

# Fork It Up!

NEWS FROM  
PASSION FOOD HOSPITALITY  
ACADIANA • BURGER, TAP & SHAKE  
DISTRICT COMMONS  
FUEGO COCINA Y TEQUILERIA  
PASSIONFISH & PENN COMMONS

WINTER 2016



*The Big Daddy*  
PAGE 8

## *In This Issue*

The Final Voyage of DC Coast .....	2
The Elegant Zen of TenPenh .....	3
PassionPlace .....	3
The Brunch Bunch .....	4
Egg-cellent Choice.....	6
Fat Tuesday Fête.....	7
The Breakfast Club .....	7
Travelling Gourmand.....	8
The Big Daddy.....	9
Bowled Over .....	10
Table Crumbs.....	11

# The Final Voyage of DC Coast

*Passion Food Hospitality's Flagship Sailed Proudly into the Sunset on 12/31/15 (Continued on page 5)*

When **DC Coast** lifted anchor and set sail on **December 31, 2015**, it left many nostalgic friends and admirers behind on shore, waving a fond and grateful farewell. The pioneering seafood restaurant that was the daring first venture of **Passion Food Hospitality** partners **chef Jeff Tunk**, **Gus DiMillo**, and **David Wizenberg** was, after all, many things to many fans: a breath of fresh salt air from the three American coastal regions where Tunks had found his culinary passion; a beacon of fine dining culture in what was once the capital city's 'combat zone'; and a landmark of thoughtfully preserved Art Deco elegance that led the revival of the entire 14th Street corridor.

When Passion Food Hospitality took over the soaring first floor of the historic Tower Building at the northwest corner of Franklin Square, it was a former McDonald's – with bullet holes in the walls. Early patrons may remember that taxis were reluctant to drop them at such an unlikely address. Kitchen staff leaving late night were routinely propositioned by workers engaged in an even older profession. DiMillo was in constant contact with the city, urging it to clean up the surrounding streets and increase police presence. Seventeen years on, thanks to the bold vision of the Passion Food Hospitality team, the prosperous Franklin Square neighborhood anchors the lower end of 14th Street, itself a shining example of urban renewal.

Tunks' approach to seafood represented another radical shift in Washington. Nowadays we take 'fresh sourcing' and 'sustainability' for granted, but when DC Coast opened, he was breaking brand new ground with his insistence on procuring the freshest possible seafood from responsible vendors – building relationships with individual oyster farmers and other small purveyors and artisan sources long before it was fashionable. His ties extended to Iceland and New Zealand, and his interest in culinary culture ranging from the Pacific Rim to South America to the Carolina Lowlands broadened the city's palate to truly global proportions. Tunks' award-winning crab cake, meanwhile, was a matter of fierce local pride, and he was forced by popular demand to keep it on the menu year-round, mostly for out-of-towners



*Waiters gathered in front of one of DC Coast's iconic mural*

who'd come to expect it when visiting.

Many of the DC Coast favorites that graced the menu for years, from the *Tuna Tartare* to the *Mushroom Crusted Halibut* to the *Chinese-Style Smoked Lobster*, have been revived for the final month of service – and fear not: you'll still be able to satisfy your craving for them at PassionFish in Reston and Bethesda, the younger, less formal, suburban siblings of DC Coast.

Not surprisingly, DC Coast attracted significant attention from the press, as well as the public. Early on, it was acclaimed by restaurant critics and editors of *The Washington Post*, *Esquire*, *Bon Appétit*, *Food + Wine*, and *Town & Country*. In 1999, it was named one of the "Top 50 Restaurants in America" by *Travel + Leisure*, and the following year, one of Washington's "Top Five Restaurants by *Gourmet Magazine*. That crab cake? *Washingtonian* rated it among the "Best in Town."

But while many Washington area diners made the most of the last few weeks that DC Coast was open and serving celebrated favorites, there's a select handful who are reminiscing from an entirely different perspective: the chefs who cut their teeth in Tunks' kitchen, riding the wave of his well earned success on their way to exciting culinary ventures of their own.

**Brendan Cox** now owns and operates Oakleaf, a family-run farm-to-table restaurant in Pittsboro, North Carolina.

# The Elegant Zen of TenPenh

*Jeff Tunks' Asian flavors presented in the comfort and serenity of a far-eastern villa*

When TenPenh opens in a new development at Tysons Corner this spring, those who fondly remember the original ground-breaking pan-Asian restaurant down the street from The White House will have a hard time deciding between old favorites like Jeff Tunks' *Red Thai Curry Shrimp*, *Chinese-Style Smoked Lobster*, and *Whole Crispy Fish* -- the dishes that made the place a legend in its eleven years downtown, and one of the reasons it was so lamented when its doors closed five years ago.

Those doors will reopen across the river onto a breathtaking new atmosphere of Asian elegance as imagined by Gensler, the international architecture and design firm responsible for the stunning interiors of the most recent Passion Food Hospitality ventures. Inspired by the layout of a traditional Chinese courtyard house [complete with a contemporary moon gate,] the new TenPenh features a succession of rooms of differing character, some arranged



*Chinese-Style Smoked Lobster*

around an outdoor courtyard, others, around the bustling open kitchen. Rather than overtly projecting the Asian theme with decorative objects and motifs, TenPenh evokes the sense of a sophisticated westerner's private home who has lived in Asia and absorbed the serenity of its highest aesthetic: calm, uncluttered, and inviting. Everything down to the texture of walls is calculated and considered, producing a consistent elegance that is punctuated here and there with moments of whimsy [animals of the Chinese zodiac hidden throughout!], bold elements of jade, amber, and onyx, and the dramatic play of light and shadow.

In this completely modern setting, up to 254 guests in various dining rooms, lounges and bar settings will enjoy a menu of Asian-inspired cuisine that is as carefully considered as the atmosphere. Years ago, when the original TenPenh was in development, the partners of Passion Food Hospitality traveled throughout Asia seeking inspiration. Chef Jeff Tunks, keen to



learn from experience instead of from cookbooks, engaged in intensive cooking classes in Thailand, and savored everything on the journey, from earthy street

food to the most refined Southeast Asian. In its new incarnation, Tunks will bring back the exotic signature dishes of old, adding new ones destined to become favorites of the next generation TenPenh. ■

## PassionPlace

*Eat, drink and luxuriate  
at PassionFish Bethesda*

PassionFish Bethesda's witty and sophisticated interiors provide the perfect backdrop for well...pretty much anything. And as Spring approaches, the al fresco dining opportunity changes from a temptation to a necessity. Either indoors or outdoors, PassionFish Bethesda offers a variety of flexible options from private dining in the Chesapeake Room for 36 people or less, to full restaurant buyouts that can accommodate up to 300 guests. The world is literally your oyster at PassionFish Bethesda. Working with Gensler, its go-to design firm, PassionFish Bethesda has captured the essence of the source of its seafood in an

# PassionPlace

(Continued)

ambiance of casual marine chic befitting the sophisticated suburban location. The subtle palette of blues and browns, punctuated by bursts of sunny golden yellow and layered with witty nautical references, welcomes



*Circular banquettes create intimate nooks*

you in and sets the mood for anything from a glass of wine at the bar, to full-on, multi-course seafood feasts, to memorable special events in the private dining room. “We wanted the space to feel like it’s predecessor but taking into consideration the vibe of this new neighborhood we’ve entered,” says Gus DiMillo, a PassionFish partner along with David Wizenberg and chef Jeff Tunks. “The restaurant sits on an amazing corner—the perfect location—that’s so lively and vibrant. It’s great for al fresco dining, whether out on the patio or inside as all the windows open up to the streets so even those dining inside feel like their outside.” The 180-seat restaurant [including 29 outdoors], sweeps across an expansive one-floor layout on the bustling corner of Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues. Sleek glass-paneled wine cases, a central bar, and large windows that open to the street, give it a modern edge. The low-slung lounge area



*PassionFish's Rock Roll*

creates intimate nooks for sipping cocktails, while the three circular upholstered banquettes create inviting spaces for sharing handcrafted sushi, fresh crudos, and coastal delights. The bright colors of the cuisine are reflected in the interior with pops of whimsy, from the three-dimensional wall art to the large-scale aquatic tile mosaic in the private Chesapeake Room. Enjoy your lunch, brunch or dinner bay (window)-side or outside this Spring at PassionFish Bethesda. Want to make it an event? Contact Kathryn Stulginsky, PassionFish's Event & Marketing Coordinator at [KStulginsky@PassionFoodHospitality.com](mailto:KStulginsky@PassionFoodHospitality.com). ■



*Bursts of color pop in PassionFish's dining room*

# The Brunch Bunch

Cozier on Saturdays and Sundays

Weekend brunching takes on new meaning for **Bethesda, Maryland** residents with the serenely elegant **PassionFish** opening its doors from morning to afternoon, bringing greater variety and excitement to Saturdays and Sundays. This was an ideal opportunity for chefs **Jeff Tunks** and **Chris Clime** to get creative with the incredible, edible egg—giving it a little love and attention to turn an ordinary egg into the extraordinary.

Think of devouring and thoroughly enjoying a lightly puffed **Skinny Omelet** using *Egg Whites* with creamy *Pipe Dream Farms Goat Cheese*, oven *Roasted Peppers*, with farm fresh *Spinach* and *Mushrooms*. Or an absolutely decadent nod to the South – a golden-brown-delicious **Fried Chicken & Waffle** with crispy-crusted *Chicken* atop an airy housemade *Waffle* doused with whipped *Butter* and *Pepper Jelly Maple Syrup*. In the **Huevos Rancheros**, even a simple marriage of *Onions*, *Black Beans*, *Queso Fresco*, *Avocado* and spicy “*XXX Sauce*” wrapped in a warm *Corn Tortilla* shows off the humble egg. While the *Sunny-Side-Up Eggs* take center stage in the hearty **Smoked Great Lakes Whitefish Hash**, the buttery dices of *Yukon Gold Potatoes* with crisp edges vies for your attention with every delectable bite.

Begin the meal with one of the comforting, indulgent and appetite-stimulating starters. PassionFish is whisking up a trendy brunch favorite and loading up the **Seafood Crêpe** with *Shrimp*, *Crab* and a blessing of “*Holy Trinity*” and *Royal Glaçage*. When the winter skies turn

# The Final Voyage of DC Coast

(Continued from page 2)

**Andy Brooks** opened the former Bombay Bar & Grill out in California. **James Clark** is Executive Chef at Carolina Crossroads at the Carolina Inn in Chapel Hill. Closer to home, **Norman Messer** is Executive Pastry Chef at Chef Geoff's, Inc.; he was trained at DC Coast by chocolatier **Jason Andelman**, who is now proprietor of two Artisan Confections venues in northern Virginia.

**Chefs Linton Hopkins** and **David Guas** were hand-picked by Tunks from his team at The Windsor Court Hotel in New Orleans; the twenty-something roommates loved the Big Easy, but leapt at the chance to join their mentor in Washington to open DC Coast. After several years as Tunks' chef de cuisine, Hopkins and his wife Gina – they met at DC Coast – moved to his hometown of Atlanta, where they began building an acclaimed restaurant empire of their own, which includes Eugene's, Holeman & Finch, H&F Bread Company, and multiple H&F Burger locations. According to *Zagat*, "Proprietor Linton Hopkins is one of the city's most prominent — and important — chefs."

Says Hopkins, "I'm sad that one of the true great American restaurants is no longer going to be a part of the DC restaurant culture. Jeff Tunks brought a brash New American cuisine with regional identifiable foods by way of an American brasserie and it was a home run from the start. What became the scope of American cuisine twenty years ago was allowing other cultures like Mexican and Asian

to influence the cuisine. Jeff was that pioneer for DC, among that first generation bringing a contemporary spin to the American table along with Larry Forgione, Jeremiah Tower and Wolfgang Puck. It was for his vision, palate and knowledge that I followed him to DC, and left with so much more experience under my belt."

David Guas remembers the early days of DC Coast as if they were yesterday. Now a successful cookbook author, television personality, and proprietor of two Bayou Bakery, Coffee Bar & Eatery locations, he says of Tunks, "There's no one else I'd rather have worked 80-to-90 hours a week for than Jeff! Opening DC Coast, he was on cloud nine, and his enthusiasm and work ethic and expectations carried us all right along with him. DC Coast was the hottest ticket in town, for good reason, and people were desperate to get in. I was usually in the lower-level production kitchen, so I didn't see much of this personally, but there were always stories of people trying to slide cash to any staff near the door, in hopes of getting a table. There's no doubt," he continues, "that our intensive training under 'Big Daddy' set many of us up for our own successes."

Thanks for the memories, DC Coast, and for all the fine dining, and civic leadership, and culinary stewardship, and maybe most of all, for raising the bar for bold new restaurants in the nation's capital and beyond. DC Coast had its final day on December 31, 2015 with friends, family, and loyal patrons. ■

# The Brunch Bunch

(Continued)

gray, the robust and warming soups like **Crab & Corn Chowder** or **Lobster and Butternut Squash Bisque** topped with toasted *Pumpkin Seeds* become small, satisfying wonders on their own.

Brunch is always worthy of a generous measure of alcohol to complete the meal. Customary to Passion Food Hospitality restaurants, they want you to fully enjoy the experience with a few cocktails at only \$5 with your meal. Slide into your first libation with the **Ruby Slipper** – a dazzling mix of *Strawberry Liqueur*, *Gosling Ginger Beer* and *Strawberry Purée* finished with on-tap *Prosecco*. The classic martini is shaken up with a hint of *Vanilla*, *Coffee Liqueur*, *Half & Half* and *Vanilla-Infused Vodka*. This **Breakfast Martini** may even get James Bond in the mood for a mid-morning eye opener!

When it comes to serving brunch on the weekends in Bethesda, the evidence is clear that it is growing in popularity. And thankfully, PassionFish is one that is most reasonable at **\$19 for two courses**. So, we'd say it's time to get crackin' and gather a bunch for brunch! ■



PassionFish's House Rolls with Smoked Whitefish Spread

# Egg-cellent Choice

Take a crack at our healthy Brunch options

If breakfast is the most important meal of the day, then we'd better get it right. At the restaurants of Passion Food Hospitality, check the weekend "breakfast" box off your list with the flourish of a fork, while upholding your New Years resolution to eat healthy -- the better to fit in the spring fashions that are just around the corner! At PassionFish in both Reston and Bethesda, District Commons, Penn Commons, and Acadiana downtown, and Fuego Cocina y Tequileria in Clarendon, the brunch menus are full of ways to indulge in dishes that are good and good for ya'.

PassionFish has the seafood advantage, replacing red meat in its flavorful **Smoked Great Lakes Whitefish Hash with Sunny-Up Eggs**, and flaunts it again with the **Catch of the Day**, healthfully grilled a la plancha with extra virgin olive oil, lemon, and sea salt. The lightly puffed **Skinny Omelet** of Egg Whites with creamy **Pipe Dream Farms Goat Cheese, Roasted**



PassionFish Bethesda's Huevos Rancheros

**Peppers, Spinach and Mushrooms** is a virtuous yet delectable start to the day; why not jump-start the meal itself with the **Iced Vegetable Crudités** with *Fresh Chive Tzatziki* or the **Roasted Beet Salad** with *Pipe Dream Farms Goat Cheese and Spiced Pecan Vinaigrette*? Finish up with a guilt-free **Selection of House-Made Sorbets** or **Seasonal Fresh Berries**. Two courses are just \$19, and with brunch, specialty cocktails are a slim \$5.

At **Acadiana**, weekend brunch rolls along to the accompaniment of live New Orleans-style jazz and a menu of N'awlins-inspired favorites. Keep the fat-calories down with the **Smoked Turkey Hash with Red Bliss Potatoes and Poached**



District Commons' Skinny Omelet

**Eggs** [ask for the *Smoked Gravy* on the side.] Maintain your vegetable intake with the *Cajun Bloody Mary* or the *Basil Belle*, and take care of your vitamin C with a *Blood Orange Mimosa*, *Bourbon Lemonade*, or *Pamplemousse Rose*; at \$5 each, these brunch beverages will make your wallet feel good, too!

**District Commons** offers **Today's Catch** simply grilled with a *Green Salad* on the side,

and its version of the **Skinny** [egg whites only] **Omelet** is made with *Feta Cheese*. Other healthy options are the **Roasted Portobello Mushroom** with *Quinoa, Sweet Peppers, Pine Nuts, and*



*Penn Commons' Beer Steamed Mussels Raisins*; the **Greek Yogurt & House Granola Parfait**; and a whole colorful range of salads. The **Smoothie of the Day** is a good healthy beverage choice -- and the bottomless *Bloody Mary* and *Mimosa* options will keep you company for just \$16 with the purchase of an entrée; there's a two-hour limit on the 'bottomless,' which gives you plenty of time for that afternoon work-out. Sundays only.

Over at **Penn Commons**, take control of your brunch and build your own 3-course prix-fixe menu for just \$19, choosing from healthy starters like **Char Roasted Eggplant, Pesto, and Toasted Pine Nut** dip or **Dill & Cucumber Tzatziki with Black Olive Tapenade** -- both scooped up with *Grilled Country Bread*. **Beer Steamed Blue Hill Bay Mussels** with *Allagash White, Cherry Tomatoes, Basil, and Chili Flakes* joins **Today's Fresh Catch** [grilled, with salad] and a **Grilled Thai Steak Salad** with *Greens,*

# Fat Tuesday Fête

Summon the spirit(s) of NOLA with Acadiana

New Orleans is a city known for many things—delicious and potent libations being one of them. At Acadiana, sip and savor the intoxicating city with cocktails with the authentic tastes like the *Category Five*, the restaurant’s version of the infamous New Orleans cocktail, the Hurricane, with Gosling’s *Light Rum and Dark Rum*. If you prefer to take your taste buds down south before the evening hours, try our addictive, brunch cocktail, *Brandy Milk Punch* featuring *E&J Brandy, Cream, Vanilla Extract and Nutmeg*.

Devour all things New Orleans for **Mardi Gras, Tuesday, February 9**, as Acadiana restaurant marks yet another carnival fête in

its bar, lounge and patio areas (with heaters). Acadiana’s menu and drinks are inspired by a lifetime of experiences from the eleven years of celebrating in Washington, DC, the century old traditions around the jovial holiday. Literally be festive and feast like it’s Fat Tuesday in New Orleans on signature parade route style appetizers ranging from *Mini-Muffalattas* to *Deviled Eggs*, all set to the tunes of a live New Orleans-style jazz band. The main dining room will offer the full à la carte menu with drink specials available at the bar.

These delicacies are sure to keep your bellies full and everyone in the best spirits for letting the good times roll on Fat Tuesday! ■

# Egg-cellent Choice

(Continued)

*Carrots, Cashews, Scallions and a Spicy Chili-Lime Dressing* as choices packing a flavor-punch that ensures you won’t miss the calories. Choose a trio of seasonal sorbets for your final course, and if you’re inclined toward a bottomless Mimosa or Bloody Mary, your total comes to \$32.

**Fuego Cocina y Tequileria’s** menus are a fiesta of vibrant Mexican flavors; a 3-course Sunday brunch is yours for \$19. **Tacos** bursting with taste instead of fat include the **Camarones** [*Grilled Shrimp with Jicama Slaw*] and the **Calabaza** [*Yucatán-*



*PassionFish’s Bloody Mary* style **Roasted Squash with Spicy Pickled Red Onions.**] The **Omelette ‘Flaco’** [that’s ‘skinny’] is served with seasonal fruit, while the **Huevos Rancheros** on a *Corn Tortilla with Black Beans & Chorizo* is all-savory with *Spicy Tomato Salsa and Avocado*. Cool it down with draft beers and cocktails that are only \$2 with the 3-course brunch, from *Margaritas to Tequila Sunrises* -- or keep the fire burning on your palate with the *Fuego Mary*.

Wherever you’re headed for brunch this weekend, make the morning meal happy and healthy with good choices from great menus. ■

## The Breakfast Club

In a city where “brunching” is a weekend ritual of late morning lunching, guests belly up to the bar or table with a bevy of brunch options that have you stay, dine, relax and enjoy. At Acadiana, weekend brunch is set to the tune of live New Orleans-style jazz to liven up the Louisiana atmosphere with offerings from the N’awlins favorite *Grits & Grillades* to the *Cajun Bloody Mary*. District Commons offers bottomless brunch with a choice of *Mimosas* or *District Bloody Marys* with top-heavy garnishes like *Lime & Jalapeno Stuffed Olives* and *Old Bay Salted Rims* to enjoy along with brunch specialties such as the classic *Pan Seared Salmon Cakes “Benedict”* or the *J&B Breakfast Hash with Braised Shortribs, Yukon Gold Potatoes and Sunnyside Up Eggs*. Fuego Cocina y Tequileria’s brunch options boast a fiesta of vibrant Mexican flavors in your mouth with dishes like *Carnitas & Potato Hash with Slow-cooked Pork, Poached Eggs and Lime Cilantro Hollandaise* and *Latin Style “French Toast” with Roasted Pineapple, Canela and Agave Nectar Syrup*—all to be enjoyed with juicy libations laden with fun when spiked with Cava.

# Travelling Gourmand

*Jeff Tunks savors his way through Austria*

Where, of all the possible spots on the globe, does a serious chef who is also a die-hard downhill skier and a hopeless romantic opt to visit for a winter vacation? “Austria,” says Jeff Tunks. “I’d never been and I knew that it would be a winter wonderland. It was amazing.”

Tunks, a self-described ‘research-type person,’ did his homework and planned the seven nights in Kirchberg [near Innsbruck,] Salzburg, and Vienna to a tee. His travel companion? She was advised to bring a passport and pack for winter, and only learned their destination at the gate. “She’s a very good sport,” notes Tunks, in a pointed understatement – in fact, she’s actually an Ironman triathlete. Speaking of sport, the couple sought out the Hotel Rosengarten, a Relais & Châteaux property in the heart of the Alps, whose chef-proprietor, Simon Taxacher, lived up to his distinction as a ‘Grand Chef Relais & Châteaux.’ The unseasonably warm weather was better suited to hiking than skiing, Tunks says, and the dining did not disappoint.

Throughout the trip, the hotel breakfasts were hearty affairs of smoked fish, farm eggs, homemade jams and butters, and – Tunks’ real weakness – hearty breads. “Needless to

say, we would take it easy for lunch every day, enjoying a beer and picking our way through the gourmet markets, to save ourselves for big dinners,” he says.

**“As it turned out, my Wiener Schnitzel was the best I’ve ever had: flawlessly fried, with tender new parsleyed potatoes, and a fresh spritz of lemon. It was ideal.”**

They drove to Salzburg on Christmas Eve, and wandered through one of Europe’s famous Christmas markets with mugs of *gluehwein*, the traditional hot mulled wine of the festive season, sampling cheeses and savory sausages as carols sounded in the air; “Silent Night,” he points out, was actually written nearby... Dinner was at Stiftskeller St. Peter, believed to be the

oldest restaurant in the world, established in 802. “It was pretty surreal, entering through this ancient monastery, with this incredibly romantic atmosphere,” recalls Tunks. “It was very touristy though, and extremely busy that day, so I didn’t have the highest expectations for the meal. As it turned out, my *Wiener Schnitzel* was the best I’ve ever had: flawlessly fried, with tender new parsleyed potatoes, and a fresh spritz of lemon. It was ideal.”

Next stop: Vienna. “Coffee houses are a big part of the city’s culture, and we went with it. At Demel, a famous pastry shop [about the same age as our country,] we had Apple Strudel and Sachertorte, hot chocolate and Viennese coffee. We spent some quality

time in Julius Meinl, the Neiman Marcus of gourmet food stores. Breads and fresh pastas, caviars, smoked fish, sushi and sausages - you name it, it was there, and it was gorgeous. It’s such a meat-centric country,” Tunks notes. “Where else are you going to find Pig Snouts in Aspic?”

Their last night in Austria, they savored a blow-out meal at Silvio Nickol Gourmet restaurant in Vienna’s Palais Coburg, which boasts two Michelin stars. “There are only about 40 seats; it’s not easy to get in, and yet it wasn’t completely full, which was probably deliberate, given the extreme orchestration of service required. The friandaises were not to be believed. I’ve never seen such detailed presentation. And it just kept getting better. They served the best bread I’ve ever had in



*Viennese Pig Snouts in Aspic*

# Travelling

(Continued)



*A memorable display of desserts in Austria*

my life – with Bacon Butter! And Langoustine with Coconut Sorbet, and Monkfish with Caviar, and such great Grüner Veltliners, Austria’s white wine. Apparently, they have Europe’s second largest wine cellar.”

How was our Washingtonian culinary star received in the Old World? “I made all our reservations online,” he reveals, “and I always wrote that I was a chef from DC, looking forward to my first trip to Austria. Our hosts couldn’t have been nicer. The chefs all took the time to come out and talk to us. Everyone was very hospitable, and gave us a great time.” Food wise, what he’s taken away in practical terms are memories of the legendary pastries, the Wiener Schnitzel, and the bread programs he encountered. He doesn’t promise he’ll be changing his own menus, but then again, don’t be surprised to see a hearty, dense, pumpkin-seeded Austrian-style bread at a Passion Food Hospitality restaurant near you, one of these days... ■

# The Big Daddy

*An Oyster Honor for chef Jeff Tunks*

If you order as many oysters as chef **Jeff Tunks** does, your suppliers are bound to take notice. And if you’re as strong an advocate for the seafood industry as the veteran chef is, they may well name shellfish after you. **Hollywood Oyster Company** in Maryland crafted the perfect mollusk to shuck up for chef Jeff Tunks and bestowed the honor of a custom oyster in his dedication. Like its namesake, the proprietary oyster is affectionately known as **“The Big Daddy.”** And while the nickname sticks, the pounds have not after Tunks shed 125 pounds, but still stands tall at 6-foot-3. “Of course, I’m completely honored,” says Tunks. “Hollywood Oysters is a great operation down in southern Maryland, in a pristine estuary of the Chesapeake. They practice highly responsible aquaculture, and are raising really fine oysters. ‘The Big Daddy’ is nice and buttery, with a deep-cup that holds lots of briny liquor. It’s over-sized and sweet—but that’s where the similarity between us ends!”

The tribute is indicative of the lasting relationships that Tunks has cultivated with

farmers, producers, and growers throughout his career: when a chef-restaurateur cares the way he does, it’s not just a name on an order form, it’s personal. ‘The Big Daddy’ will now have a place of honor at the popular raw bars of PassionFish in Reston, VA and Bethesda, MD, as well as District Commons and Penn Commons. ■



*The Big Daddy’ oyster served at Acadiana*

# Bowled Over

*Brothers in hospitality, Scott and Chris Clime, carry on a family tradition*

There's something special about being able to trace the trajectory of your life back to a pivotal moment in time, a particular place, or even a certain thing. The latter holds true for Passion Food Hospitality's brother duo **Chris Clime** [executive chef of PassionFish in Reston, VA and Bethesda, MD] and **Scott Clime** [wine & beverage director] who found their zeal for hospitality through an unlikely family tradition passed down from father to sons.

The story begins 50 years ago during the Vietnam War when Scott and Chris' father, Robert, was at sea on the U.S.S. Enterprise while

enlisted in the Navy. During his tour through Southeast Asia, the young officer seized the opportunity to explore the colorful port towns dotting the Pacific. Once hitting docks, he would beeline for the exotic local markets and spend afternoons weaving in and out of the merchants' stalls, breathing in the spiced air, and hunting for treasures to bring home. On one of these market excursions in the Philippines, he found himself admiring a stack of mahogany bowls, each seamlessly carved from a single piece of wood. Perhaps it was the craftsmanship, the smooth lines of the rich wood that

caught his eye – or maybe it was an inkling that these trinkets would become treasures to him and to a family he had yet to have.

Robert Clime returned to the States as a decorated fighter pilot with his medals, ribbons and his bowls. After completing his duty in Vietnam, he continued to serve in the Navy, married and started a family. As he rose in the ranks, he and his family relocated from base to base. In every new town, they would harness the powers of hospitality as a way to make new friends, connect with neighbors and network in each community. Over the years, the couple developed a true knack for entertaining. A signature



*The mid-century Clime family  
Caesar Salad Bow*

Clime dinner party was never short of food, plentiful drink and a big, leafy Caesar Salad served exclusively—of course—from one of the mahogany bowls anchoring the dining room table. With each gathering, Robert Sr. and his wife tackled increasingly elaborate recipes for their guests, eventually working through the pages of Julia Child's cookbook, which would result in a messy kitchen well worth every minute of clean up. Eager to lend a hand, the brothers began volunteering in the kitchen. While the soufflés were deemed too advanced, the boys would jostle for the coveted role of preparing the Caesar Salad –

always in one of the huge well-worn bowls.

Scott and Chris were empowered by their newfound responsibility in the kitchen as they witnessed the results of these get-togethers in creating lasting friendships, making memories and building communities wherever they were based. Later, with Robert Sr. off for 6-month deployments, Chris would bond with his mother cooking nightly dinners. The time spent in the kitchen during these formative years lead to his realization, at the ripe age of 15, that he was destined to become a chef. Chris never veered from his path, later attending Johnson & Wales Culinary School in Rhode Island. While he was making his foray into great kitchens around the mid-Atlantic, his brother Scott worked his way up to directing the entire beverage operation for Passion Food Hospitality.

Robert Sr. cemented the Caesar Salad tradition by bestowing his sons with their own mahogany bowls more than 20 years ago. To this day, no Clime family dinner or gathering is complete without a salad, and the men continue to take turns for the honor of making their own adaptations. While family opinions may vary on who makes the best, they all agree that the cleaning and care of these bowls is essential to the end result. Like a well-loved cast iron skillet, these gentlemen understand that the key to a true Clime Family Caesar Salad emanates from the rich wood, the years of use and the unseen magic of something so sacred, symbolic and enduring. ■

# Table Crumbs

## Calendar of Events & Closings HOLIDAYS & CLOSINGS

**Tuesday, February 9: Mardi Gras** - Acadiana will celebrate Mardi Gras with a slew of New Orleanian cocktails. [See page 10 for details]

**Monday, February 15: President's Day** - All restaurants will be open with normal hours.

**Sunday, March 27: Easter Sunday** - Acadiana will be open for brunch from 11AM-3PM and the bar will be open until 4PM. District Commons will be open for brunch from 11AM-4PM. All other restaurants will be open with normal hours.

**Thursday, May 5: Cinco de Mayo** - Fuego will be celebrating Cinco de Mayo with authentic dishes and bites. [Visit FuegoVA.com for updates on festivity plans]



*Burger Tap & Shake's High Thigh Burger*

**Sunday, May 8: Mother's Day** - Acadiana will be open for brunch 11AM-4PM. All other restaurants will be open with normal hours.

**Sunday, May 29: Memorial Day Sunday** - District Commons, both Burger, Tap & Shake locations and Fuego will be open with normal hours. All other restaurants will be closed.

**Monday, May 30: Memorial Day** - All restaurants will be closed.

---

## UPCOMING CLASSES & EVENTS

To register, please visit [www.PassionFoodHospitality.com](http://www.PassionFoodHospitality.com) or call 202.408.0201. Reservations will not be taken more than 30 days prior to each class. Classes are from 1-3 PM and \$85 [all inclusive] per person, unless otherwise indicated.

- **Sat., February 20, Cognac & Armagnac Tasting Class**  
Acadiana from 1-3PM
- **Sat., March 19, Whiskey Battle: Ireland vs. American Tasting Class**  
Acadiana from 1-3PM
- **Sat., May 14, Champagne & Sparkling Wine Tasting Class**  
Acadiana from 1-3PM
- **Sat., June 18, Barbecue Grilling Class**  
Acadiana from 1-3PM

# Fork It Up!

**PUBLISHER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**, Simone Rathlé  
**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**, Tania Lee, Meg Malloy, Misi Cooney  
**PHOTOGRAPHS**, Chris Granger, Scott Suchman, simoneink, llc.  
**PRODUCTION**, Laura Marsh

Fork It Up! is published three times a year by  
simoneink, llc, P.O. Box 25723, Washington, DC 20007.  
Copyright © 2016 simoneink, llc. All rights reserved.

Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

For more information: [www.simoneink.com](http://www.simoneink.com) [simone@simoneink.com](mailto:simone@simoneink.com)  
Twitter @simoneink Facebook.com/simoneink Instagram @simoneink

## Passion Food Hospitality, LLC

**Acadiana** 202.408.8848

**Burger, Tap & Shake** 202.587.6258

**Burger, Tap & Shake Tenleytown** 202.524.8868

**District Commons** 202.587.8277

**Fuego Cocina y Tequilera** 571.970.2180

**PassionFish Bethesda** 301.358.6116

**PassionFish Reston** 703.230.3474

**Penn Commons** 202.905.2999

[www.passionfoodhospitality.com](http://www.passionfoodhospitality.com)