

Datebook



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Photos by Lance Iversen / The Chronicle

RESTAURANTS

Cold outside? Warm up inside

By Janny Hu
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Now you can have your cake and drink it, too. With winter officially here, our favorite bar drinks are getting a seasonal makeover, with everything from eggnog to cinnamon to chai making their way into cocktail glasses. And while some are relatively light, like hot toddies, others, like hot buttered rum, might as well double as desserts.

Not that the decadence is stopping anyone. "We sold more of those this weekend than anything," David Garrett, bar manager at Murray Circle at Cavallo Point and the adjacent Farley's Bar, says of the hot buttered rum.

It's no surprise that, come winter, the two fireplaces at the Sausalito restaurant become the most trafficked areas of the bar. It's simply that time of the year when we seek warmth, be it

Drinks continues on E3



Above, Christy Bocskai adds nutmeg to a Coffee Flip, one of the holiday cocktails at Farley's Bar in Cavallo Point Lodge at the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge. Left, a hot buttered rum.

Inside: The Inside Scoop on Original Joe's. Plus reviews of Wente and Gypsy Cafe. **E2, E3**

Sunday: Spirited dishes for New Year's Eve. **Food & Wine**

DAVID WIEGAND
Television

'Wait Wait' makes jump from radio

Back in the mid-20th century, many of the earliest TV shows got their start in radio. Such classics as "I Love Lucy," "The Jack Benny Program" and "Gun-smoke" were all heard before they were seen. So there is precedent for BBC America to team up with National Public Radio to bring the latter's charming and quirky "Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!" to television.



Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me! A Royal Pain in the News:
8 p.m. Fri. on BBC America.

Launched in 1998 by NPR and Chicago Public Radio, "Wait Wait" is a weekly hour-long radio quiz show featuring a panel of celebrities who answer fairly obvious questions and then riff about politics, the state of the world and other knee-slapper topics. Friday's BBC America TV broadcast

Wiegand continues on E2



Tim Maloney / The Chronicle

Brent Plater invented the Big Year five years ago, where competitors try to spot all 36 endangered species in the Golden Gate National Parks.

CATCHING UP
With Brent Plater

Endangered species contest gets an encore

By Sam Whiting
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

2012 is a Golden Gate National Parks Endangered Species Big Year, a free yearlong treasure hunt in which 100 or more amateur naturalists will race against time to observe all the endangered species that the park, also known as the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, has to offer.

The competition was invented five years ago by Brent Plater, 37, who runs the Wild Equity Institute from a one-room office five stories above Mission Street.

Q: How many endangered species are in the Golden Gate National Parks?

A: Thirty-six, more than in any national park in North America. If you get your eyes on one of them, you can

Plater continues on E2

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RESTAURANTS

THE INSIDE SCOOP *By Paolo Lucchesi*

Original Joe's nearly back, booths and all

The signature red booths are installed. The charbroiler has been fired up. Even the Art Deco mermaids have been hung.

Yes, **Original Joe's** is almost back.

The North Beach reincarnation of the San Francisco classic — the Tenderloin original burned down four years ago — is about a month away, and the Duggan family is making sure the legacy is brought over to the new location (601 Union St.), oftentimes literally.

The old Tenderloin phone number has been carried over, and someone ferried over the old bar stools, too. Though the space is larger than the original, there is the exact same number of red booths (23) in the dining room. But Original Joe's signature is the open kitchen, which required removing some walls.

"You can't be Original Joe's without the exhibition kitchen. It's what makes us what we are," says **John Duggan**.

Nine counter seats will overlook the kitchen. In addition to the main dining room, there will also be a sizable bar, a park-side dining area and two private rooms — the Salesian Room, named after North Beach's Boys and Girls Club, and the Tony Bennett Room, a hold-over from the space's Fior d'Italia days.

The menu will be very similar to the old version, and the cocktail list will be lifted from Original Joe's circa 1950.

More scoops: Check The Chronicle's Inside Scoop SF website for breaking restaurant news and features. Go to www.inside.scoopsf.com.

The restaurant is tentatively slated to return in late January, and even though the opening is a few months behind schedule, perhaps 2012 is when it was meant to be.

Just like the Golden Gate Bridge, Original Joe's will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2012.

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Napa hibernations: Several prominent Wine Country spots are planning to take advantage of the slow winter months to go under the knife.

The Restaurant at Meadowood (900 Meadowood Lane) — one of two Bay Area restaurants holding three Michelin stars (the other is the **French Laundry**) — will be on



Brant Ward / The Chronicle 2010

Oenotri in downtown Napa will be one of the restaurants closing for a couple weeks in January to revamp, adding 20 seats to its large dining area.

hiatus from Jan. 1 to March 12 to overhaul the dining room and kitchen. Chef **Christopher Kostow** and his entire team will be staying on, but expect new menu formats and a new **Howard Backen** design upon reopening.

Another luxe Wine Country resort, Yountville's **Bardessono** (6526 Yount St.), is already in the process of revamping its restaurant. The restaurant closed earlier this year and is being fully gutted. When it reopens in late January, the restaurant will have the same chef in **Victor Scargle**, but it will be an entirely new concept, with a fresh look and

design. The new name will be **Lucy Restaurant and Bar**, after the matriarch of the Bardessono family.

Right around the corner, **Thomas Keller's Bouchon Bakery** (6528 Washington St.) will close in January for renovations as well. The bakeshop suffered a fire in September but has been operating since then with a limited menu.

The temporary closure — expected to be a month or so — will give the staff a chance to get back to full speed. Just as notable, the retail area will be redone and a door added to improve customer flow.

Keller will also close **Ad Hoc** for the first two months of the year. Along with the French Laundry's annual winter break (Jan. 1-19), this means that for a few weeks Yountville will be down to a single TKRG restaurant: **Bouchon Bistro**.

Last but certainly not least, downtown Napa hit **Oenotri** is reformatting the dining area to add 20 seats. The restaurant will be dark Jan. 1-17 to implement the changes.

* * *

Raising bars: Like **Oenotri**, San Francisco's **Cotogna** (490 Pacific

Ave.) has been bursting at the seams with popularity. But there's a new option if you're waiting for a table: Head next door to **Quince** (470 Pacific Ave.), where owners **Michael and Lindsay Tusk** have been tweaking the bar and lounge. It's now a little more separated from the restaurant and offers a few new attractions, like an à la carte bar menu and a roaming cocktail cart mixing up martinis, Manhattans and Negronis.

* * *

The Arka-lect: On the heels of opening his San Mateo restaurant, **All Spice** (1602 S. El Camino Real), and being named one of **John Mariani's** "Chefs to Watch" in Esquire, **Sachin Chopra** isn't slowing down.

The chef who once had a hand in well-regarded Peninsula restaurants like Sakoon and Amber India has signed on as a consultant to another restaurant south of San Francisco, **Arka** in Sunnyvale (725 S. Fair Oaks). Billed as a sleek, modern Indian restaurant and bar, it's in soft-opening mode, with the formal launch to come next month.

Paolo Lucchesi is a Chronicle staff writer. Send tips and notes to plucchesi@sfgchronicle.com.

'Wait Wait' a laughable celebrity quiz show

Wiegand from page E1

of a year-end edition of the show isn't the first time fans will get to see, as well as hear, host Peter Sagal and announcer Carl Kasell — the show has toured live for several years now.

Panelists for the year-end special include American comics Paula Poundstone and Alonzo Bodden and British comic and TV personality Nick Hancock. Most, but not all, of the questions focus on the United States, which may seem to put Hancock at a disadvantage, but the questions don't necessarily call for a master's



Host Peter Sagal tapes quiz show 'Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!' which features a year-end edition for its BBC America telecast.

Jean-Marc Giboux / Getty Images for BBC America

degree in contemporary American life. The alleged object of the game is for panelists to score points, but, in fact, it's

really about the panelists scoring laughter from the studio audience, which they all do with varying levels of

success.

Bodden is the funniest of the three, with the quickness of his wit on display when a question

is asked about how the lower U.S. credit rating might affect President Obama's re-election bid: "Do you really think you can scare a black man by lowering his credit rating?" Bodden asks.

Observing the proliferation of tents among the Occupy protesters around the country, Poundstone suggests REI might be the real force behind the demonstrations. And Hancock has great fun asking the Yanks to explain the differences among the various Republican presidential candidates.

Author Neil Gaiman ("Coraline") is also on hand to answer ques-

tions supposedly outside his field of expertise. In this case, it's questions about the royal wedding, many of which have to do with Pippa Middleton.

All of this is perfectly fine, often amusing and occasionally very funny, but while I wouldn't go so far as to call for renaming the show "Wait Wait ... Don't Show Me," the fact that it's on TV doesn't really add much. You may not be able to enjoy it quite as much as you would if you were actually in the audience, but otherwise, it would be just as diverting if you were listening to it on the radio.

E-mail David Wiegand at dwegand@sfgchronicle.com.

Keeping an eye on endangered species

Plater from page E1

score a point. In addition to that, we put together 36 conservation actions, one for each species. If you complete that action, you get a point.

Q: In 2007 you counted 33 endangered species in the parks. What happened?

A: The black abalone, Franciscan manzanita and Myrtle's silverspot butterfly were added to

the list. The manzanita is a plant that was thought extinct in the wild for almost 70 years. A biologist was driving across the Golden Gate Bridge when he spotted it where the Doyle Drive construction is going on.

Q: How is someone going to spot the black abalone?

A: The GGNRA extends a quarter mile out to sea. People go out at low tide. Waders are a good idea.

Q: What does the winner get?

A: Last time around, the winner got \$1,000 cash. It was winner take all. But we're thinking about redoing it.

Q: In November you were awarded a \$10,000 national fellowship from Toyota. How will you spend it?

A: We're working on implementing some new things into the Big Year project. We'd like to rewrite several of the

► To sign up for the Big Year, go to www.wild.equity.org.

action items for 2012 so that they can be oriented toward youth development opportunities.

Q: What is the Wild Equity Institute?

A: Wild Equity is an attempt to bring together the grassroots conservation and environmental justice campaigns.

Q: When did it start?

A: 2009. I'd been volunteering on some campaigns in grassroots conservation and also working as an environmental justice attorney, and that's where I had the idea that the moral foundation was the same between these two branches of the environmental movement.

Q: Where did you grow up?

A: Detroit. I grew up at 16-Mile, 16 miles from the center of Detroit.

Q: Aren't they returning part of Detroit to nature?

A: Not by design. But Detroit is re-wilding. The beaver came back two years ago, right in the Detroit River.

Q: What would you like to see back here?

A: It's a long shot, but I'd like to see the California sea otter back in San Francisco Bay.

Q: If they came back what would it mean?

A: Who doesn't love sea otters? They're the cutest marine mammal around.

Q: Cuter than seals?

A: I would say so. A lot of superlatives apply to sea otters. They have the densest fur of any mammal. They have this endearing practice of turning on their backs to crack the shells with rocks. They put on a show.

Q: Where do you live?

A: The Mission District. My wife, Rose Braz, and I moved six months ago from Oakland.

Q: Have a pet?

A: A Chihuahua-terrier mix named Charlotte. She's very famous. She's a fashion model for dog clothing. We've gotten her picture into various dog magazines over the years.

Q: So your dog works?

A: Yeah, usually just for treats. She's pretty cheap.

Q: What kind of car do you drive?

A: A VW Jetta. We've been running it on recycled biodiesel for years.

Q: How do you stay optimistic?

A: If you lose hope and despair and quit, then you're no good to anybody. A little bit of anger helps keep you moving.

Q: What would you call your autobiography?

A: "He Tried."

Q: Who plays you in the movie?

A: People tell me I look like Joaquin Phoenix.

E-mail Sam Whiting at swhiting@sfgchronicle.com.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Crossword Puzzle

F	L	I	E	D	S	P	A	C	U	S	S
A	I	M	E	R	H	A	Y	S	O	T	T
C	A	P	R	I	C	O	R	N	S	L	E
E	R	R	V	O	W	E	D	F	O	R	T
T	S	E	R	E	I	V	O	R	I	E	S
C	A	S	H	I	E	R	S	A	U	G	
C	R	O	O	N	M	I	S	T	R	U	S
E	N	N	E	P	A	N	T	S	A	H	I
D	O	S	I	M	E	T	E	R	P	R	O
N	O	R	W	A	G	E	D	W	A	R	
A	M	B	E	R	R	O	G	E	T	L	O
N	E	A	R	J	E	L	L	I	B	E	A
Z	E	S	T	A	G	E	E	O	N	C	U
A	R	E	S	B	O	O	R	G	E	E	S

Today's Crossword

M	E	S	A	R	O	M	A	N	V	A	M
I	R	O	N	A	P	P	L	E	I	S	E
S	N	I	T	V	E	G	A	S	B	E	A
C	E	R	A	M	I	C	I	L	I	T	E
E	M	O	L	O	A						
R	E	B	U	I	L	T	C	E	N	T	R
E	L	I	S	I	O	T	A	S	E	U	R
H	I	A	G	G	U	T					
E	R	O	S	P	A	G	E	S	D	I	M
M	A	T	T	E	R	S	R	E	T	I	N
B	O	O	T	L	E	G	R	E	V	O	L
A	S	T	I	M	A	S	O	N			
A	L	T	O	P	L	E	A	T	E	T	T
S	O	O	N	T	A	W	A	N	Y	D	E

Sudoku Puzzle

9	8	4	3	7	1	6	5	2
3	5	1	2	8	6	7	9	4
7	2	6	5	9	4	8	1	3
1	7	5	8	3	9	4	2	6
2	4	9	6	1	7	3	8	5
6	3	8	4	2	5	9	7	1
8	1	2	7	4	3	5	6	9
4	6	7	9	5	2	1	3	8
5	9	3	1	6	8	2	4	7

Challenger

3	3	9	7	14
5	8	2	2	17
6	6	7	5	18
5	7	5	18	
19	18	19	13	17

Chess

1. ... Ng3ch1
2. Kg1 Rxf2
mate. If instead
3. h3 Rxf2
mate.