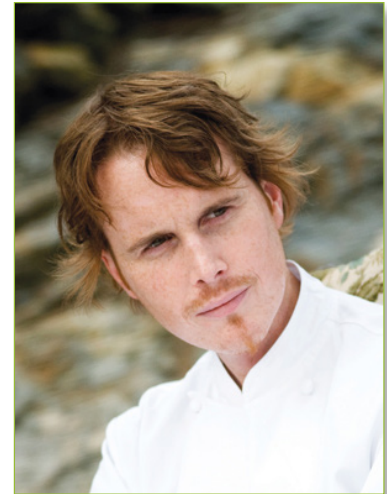




Food & Wine Strengthens Ties to Celeb Chefs

Brighter spotlight on personalities By Lucia Moses



In a nod to our insatiable culinary fixation, Food & Wine magazine is strengthening its ties to celebrity chefs.

The magazine has tapped six Chefs in Residence to participate in brainstorming sessions and Q&As and report back from their travels. Content featuring the inaugural participants—Grant Achatz, Hugh Acheson, Mario Batali, David Chang, Eric Ripert and Andrew Zimmern—will appear beginning with the redesigned February issue, which goes out to subscribers Jan. 9 and appears on newsstands Jan. 17.

Food & Wine has long had ties to cooks; its Best New Chefs franchise is in its 25th year. Editor in chief Dana Cowin said Chefs in Residence was designed to get more out of those relationships.

"Chefs today are such thinkers," she said. "They're forward-thinking and inspiring. I asked Grant Achatz what he would reinvent, and he said the Crock-Pot."

Food & Wine will now put an even brighter spotlight on chefs as personalities. Readers of the February issue can learn about Achatz's favorite TV shows (House and Friends) and check out photos of Philadelphia chef Jose Garces' home kitchen.

Anthony Bourdain will serve as Illustrator in Residence, seeing as the chef, author and TV personality is something of an artist as well. Cowin declined to disclose Food & Wine's financial arrangement with the Chefs in Residence.

Foodies already get their fill of celebrity chefs by way of outlets like Food Network and Condé Nast's Bon Appétit, which has been injected with more personalities under editor in chief Adam Rapoport.

Food & Wine, too, has featured fashion and beauty figures in the magazine when they "have a deep connection to food," Cowin said. "We did Erin Fetherston. We've been in the beauty world with Bobbi Brown."

But clearly, Food & Wine doesn't think the stew of food magazines and blogs and cooking shows has reached the boiling point. Readers have an "insatiable interest in everything about these chefs," Cowin said.

The insidery approach extends to the rest of the redesigned magazine, which became part of Time Inc. in October when the publishing giant acquired American Express Publishing. The February issue has a feature on Cronut inventor Dominique Ansel, for example. Throughout, there's a greater emphasis on food, travel and design trends.

"People know so much now, you can be more in-depth," Cowin said.

JANUARY 5, 2014