

Golden Mushroom co-owner wins chef of the year award



KEELY WYGONIK

Certified Master Chef Milos Cibicki, co-owner of the Golden Mushroom Restaurant in Southfield, has been honored by the chef's profession as the American Culinary Federation's national chef of the year. He will represent the central region of the United States as its nominee for the national chef of the year award.

"I've won many awards in com-

petitions, but winning this award is very special," said Cibicki. "Being selected as the regional chef of the year means your peers recognize your efforts and appreciate the time and energy given to the future of our industry."

Cibicki won double gold medals at the "Culinary Olympics" in 1972, and was the first Certified Master Chef in America. Today fewer than 50 chefs can boast the distinction of Certified Master Chef. It is an honor, and measure of knowledge of the chef's profession. To earn the title, one must document a long history of success in the kitchen and thorough education before becoming eligible to take the 10-day exam that leads to this achievement.

If you're looking for a way to add some zip to your summer meals, try flavored vinegars.

"Everybody is fat conscious, and trying to reduce their intake of fat and oils," said John Jenna, merchandise manager, product development, Merchant of Vino. "Oil adds flavor. If you cut oil, you kill flavor, what I'm recommending is use less oil, add water and flavored vinegars."

Jenna gave me a quick lesson in flavored vinegars at the Merchant of Vino at 4050 Rochester Road in Troy. Three of the best known flavored vinegars are the French Orleans, Italian balsamic, and Spanish sherry.

French Orleans adds a brisk, sharp flavor to salad dressings. It is also absorbs the flavor of herbs.

"Balsamic means to improve your health in Italian," said Jenna. For nearly 1,000 years, balsamic vinegar has been made in Modena, Italy from the Trebbiano grape. "It has an amazing flavor," said Jenna.

He sprinkles balsamic vinegar on vegetables, pasta, fresh fruit, and salads.

Sherry vinegar tastes like sherry, and has a nutty flavor, and natural sweetness.

One of Jenna's favorite marinades for beef and lamb is garlic, sesame seed oil, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and a little lemon juice. For a different flavor, mix sherry vinegar with walnut oil.

Ever wonder what makes cakes fall? According to Betty Crocker, cakes fall for many reasons, usually related to an unbalanced proportion of ingredients. Excess sugar makes

the cake too tender to support itself in the middle. Too much shortening makes flour's gluten strands too slippery to hold cake up. If there's excess liquid, it won't evaporate enough to let the cake rise. Too much baking powder or baking soda will cause the cake to rise quickly and then fall because there is not enough flour to support the structure.

Tip of the week: Make a refreshing, low-fat summer fruit dessert by preparing crisp baked egg white meringues and filling them with juicy strawberries, peaches or raspberries.

Make an award-winning Mexican black bean pizza

See Larry James's Taste buds column on Taco front.

This recipe submitted by Dave Schmitt of Phoenix, Ariz., was a \$10,000 winner in the 1992 Pillsbury Bake-Off.

BLACK BEAN MEXICAN PIZZA

- 1 can (10 oz.) Pillsbury refrigerated all-ready pizza crust
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon hot red pepper sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
- 4 ounces (1 cup) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 4 ounces (1 cup) shredded Cheddar Cheese
- 1 can (2 1/2 oz.) sliced ripe olives, drained
- 1/2 cup sliced bell pepper
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup dairy sour cream
- 1/4 cup green or red taco sauce
- 1 cup thick and chunky salsa

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly grease a 12-inch pizza pan. Unroll dough and place in the greased pan.

(Chef's Note: You can make your own pizza dough. If desired, or use one of those new Boboli shells!)

Bake the dough at 425 degrees until light golden brown, 7-10 minutes.

In a food processor with a metal blade, combine beans, oil, cilantro, cumin, hot red pepper sauce and garlic; process until smooth, frequently scraping down the sides of the bowl. (Hand mixture can be mashed by hand but will not be as smooth)

Spread bean mixture evenly over partially baked crust.

Sprinkle with cheeses, olives, bell pepper and onions. Bake at 425 degrees until crust is deep golden brown and cheese is melted, about

10-12 minutes. In a small bowl, combine sour cream and taco sauce. Blend well. Serve pizza with sour cream mixture and salsa. Serves 6-8.

Enjoy spring strawberries

AP — With their spring-fresh flavor and brilliant red color, strawberries make colorful desserts, salad and refreshing beverages.

The history of the modern strawberry spans many years and continents.

In 1714, the strawberry was a cross between a plump, red berry the French found in South America and a wild meadow strawberry found in the colony of Virginia.

It's said that children are responsible for the name. They strung the berries on straws (grass) and said them "by the straw" or as "straws of berries."

- and hulled
 - 1/2 cup sugar, or to taste
 - 1 1/2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice, or to taste
- Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender; puree. Taste and add additional sugar or lemon juice as needed. Strain, if desired. Use immediately, or cover and refrigerate up to two days. Serve on ice cream, pound cake, layer cake, or sliced fruit. Makes 1 cup sauce.

- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - 1 1/2 cups fresh strawberries, washed, hulled and sliced
 - 2 1/2 cups fresh rhubarb, sliced (Pie pastry for top and bottom crusts)
 - 1 tablespoon butter
- Combine sugar, salt, tapioca, nutmeg and lemon juice in a large bowl. Add strawberries and rhubarb. Mix well to coat fruit. Let stand 15 to 20 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Place fruit mixture into prepared bottom crust. Dot with butter. Add top crust, crimp edges and cut several holes to vent steam. Bake in a 375-degree F oven for 40 to 50 minutes, until golden brown. Makes one 9-inch pie.

STRAWBERRY SAUCE

- 1 pint strawberries, cleaned

Chef Milos Cibicki

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Participants will be paid up to \$225 for the six-week study (four visits). Also, study-related care and tests will be provided free to qualified participants.

To find out if you qualify, contact Delores Sears-Ewald at 876-2670.

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