a baker on an island resort, this Southern gal is more than up for the challenge.



APPCA: How did you get interested in cooking?

Reed: My mother always was the cook at home, and at a very young age she allowed me to cut the tomatoes and cucumbers for the salad. She let us get involved as much as we could safely. When I was in college I started getting interested in cooking. Toward the end of that I had worked in several restaurants, and I liked the flow of how a kitchen worked. I liked the way food was put together

and liked reading the recipes and making it happen and when it tasted the way it's supposed to taste.

APPCA: Describe your culinary training.

Reed: I was born and raised in Alabama, but I lived in Florida after college for six years. I had worked in several restaurants as a manager, server, bartender and cook. I had pretty much done everything you could do in a restaurant without owning one. So I thought, Wouldn't the smart thing to do be to go to culinary school? I took a month off and did a cross-country journey with interviews at several culinary schools along the way. It was also a personal journey to make sure I wanted to be away from home. I ended up in Seattle with a dear friend of mine. I did an interview with The Art Institute in Seattle. I think that was my fourth. The area excited me. It was becoming the new New York City with food and chefs. I worked for Tom Douglas Restaurants in Seattle. They gave me the opportunity to work in every one of their restaurants. Their executive chef took me under his wing and mentored me for several years. To get that Art Institute degree and know I was a certified chef meant something to me.

APPCA: What did you do after graduation?

Reed: I continued to work a bit with Tom Douglas restaurants and eventually I went with one of their chefs and opened up a restaurant called Supreme. It was luxurious comfort food. Then I got an offer to work on Orcas Island in the San Juan Islands for three months as a pastry chef at a resort. I did the bread baking and pastry part of it. That was amazing.

Then a headhunter for Bon Appétit Management Company contacted me to become their catering director for Evergreen State College. It was a college in Olympia for vegan and vegetarian kids. We brought the cafeteria-style food to a higher level. I did all the catering for all the special events, too. It was a lot of work, but it was a great education for me. A lot of it had to do with my time management and planning and figuring what a budget really meant. I also took a job with the Washington State Performing Arts Center in Olympia. After a couple of years, I went back to Seattle and worked with a grocery store called Fremont Fresh Market. We did fresh daily comfort foods and also high-quality greens from farmers' markets. I opened a bakeshop in the back of the store, where I did fresh breads daily, cookies and cakes.

Then I saw that a technical college was hiring a culinary-arts co-instructor. My instructor/mentor from culinary school was the other instructor. I thought, I've got to try this. It was an opportunity for him to continue to mentor me and for me to mentor other people. That was probably one of my greatest memorable achievements: becoming a chef/mentor instructor and being able to touch so many lives. I did that for four-and-a-half years. I got so much out of it. I even got a faculty-of-the-year award.

APPCA: How did you end up in Las Vegas?

Reed: My true love. When Chris and I reconnected, we decided we wanted to be in the same city and he won. He works for Mario Batali in Las Vegas. I had been an executive chef, I had taught, I had mentored and I had become a sustainable chef. So I thought, well, guess what I want to do when I grow up? Be a personal chef. I got in touch with Candy Wallace, who had been a dear friend and mentor for at least six years. I gave her a call and screamed, "Let's do this!" So I went to San Diego and we did the classes and I took the test. When I came back to Las Vegas, I took some business and finance classes and I put Garden to Plate together.

APPCA: How did the name for your business come about?

Reed: I came up with the name with my mom. She always has a beautiful garden growing. It was thinking about local food and where I want to see my food coming from.

APPCA: What kinds of things did you do to get your business started?

Reed: When I arrived in Las Vegas, I started marketing like crazy. I got business cards and brochures made and pictures of myself on paper to hand out to people. I made some connections with people who didn't necessarily want a personal chef for themselves, but knew people who did.

APPCA: How did you find the farmers you wanted to work with?

Reed: I went on farmersmarketslasvegas.com. Fortunately, they have some year-round markets out here. I started in late fall, which is the hardest time to start a garden-to-plate business. I went to a farmers' market and introduced myself to the Van Dyke family, who are now my farmers. I can call them on Friday, and on Monday she'll bring in a market basket for me. Then I'll also shop at the farmers' markets that they're at on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. I also work with California Family Farms.

APPCA: Why did you choose these particular farmers?

Reed: They are the ones that connected and followed up with me. They took a small business seriously. I think some of them weren't sure this was worth their time. For me to shop at the farmers' markets and get the quality I get versus going to the grocery store is a big difference. It isn't necessary organic that I provide unless my client is gung-ho on organic. For meats and fish, I do the best I can right now. Some things, like lamb and beef, might come out of Colorado. The fish is from the Pacific and is wild caught. I have a meat vendor who sources quality meat, but I found that 50% of my clients are vegetarians. That helps me keep my costs lower. I like to keep with my motto: sustainable food and keeping a low-carbon footprint.

APPCA: Is that why your clients choose you?

Reed: One of the connections I made in town was with an athletic club. I do a marketing program with them. Once or twice a month I do food demos with healthy food options. I do some extra

research for that. I've gotten two of my clients through the athletic club. I find the more you market yourself, the more options you'll have in the end. You have to find what people want.

That's the hardest part: proving your worth in someone else's kitchen. I can show someone my résumé, but it doesn't mean I was there and did it. I pride myself in giving people references, and I have a great client who loves to give me a reference because I did some gluten-free food for his mom. Making that accessible to her meant they could enjoy family time when she comes into town. Those are the kinds of things that I like about my clients, that they would choose my food over going out.

APPCA: How do your menus come about?

Reed: I go to the farmers' market and see what's fresh and think about how I would like to see that on the plate. I email my clients and get their feedback. Sixty percent of the time they agree. Then we build a menu and make sure it's within the costs.

APPCA: Why is cooking important to you?

Reed: It gives me a sense of accomplishment knowing that someone's going to get something out of my food. It's not an MSG-loaded frozen meal that's put in a microwave. They can have fresh food in their refrigerator. It's a whole different philosophy. Also, I kept my promise and worked with the farmers. I practice what I preach. I'm doing simple cooking procedures that enhance the food and show off what my farmers have to offer. So it's a good day at the end of my day.

But even with my 20 years' experience, I get inspired hearing how Priscilla [Van Dyke] would prepare the food she grows. She's in tune with who my clients are. I take my clients to the market and introduce them to the farmer. I can say all day [to my clients] that Priscilla's your farmer, but until you meet her you won't know. My clients can actually pick out their produce. I have to be careful because then I'll have to redo the menu. But I want them to love what they are eating and feel more confident paying my weekly price when they get that whole interaction with the farmer.

APPCA: How does this differ from working in a restaurant?

Reed: The self-satisfaction. You're the one you are depending on. You're on your own. I am learning a new patience about my food. My food does mean something. It's okay if it didn't win a competition; it's winning with my clients. It's okay that it didn't make the menu at a restaurant I worked at. Now, I can put all the things on the menu that I like and my clients choose their favorites. I feel like I'm winning more personally and I'm still educating. People need to learn how to eat and cook for themselves so they can provide a good-quality balance for themselves. I know this sounds odd, but I hope to work myself out of a job after about six months and move on to a new family. I never want to not have a job, but I would love people to take it on themselves.

APPCA: Describe the recent five-day job you did for Arbonne International?

Reed: Arbonne is about health and wellness. They do natural masks, makeup, hair products, natural snacks, men's care line, sea wraps and stuff like that. A group of them from Kentucky [45 people] were coming here for their annual convention and decided they didn't want to go out to eat, but wanted to have a personal chef. We worked on a per-person budget and I worked with the farmers to come up with the menus. In addition to my main farmers, I worked with an apple orchard, and we had fresh-pressed pear and apple cider. We had freshly gathered honey. I connected with a local bread company, and we did pita and sourdough bread. We used

biodegradable plates and cups and bamboo utensils. Nothing went to waste. It was lovely and they were very appreciative.

APPCA: What skills make for a great personal chef?

Reed: You have to have time-management skills, you have to keep your word and you have to directly respond with your client. You can't have the ego you're allowed to have in a restaurant. You have to have a simplistic view of food and build upon that. When I first started I was so grandiose with menu planning because I had worked at restaurants. I was doing all this frou-frou stuff and people were like, Well, do you do lasagna? Also, when people are excited about food, you share that enthusiasm for that food. Even if you don't like to cook white rice, you have to act like white rice is the best thing ever. You start off small and educate as you go along week by week. Give them what they're used to and then give them the big bang afterwards and surprise them. Also, one thing Candy taught me was leaving a little something extra for your clients. Not every time, but maybe every other week or once a month. It gives them a feeling that you care. I like to leave bowls of fresh fruit from Priscilla. It's keeping it personal without being too personal.

APPCA: What are some of the challenges of working as a personal chef?

Reed: Marketing and being at the right place at the right time and right season. Even if you're shopping at a local grocery store, which I still have to do, too. I find that you have to really start at the right time. Make sure your clients are matching what you do. If you are a breakfast cook, market yourself as someone who does great baked goods, fresh fruit and eggs to order. Market yourself properly and know where your strengths are. You can't make everyone happy, even though you want to. Financially, you have to be prepared to lose some money.

APPCA: Where do you go for inspiration?

Reed: I go to the farmers' markets. I go outside. When I go home, I go to my mom's garden. I also talk to my friends in the industry and find out what they are doing. The trends are important because you want to keep up with health and wellness.

APPCA: Advice for those seeking to become a personal chef?

Reed: It gives you a confidence in cooking like nothing else will give. Good training is important, especially if you haven't worked in a restaurant. Go with a personal chef one day and do the rounds and cook with him or her and see if that's something you would like. Have a personal enthusiasm about food and be really jazzed about carrying your pots and pans and preparing what the client wants. Stay with it. It takes six months to get off the ground. Keep the ego at a minimum. The most important thing is the food for the client and not where you came from. Share your strength on the plate, not verbally.

APPCA: Do you miss working in a restaurant?

Reed: No [laughs]! Sometimes I miss the camaraderie. The Batman aspect with Robin by your side. There's no Robin when you're a personal chef. When my produce is late, that's when I miss that restaurant. But you do find the strength and you can make your job like a restaurant because you can have a dinner party and get feedback and have that food acceptance like in a restaurant, but without the hours. The cool thing is that I have clients from 9 to 1 then 2 to 5:30. You're home and done when the sun is going down. And you can smile when you are done.

For more information on Garden to Plate, visit gardentoplate.com or call (205) 790-7415.

Natural and Organic Sales to Grow Nearly 20%

According to Mintel's latest report on green living, the environment remains a concern for the majority of Americans. More than one-third (35%) of survey respondents say they would pay more for "environmentally friendly" products.

"Given this increased interest in the environment over the past few years, nearly every segment of consumer products now offers a 'green' option for shoppers," comments Chris Haack, Mintel senior analyst. "Food and beverage and personal care are the two most mature categories and account for the majority of green products in the marketplace."

After rapid sales growth of more than 24% from 2006 to 2008, the natural and organic food and beverage category saw only slight growth in 2009 (1.8%) as the recession took its toll on nearly every sector of the consumer-goods marketplace. Despite this stall, sales in this segment are forecast to grow nearly 20%.

SIDE DISH

Taste Bali with Nicole Aloni.

Escape to romantic Bali next February with a team of culinary experts including acclaimed culinary writer and cookbook author Nicole Aloni, and experience the hidden treasures of this exotic island.

Excursions will include most of Bali's must-see sights, plus rice fields, lake and waterfall treks, tours of coffee, cacao (chocolate) and clove plantations, picnic lunches, tours of coffee and soy-sauce factories, aboriginal villages, palm wine-making, several local markets, eel-breeding farms, tours of family compounds, cooking classes and demonstrations. In addition to breakfast, another sumptuous meal each day is included in the trip package. A \$350.00 deposit is required to secure space. Registration/release forms may be downloaded at www.danutours.com. Final payment due June 15, 2010. For more info, visit <http://nicolealoni.net/2010/03/culinary-tour-taste-bali-nicole>.



Pistachio, Mi Amore. An elegant new Italian liqueur, Dumante Verdenoce, can now be savored in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia, with other states to be added soon. Dumante Verdenoce is a pistachio liqueur hand-crafted in southern Italy in a tradition fine-tuned over many centuries. This ultra-premium liqueur is made in small batches from pistachios from the slopes of Mount Etna in Sicily. The result is a rich, smooth and aromatic liqueur with a long and complex finish that sets the standard for excellence in luxury spirits! Dumante Verdenoce was awarded a gold medal at the recent 2010 San Francisco World Spirits Competition. Dumante can be enjoyed alone, savored in a cocktail, or used as an ingredient in appetizers, entrées and spectacular desserts. For an appealing array of recipes—from cocktails to sweet and savory dishes—visit www.dumante.com.



A Practical Guide for Soup Lovers Everywhere. The Soup Shack at thesoupshack.tumblr.com from APPCA member Robert Seibert (SuppermanChef) is designed to be your “go to” spot for sinking your spoon into all things pertaining to soup. From basic soup-making skills and concepts to recipes for the best soups from around the world, hang out at the Soup Shack to share your favorite soups and join the discussion. Seibert will be sharing stories, steamy recipes and cooking techniques by posting videos and thoughts on The Soup Shack blog on a regular basis. Look for new posts, feel free to leave comments and help stir the pot!

Help a Member Relay for Life. Cancer survivor and APPCA member Jim Huff, owner of Traveling Culinary Artist in the metro New York City area, will Join in The Fight with American Cancer Society Relay For Life with his family on June 4. “Give what you can, if you can,” he says. “We need to get rid of this disease!” To support Huff’s efforts by making a donation, please visit Jim’s [Relay for Life page](#).

Bet on the Bento. The Laptop Lunches Bento System (\$39.99 at www.laptoplunches.com) has been touted in major magazines, and for personal chefs creating kids’ meals this summer, this new, clever system might be just the ticket. It includes five inner containers that rest in a tray, a set of stainless-steel utensils and a water bottle, all of which zip into an insulated mini-laptop case, appropriate for both kids and adults. The brightly colored inner containers accommodate everything from carrot sticks to miso soup. See for yourself: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XO4Vag9zsY>. Obentec, Inc. was founded in 2001 by two California moms with the mission of helping families improve lunchtime nutrition while reducing waste. Learn more at <http://www.laptoplunches.com>.

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