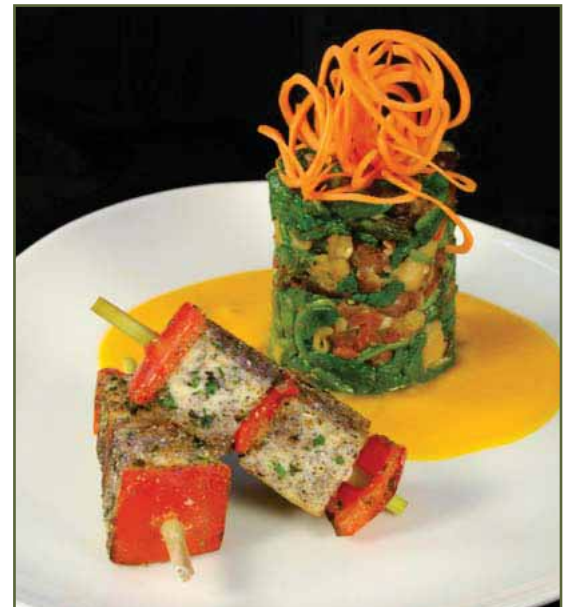
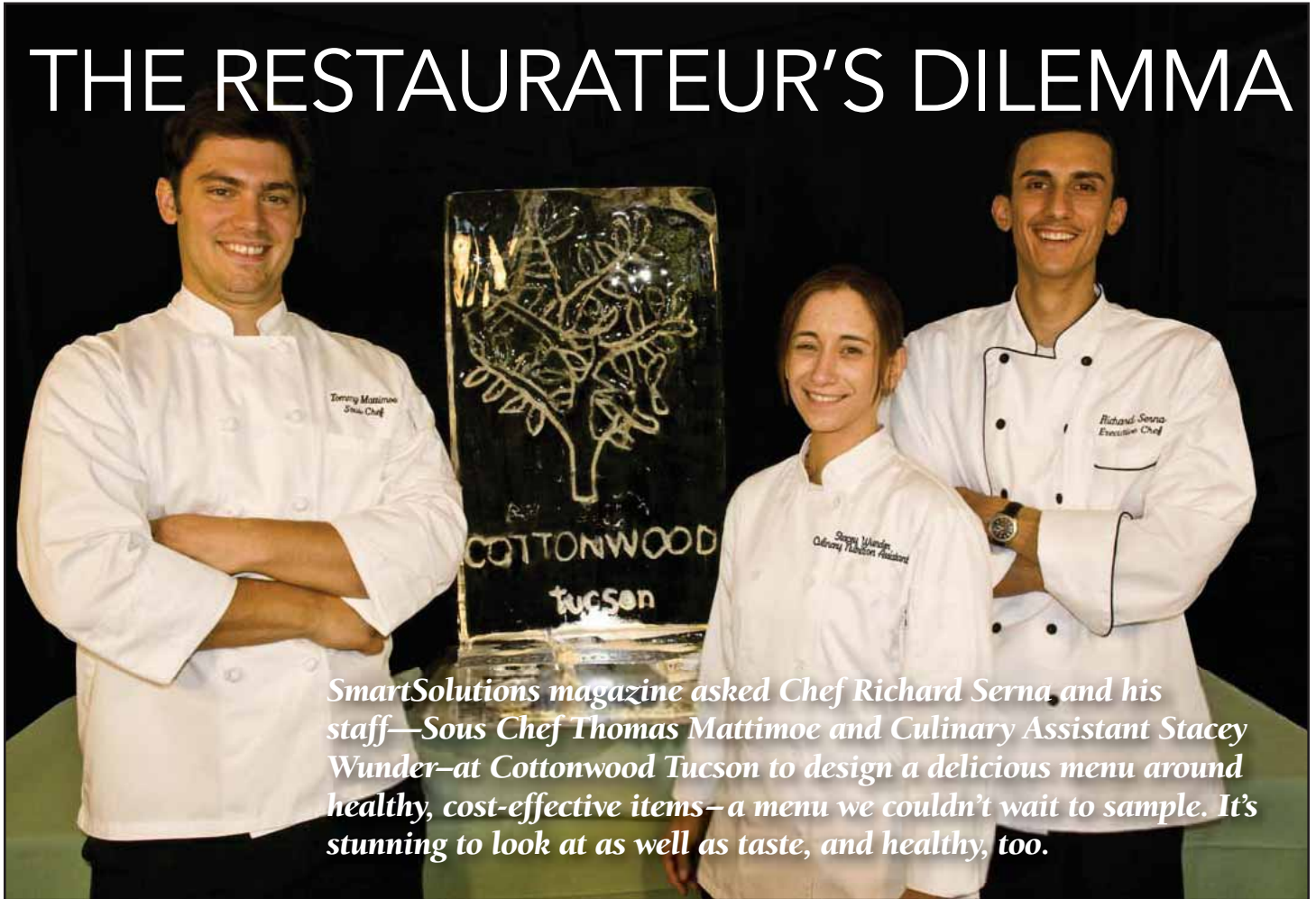


HEALTHY DINING

THE RESTAURATEUR'S DILEMMA



“Although 47% of consumers want more healthy restaurant options, just 23% tend to order healthy food when dining out...” Technomic, The Healthy Eating Consumer Trend Report

Obesity. Diabetes. Cholesterol. Trans Fats. Glutens. – The hazards of a poor diet and the benefits of eating “healthy” have never been more top of mind. Pundits point to our fast-food culture as the nemesis of proper nutrition and even local governments have jumped on the bandwagon to regulate change and increase awareness. It’s working. But the sad fact remains that while the general public understands the need to eat better, when it comes to eating out, they don’t.

Maybe it’s the “all in” mentality that says “If we’re going to eat out, let’s splurge.” Maybe it’s the tempting flavors that today’s chefs are bringing to the table. Maybe it’s the portion sizes that fill us up long before the plate is clean. In any case, as Technomic recently documented, the dining public doesn’t often do what they say.

But there is hope.

As USA Today recently reported (4/13/2011), some of the major U.S. restaurant chains are looking at some ‘eye-popping’ numbers when it comes to sales of nutritional food options. “For the first two months of 2011, the top-selling entrée at Applebee’s wasn’t a gloppy burger or flashy fajita plate. It was a sirloin and shrimp entrée from the chain’s diet menu. This marks the first time that a low-calorie item ever ranked as the chain’s best seller for a single month—let alone two in a row.”

Stop. Rewind. Re-read the description of that top-selling entrée. Does it say ‘sirloin and shrimp’?

The take-away from all this is simple: 1) People want to make healthy food choices, but 2) they don’t want to sacrifice flavor. A sirloin and shrimp entrée doesn’t sound like a sacrifice, and any operation can utilize the same strategy to create its own top-selling healthy menu choices. For example, SmartSolutions magazine asked Chef Richard Serna of Cottonwood Tucson to design a delicious menu around healthy, cost-effective items—a menu we couldn’t wait to sample. Here’s the result:

Healthy Dining Menu

By Chef Richard Serna

**Chicken Apple Hash
with Curried Chive Sauce**

**Egg White Scramble
Blueberry Oat Smoothie**

**3 Bean Hot Spinach Salad
Wilted Spinach, Roasted Red Bell Pepper**

**Asparagus, Pickled Shallot,
and Carrot Vinaigrette**

Lemon Grass Skewered Tofu

**Quinoa Potato Cake and Slow Roasted
Beets**

Accompanied with Pan Seared

Tenderloin of Beef

Morel Cream Sauce

Sweet Potato Gnocchi

Vanilla Bean Ice Cream

Strawberry Sauce and Pistachio Pieces



SWEET POTATO GNOCCHI WITH VANILLA ICE CREAM

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup sweet potato puree
- 1/2 oz. whole egg
- 3 tsp. brown sugar
- 3/4 cup flour
- Pinch cinnamon
- Pinch clove
- Pinch salt

Method:

1. To make the sweet potato puree, add a cup of diced sweet potatoes to a pot of boiling water until soft. While warm, mash the sweet potatoes through a sieve and measure out the puree.

2. In a bowl, add the puree, spices, sugar and mix well. Add the egg until well incorporated and slowly fold in the flour. Do not over mix. Roll out mixture on well-floured surface. Cut out 1/2 tablespoon sized gnocchi from dough. Should make 16 total. Heat water to boil in a medium sauce pan and boil the gnocchi. They should rise to the surface of the water when done. Let cool. Place 4 pieces per order.

VANILLA ICE CREAM

Yield: 4 2-oz. servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cottage cheese (pureed)
- 1/3 cup 2 % milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/3 fresh vanilla bean (scraped)
- 2 Tbsp. whole egg
- 1 ice bath

Method:

1. Puree the Cottage cheese in a blender and set aside.

2. Heat milk and vanilla bean with guts, and half of the sugar in a saucepan over a medium heat until just starts to simmer. In bowl, add the egg and the other half of the sugar, mix well. While whisking, slowly add the heated milk to the egg mixture until eggs are tempered. Add back to the sauce pan over a low heat, stirring constantly until mixture begins to thicken.

3. Remove from heat and cool over an ice bath. Once the mixture has cooled, remove the vanilla bean and add the pureed cottage cheese. Mix well and add the mixture to an ice cream maker. Churn until it reaches ice cream consistency.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS FOR THE ENTIRE ENTRÉE:

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (127g)			
Servings Per Container			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 220	Calories from Fat 15		
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat 1.5g	2%		
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%		
Trans Fat 0g			
Cholesterol 35mg	12%		
Sodium 150mg	6%		
Total Carbohydrate 44g	15%		
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%		
Sugars 22g			
Protein 8g			
Vitamin A 90%	Vitamin C 6%		
Calcium 8%	Iron 8%		
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
	Fat	9	Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

For help in creating your own healthy menu items, start with the USDA and US Department of Health and Human Services' Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010. And for help in understanding that 'hefty' document from the standpoint of a professional foodservice operator, following is a summary by Shamrock Foods' Non-Commercial Manager Heidi Allison, MS, RD, MBA.

Calories do matter and moderate exercise can only go so far; find ways to keep the numbers low. Gazpacho instead of chowder; fish tacos instead of enchiladas? Both choices satisfy the urge for ethnic tastes—and give you great ways to tell a 'healthy' story on your menu.

• Less is more for most healthy dishes. Reduce the amount of these items that you use:

Sodium – Hold the salt shaker; Culinary Secrets spices can help you achieve the same savory flavor profiles without dumping in the salt. See the article “Seasoning Blends Offer Flavor to Low Calorie Menu Options” in the March/April 2010 issue of SmartSolutions magazine, and “ ‘Tis the Seasoning” in the November/December 2010 issue. Also, avoid using these salty foods in your recipes: cured meats, chips, salted crackers. The more processed and ready-to-eat, the greater the chance that ingredient has high levels of sodium. Your patrons need to consume less than 2,300 mg per day of sodium, so each healthy meal you serve should contain one-third of that amount or less.

Saturated Fats – Reduce or avoid animal fats and fats that are solid at room temperature, like butter and margarine. Use oils instead, in small amounts.

Cholesterol – Reducing the portion size of animal foods (chicken, beef, pork, egg yolks) reduces cholesterol. Make use of Shamrock's USDA-Certified meat-cutting facilities to menu portion-controlled proteins that let you tell a great story AND maintain consistent costs.

Trans Fats – The poster child for great ideas gone bad, trans fats made cooking and baking easier and refrigerated storage less of an issue. But the miracle of Crisco has now been shunned by most responsible operators, chain and independent alike. Luckily, there are numerous Zero Trans Fats options available, including fry oils, salad oils, butter alternatives and more from Shamrock Foods.

Sugar (soda and sugary beverages; grain-based desserts).

Refined Grains (white breads, pizza, grain-based desserts, tortillas)

• Here are some foods you can feel free to use more and more often:

Vegetables and Fruits – especially dark-green, red and orange varieties. A colorful plate is a healthy plate; think beans and dried peas, fresh broccoli, spinach, romaine lettuce, tomatoes, red peppers, carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squash and pumpkin.

Whole Grains – Some examples include buckwheat, bulgur, miller, oatmeal, quinoa, rolled oats, brown or wild rice, whole-grain barley, whole rye and whole wheat. Whole grains include the entire grain seed, known as the kernel. It consists of three components: the bran, germ and endosperm. If the kernel has been cracked, crushed or flaked then it is a “whole grain.”

Fat Free and Low Fat milk and milk products. There's no better choice than the full line of dairy products from Shamrock Farms.

Lean Meats – seafoods, lean cuts of meat and poultry. Don't forget beans and peas as side dishes or even entrees. Soy products and unsalted nuts and seeds are the foundation of many ethnic favorites.

Oils – Canola, sunflower, blends and more. Use trans fat free oils to replace solid fat wherever possible.

Minerals and Vitamins – Choose foods that provide more potassium, fiber, calcium, and vitamin D. These include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, milk and milk products.



The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 recommends 'Nutrient Dense Foods' as a foundation for healthy diets. In plain-speak that means foods and beverages that offer multiple positive nutrients (vitamins, minerals, proteins, etc.) with relatively few calories. Importantly, the nutrient value should not be diluted with added solid fats and sugars or refined starches in the cooking or preparation process. Keep it pure, keep it simple.

And don't be afraid to tell your healthy-menu story. Consider sampling as a way to introduce your menu options and show patrons just how delicious eating healthy can be.