

Lorraine Eaton's
pick of the week



Hummusphere is one cool name, and it sure does deliver. A full line of these applewood smoked hummus spreads arrived at the office, but the Thai Coconut Curry was the runaway favorite. Available at The Fresh Market in Norfolk and Virginia Beach, 10 ounces, \$4.99.



flavor

The Wednesday Break

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Sauced



A photograph by Robert Capa of Ernest Hemingway drinking from a wine bottle, circa December 1937.

BY LORRAINE EATON

a la Hemingway

Virginia Beach duo pays homage to Papa with a new line of big and bold flavorings

By Lorraine Eaton
The Virginian-Pilot

Not long ago, a couple of guys from Virginia Beach traveled to New York City and mixed up a batch of bloody marys for a crowd of 22,000.

It was a bold endeavor, and suitable for the launch of The Flavours of Ernest Hemingway, a new line of sauces, finishing salt and an intrepid bloody mary mix of which Papa would almost certainly approve.

The first bottles and jars rolled off a Virginia Beach production line just two days before the start of Summer Fancy Food Show in New York City, where buyers and gourmet food producers from around the world meet to do business.

Research and development started just a few weeks earlier. That's when Joe Takach, CEO of The Meridian Group, a Virginia Beach-based advertising and marketing firm, pitched the idea for the line to the Ernest Hemingway Foundation of Oak Park, which licenses use of the famous author's name.

Takach, a lifelong foodie who founded his marketing firm 30 years ago, gained access to the foundation through his accountant, who knew a guy, who knew a key person there. "It fell into my lap," Takach said. But he had



the line includes:

- ◀ The Sun Always Rises, a bloody mary mix with a hint of Dijon, a nod to Hemingway's life in Paris.
- ▶ The Bull, a hot sauce with a dash of Spanish paprika, to mark the author's time in Spain.
- ◀ The Islands, a cocktail sauce with the essence of lemon and lime zest, to honor Hemingway's key West days.
- ▶ The Hunt, a grilling sauce inspired by his African safari.



- ▶ The Sea Salt, inspired by his time in Cuba, where he wrote "The Old Man and the Sea."



Judy cawling turning tables

EASY ORDERING AT PHO DALAT; JORGIO'S BISTRO ALIVE AND WELL

"We'll have a No. 2, a No. 11 and a No. 26, please."
Ordering was as easy as that at Pho Dalat, a Vietnamese restaurant in Crossways Shopping Center in Chesapeake. Their menu needs no translation because there's nothing to read. It's all pictures. Every item has its own full-page, full-color photo and a corresponding number. Best list.

I arrived for lunch before my pal and ordered a Vietnamese iced coffee while I waited. The server brought the frothy, milky beverage and deposited it at my table. Perhaps he knew I'd never ordered one before, because he stood there until I took a sip. I closed my eyes to savor the strong, sweet coffee treat, and when I opened them, I saw the kid smiling broadly in appreciation. It was very hard to save some to share with my friend. Good thing she was only a few minutes behind me.

We started with the beautifully presented spring rolls. Unfortunately, the translucent wrapper was gummy, tasteless and tough. We dug out the fresh filling from the wrapper and dipped it in the accompanying peanut sauce, which was super tasty.

Susan opted for the duck egg noodle, a white ceramic bowl filled with a light but flavorful steaming broth full of tender duck pieces, lettuce, spring onions, carrots and other spices. The broth alone was earthy and rich.

My dish was a mélange of color and texture. Honey-brown tender and moist roasted chicken and pork slices covered a bed of chewy vermicelli topped with crunchy slivers of julienned cucumber, carrot, chopped peanuts and bean shoots. There was also a warm fried egg roll cut up on the top. It was chewy-warm-cold and crunchy all in the same bowl. I'm not a pro at eating noodles with chopsticks, but I got the job done.

Pho Dalat is family-owned and -operated. They've been open about three years and have gained a loyal following. They also offer delivery.

Pho Dalat Vietnamese Restaurant, 634 Eden Way North, Suite 108, Chesapeake, 233-9995; also on Facebook.

Jorgio's remains open

Jorgio's Bistro is still serving its perfectly grilled sweetbread and Crusty Salad big enough to stretch into three meals.

It was mistakenly reported earlier on PilotOnline.com that the beloved restaurant was closing. Far from it. The Virginia Beach restaurant is still serving its warm, crusty rolls fresh from the oven with a little bowl of olive oil, tangy chopped garlic, herbs and spices, as well as its grilled skirt steak sandwiches bigger than your head.

Jorgio's Bistro, 185 General Booth Blvd., Virginia Beach.

Turning Tables appears on HamptonRoads.com daily and every Wednesday in the Flavor section. If you have tips for the Pilot Cawling or restaurant news, email news@pilotonline.com.

cook it

recipes Recipes appearing in this section have not been kitchen-tested by the authors or by the newspaper food staff unless noted.

online Previously published recipes are available to subscribers on ePilot at PilotOnline.com.

desperation dinners

AVI SHEMTOV was that guy in college who cooked. Tailgates, dinners for dates, he had it all covered.

These days, this son of a chef has his own food truck, The Chubby Chickpea, in Boston. And his publicist calls him "the patron saint for single guys in the kitchen."

The cookbook author's message to bros everywhere is this: Get over yourself and learn to cook. It's not that hard. Chapters in "The Single Guy Cookbook" speak to the lazy guy (who wants minimal cleanup), the guy who's feeling broke (and doesn't want to spend money in a restaurant), and even the guy who wants to get, well, let's just say the guy who wants to get to the next level with a girl.

Guys, it's time to get your gastronomic game on. No excuses.

—Lorraine Eaton, *The Virginian-Pilot*

STUPID-EASY POT ROAST

Serves: 2

Some nights you just want beef, and lots of it. This pot roast has great flavor and is always tender. Plus, it doesn't really need any attention. (Wish that were true about everything in your life, don't you?) Just come home, brown the sides and put it in the oven. By the time you're caught up on "Game of Thrones," you'll have a tender block of meat to tear apart.

2 tablespoons olive oil
8 ounces beef shoulder roast
1 cup diced carrots
1 yellow onion, quartered
2 potatoes, quartered
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
Heat the oil in a cast-iron skillet over high heat and quickly brown all sides of your meat, about 2 minutes per side.

Remove from the heat.
Add the carrots, onion, potatoes and the seasonings. Cover the skillet with heavy-duty foil, sealing it completely, and place it in the oven. Cook for about 1 to 1½ hours, depending on how rare you like the meat.

The best part of this pot roast is how versatile it is. You can shred it and eat it on its own, have it on a roll with BBQ sauce and cole slaw, or cut it into tender pieces and eat it over rice and its own juices.

POT ROAST STEAK BOMB

Yield: 1 fat sammy

Sometimes the simplest and most obvious recipes are the best. No doubt this is a sandwich you could figure out on your own, but I figured I'd give you a head start using leftover pot roast. The key for me is melting and mixing the cheese into the juices from the roast. In the end there is a saucy quality about the cheese that makes it a perfect leftover sammy.

1 tablespoon olive oil
5 ounces leftover pot roast (see recipe above)
½ white onion, sliced thin
1 green or red bell pepper, sliced thin
1 bakery-fresh French roll
1 tablespoon mayo
3 slices of your favorite cheese

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Cut the pot roast into thin slices if you can. If not, small chunks will work. Put the meat into the pan, leave it for 1 minute and then cook,

stirring, until the meat has started browning. Add the onion and pepper and cook, stirring once every few minutes or so to keep the meat and veggies from burning, until the veggies are tender and meat is browned.

Cut the French roll open and spread the mayo on the roll. Add the cheese to the almost-ready meat and give it 30 seconds to begin melting. Stir carefully, and tuck the cheesy steak and veggies into the roll. It's ready.



L. TODD SPENCER PHOTOS | THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Joe Takach, CEO of The Meridian Group in Virginia Beach, has secured rights with Willard Ashburn, owner of Ashburn Sauce Co., also in Virginia Beach, to develop and bottle Ernest Hemingway-branded sauces, salts and bloody mary mixes.

HEMINGWAY

LOCAL TASTINGS SCHEDULED

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to move fast.

After the foundation expressed initial interest, Takach knew just the man to help develop the flavors: Willard Ashburn, owner of Ashburn Sauce Co. in Virginia Beach, who has his own line of award-winning bloody mary mixes and whose state-of-the-art facility blends and bottles sauces and mixes for scores of artisanal producers.

The goal was to develop flavors and packaging that would evoke "a sense of Papa's personality," Takach said. At first, the task seemed as big as the larger-than-life man whose name would eventually go onto each label.

Hemingway, winner of both the Pulitzer and Nobel prizes for literature, had a robust appetite for food and drink and life.

His novels and short stories contain myriad mentions of food, from a fictional character who brewed the perfect pot of coffee to course-by-course descriptions of hotel dinners.

Hemingway was also a legendary drinker. In a 1945 letter to his fourth bride-to-be, Mary, he noted that his record daiquiri consumption stood at 34 in a single day. And he liked bloody marys, in part because his wife couldn't smell the liquor



The Flavors of Ernest Hemingway bloody mary mix is bottled in barrel-chested, broad-shouldered bottles that recall their namesake's physique. "That could be him," says Takach.

on his breath.

Aiming to take advantage of the exposure at the Fancy Food Show in late June, the marketing expert and the sauce maker got right to work, starting with a little bit of back to school.

Takach cracked open "A Moveable Feast," a memoir of Hemingway's time in Paris, published posthumously. "It's about horse racing and eating and drinking and companionship, which does follow Willard and I pretty well," Takach said.

Ashburn, a Hemingway fan since his youth, turned to a couple of newer volumes for inspiration: "The Hemingway Cookbook," by Craig Bor-eth, and "To Have and Have Another," by Philip Greene.

The finished prod-

ucts — all with big, bold flavors — pay homage to Hemingway's wanderlust and his "man's man" persona, right down to the packaging.

"Look at that bottle," Takach said, pointing to the barrel-chested, broad-shouldered bloody mary mix bottle. "That could be him."

Samples delivered to the foundation sealed the exclusive United States licensing deal. Takach and Ashburn's line is now part of the official Hemingway Collection, joining licensed products from a fishing boat to hardwood flooring to sunglasses.

Takach said that the first flush of orders is coming in from buyers who sampled the line at the Fancy Food Show. They're also working with a distributor in

Florida, where they believe there is enormous sales potential.

Locally, Taste Unlimited began selling the products on Friday, and several tastings have been scheduled.

Barkeeps at Eurasia in Virginia Beach and Todd Jurich's Bistro in Norfolk are serving up bloodies made with the mix. (Note: Hemingway's favored ratio was half mix, half booze.) The duo is not done yet. Next up: a daiquiri mix.

Product development for that one could prove interesting. Hemingway liked his daiquiris frozen, with no sugar and twice the rum of a regular.

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