

Seminar outshines last year's

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ON THE OTHER side of the kitchen was Tom Tonapanish and Chef Chan Dechi Su Wan of the Bangkok Club in Southfield. Tonapanish interpreted for the non-English-speaking chef. Watching Chef Chan swing a Chinese cleaver was almost as good as the delectable, authentic Thai cuisine that was offered.

Bringing up the rear emulations was another major arsenal of culinary defenses led by the incomparable Chef Ed Janos of Chez Haphael in Novi. Meanwhile, in the demonstration lab, Chefs Tony Morilli and Steve Schoepen, of the Whitney in Detroit, presented new concepts and trends in desserts for the '90s. Those in attendance at Chef Janos' presentation observed crisping, roasting and braising techniques incorporating salmon, whitefish and pickled. The guys from the Whitney aptly closed the conference with a presentation on the "Tex-Mex Hot Hell Desert." Massapone Souffles and a Cranberry Maple Walnut Alaska that had the audience deliver a standing ovation.

MUSSEL AND VEGETABLE SOUP (6 servings)

- 18 mussels
- 1/2 cup white wine
- few parsley stems
- 15 bruised peppercorns
- 1 sprig of thyme
- 4 shallots, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed

Soak mussels in cold salted water for 1 hour, drain and rinse in fresh water. In a stainless sautepan, bring to a boil the wine, parsley, shallots,

garlic and herbs. Add mussels, cover tightly, and over high heat steam up until mussels open. Remove from fire, drain juice and reserve. Remove beards from mussels and cut mussels in halves.

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup sliced leeks, white
- 1/2 cup scallions, sliced
- 1/2 cup carrots, sliced
- 1/2 cup asparagus, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1 quart clam juice
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 teaspoons cut chives

In a heavy sautepan melt butter, add vegetables and mushrooms and saute till transparent; dust with flour, stir for 2 minutes, add clam and mussel juices, bring to simmer, cook 5 minutes. Add peas. Mix yolks with cream, add a little hot soup to it, mix and pour back into soup. Reheat a little without boiling, sprinkle with chives and serve immediately.

Sure and 'tis the place to buy Irish foodstuffs

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Derrig uses no sage, just mace and nutmeg from a Vietnamese bean, and pork — finely chopped the European way, not ground.

"I'm the first and only Irishman to get a sausage product approved by the USDA and Ottawa," said Derrig, whose colorful packaging is the work of Tralee artist Mary McSweeney. "We use no chemicals and no additives."

"It really is a big deal," said French. "It takes a big corporation five years to accomplish that. He did it in two or three."

DERRIG'S BANGERS are beginning to make Milwaukee famous. At the city's annual Irish summer festival on the shores of Lake Michigan, Derrig sells his long links in onion rolls, smothered with sauteed onions and green pepper. "We sell 10,000 bangers in two-and-a-half days, and 1,800 loaves of soda bread," says the father of six and grandfather of eight.

Derrig's breakfast-sized bangers, rolled and baked in puff pastry, are in demand among area clubs and pubs. For the recent Mull of Erin pageant at the Gaelic League, he sold 600 of them.

Bangers on the barbecue are delicious, allows Derrig, an accomplished baker who studied culinary arts at Schoolcraft College and

Wayne County Community College.

"Put them on the charcoal in the yard. They're superb."

Bangers also taste good cooked in a frying pan, as long as you use "just enough margarine to coat the pan, no water and no lid," he said.

"Roll them by hand or with a fork." Unlike sausage with synthetic casing that has to be poked, "Our casing is natural. It has its own oils. For that reason it's important that the sausage not get too hot. If it does, the spices and oils will cook right out of the meat, Derrig said.

DERRIG SPEAKS from experience. Nine months after arriving in America at age 18, the Irishman was drafted. As an Army cook in Korea, he fried eggs for 300 soldiers every morning — on outdoor grills without benefit of a spatula.

If you're on an Irish diet, treat yourself to a stop at 3251 Michigan Ave., three blocks east of Schaeffer and three blocks west of I-94.

As the aroma of fresh-baked, currant-and-rain-forest soda bread wafts through the tiny store, you can load up on black pudding (Irish blood sausage made from pork); McCann's Instant Irish Oatmeal; Irish sand-wich biscuits; Irish Pure Seville Orange or Original Irish whiskey marmalade (great on scones); Butch

McGuire's Irish Whisky Loaf; Lakeshore Whole Grain Mustard with Guinness Stout; a plethora of Irish teas, including the renowned Bewley's blend; Mayhaw Jelly, salad dressings; George Killian Irish Red Lager in longnecks, and cold Guinness and Harp.

And don't forget the links. "They don't repeat on you," so they're safe for older people and children to eat, said the banger maker.

This time of year is special at the Irish Import store. Derrig and his wife, Mary Ellen, company president, take 20 percent off every sale and every order the week preceding St. Patrick's Day.

The Saturday before March 17, the Derrigs serve lunch and Irish coffee during an open house.

MORE THAN 1,200 people have been known to steam up the windows and line up outside Derrig's door that day.

"His son accuses him of having a public service, he's so generous," said French.

For Derrig, it's just plain enjoyment, and a way to "pay something back."

"My customers are great people. In 19 years, I've had no bad checks. That I brag about," said the Irish entrepreneur with a wink.

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