



**2015 CATIE Awards
Best Buffet Presentation & Menu
PCMA Opening Reception**

Best Buffet Presentation & Menu | 2015 CATIE Awards



In June of 2014, we were presented with a fantastic opportunity as well as a challenge. With very short notice, one of our clients requested we produce an event for the “Professional Convention Management Association” or “PCMA”. We were thrilled as they are industry professionals and we really wanted to send them home with something to remember, and talk about. It also gave us a chance to reinforce our relationship with a client who

handles much of the conference business in our city. As this was the opening reception of their conference, we decided that a cocktail reception with food stations would be the best option. We had a multitude of ideas and inspirations when we were planning the menu, but the two that really stood out was to surprise our guests with both execution and display methods they may not have not seen before. Being industry professionals, this group of guests have seen pretty much everything when it comes to events. Another element we wanted to include was an interesting selection of foods from different parts of the world. Many of the attendees were from abroad and as our city is well known for its ethnic and cultural diversity, we wanted to showcase this fact. The theme for the event was **“How far can your imagination take you?”** The event was held in a historic section of the city known as “The Distillery.” For years this area had been left to go to seed, however it has been saved and revitalized as an event space and numerous art galleries, the perfect location to let your imagination run wild. For guests from abroad, the industrial façade of the buildings make one assume that no such food or spectacular events can come from such a space.

Our first station was our **“Mozzarella Bar.”** Different types of mozzarella from “Burrata” to “Fior di Latte” were offered with Heirloom Tomatoes, Custom Flavored Salts, Small Batch Olive Oils and Fresh Garnish. Our chefs assembled “Personal Caprese” plates for each guest. The surprise element of this station was that we were making the Fresh Mozzarella. To add to the interesting execution of this station, we themed it with décor such as wooden bowls and crates overflowing with a vast array of tomatoes, buckets of fresh cut basil and the array of Mozzarellas in large Glass Bowls. The visual display of the cheeses allowed guests to see the differences in textures.

Our second station was a **“Ceviche Bar”** with an offering of three different types. The first offering was Lobster & Coconut, inspired by the flavours of the Caribbean. The second was a vegetarian, made with Sweet Potato & Hearts of Palm, inspired by a recent trip by some of our chefs to Costa Rica. The third offering was drawn upon from our own backyard of the Canadian West Coast, made with Wild Salmon, Sage & Granny Smith Apple. The interesting execution was that we served the ceviche on a functioning “Conveyor Belt”, continually circling the station so the guests could serve themselves.

Our third station was based on **“Rodizio,”** or Brazilian BBQ. Our chefs were carving beef, lamb and sausage straight from huge Rotisserie Rods that had been roasting in a fire, adding drama to the station. Chefs were lined up carving the various meats as guests passed by to make their selection. In addition to the meat carving, we salt-roasted whole Pineapple and then made Pineapple Salsa, a Brazilian delicacy. To round out this station, we served Patatas Bravas and Chimimchurri. The themed décor of this station was of a road side food stall on a Brazilian highway, with crates and rotisserie rods for a rustic feel.

Best Buffet Presentation & Menu | 2015 CATIE Awards

Our final station; dessert, was more akin to an art installation, taking inspiration from a dining experience some of our chefs had at “Alinea” in Chicago. We had been playing around with this idea for some time and this event gave us the opportunity to produce it. We called the station “Dessert as Art.” For the first part of the station, we had chefs painting on an Ice Cold Slab of Marble with many different sauces; Chocolate, Caramel, Raspberry Coulis and Liquid cheesecake. Then we created chilled Chocolate Globes filled with unexpected yummy treats; cherry wood Smoked Chocolate, Toffee Crunch, Peanut Butter Powder and Spun Sugar. To add to the experience, we then smashed the globes in the centre of the marble. Our chefs then used “Art Utensils” such as palette knives to scoop up the dramatically disassembled contents of the globe to top the Salted Caramel Budino and Chocolate Pudding.

The second part of our “Art Installation” were “Abstract Edible Paintings.” The paintings were made from marshmallows of different colors and flavors. As the guests came up to the station, we would cut off a piece of the “painting” for them or we welcomed our guests to be interactive and tear away at the painting for themselves. Overall, the dessert station was a huge hit. We wanted to people to get a sense of childhood, as if they were in their first finger-painting class, when you could be tactile with elements of art and be surprised & delighted that you get to eat your creation.

With big ideas and ambitious menu items come challenges. Initially it was the short notice we were given. We had ten days to create, plan and execute the event to our clients’ liking. It was also our busiest month of the year and the kitchen and event managers were already extremely busy preparing for many other events. We really had to pull together as a team to see this event through.

Another challenge was our Fresh Mozzarella, being made onsite during the cocktail reception. None of our chefs had actually done this before. All we can say is “Thank You, YouTube!” One of our chefs spent the weekend in her kitchen with YouTube learning how to make Fresh Mozzarella. However, making cheese at home and making cheese for a reception are entirely different tasks, mainly due the volume of cheese required for the event. The process is incredibly tedious and on site required constant supervision to ensure the cheese was made properly. In addition to the cheese dilemma, we were also challenged on how keep the



chocolate globes hard enough to shatter in the warm weather. Our city can get quite warm and humid in the summer. Storing the chocolate globes on dry ice was our solution, as our little hammers remained close by.

Events of this complexity, along with a shortened time frame really tested our creativity and our practices as a caterer. The feedback from our client and guests has told us we nailed it! We were reminded that teamwork is key and that thinking out of the box is never a bad thing, challenging our capabilities led to an event that created a lot of “buzz” and started off a conference for event professionals that let them know, not only hotels & convection facilities can create large scale events. We are confident that we met and exceeded the expectations of the client, and guests took away great memories.

Best Buffet Presentation & Menu | 2015 CATIE Awards



2015 CATIE Awards - Best Buffet Presentation & Menu, PCMA Opening Reception

PCMA Opening Reception – Best Buffet Presentation & Menu

Hors d'Oeuvre

Summer Strawberry Foie Gras

Strawberry Petal, Butter Brioche

Beet Devilled Eggs

Beet Pickled Egg, Saffron Yolk

Zucchini Cube

Pickled Vegetable Salad

Bibimbap

Rare Striploin, Egg Yolk Cream, Kimchi Rice Crisp, Nori Powder

Buttermilk Chicken Biscuit

Spicy Mayo, Red Cabbage Slaw, Cheddar Biscuit

Reuben Potato Skin

Pastrami, Asparagus Scallion Sauerkraut, Russian Dressing

Fish & Chips

Grilled Whitefish, Malt Vinegar Coleslaw, Taro Chip

Food Stations

“Mozzarella Bar”

Buffalo Mozzarella, Burrata Fior di Latte, Buckets of Heirloom, Grape, Zebra, Roma, Field Tomatoes, Personal Caprese Plates

Fresh Mozzarella Demo

Fresh Basil, Basil Oil, EVOO, Aged Balsamic, Salts, Micro Greens, Pickled Red Onions, Roast Grapes, Rig Compote, Crostini

Charcuterie Display

Local Artisanal Cured Meats, Dried Fruits, House-made Seasonal Chutney, Grainy Mustard, Fresh Breads, Maple Plank

“Ceviche Around the World”

Wild Sockeye Salmon:

Sage Salt, Horseradish Cream, Apple

Vegetarian Ceviche:

Palm Heart, Red Onion, Poblano, Corn, Lime, Olive Oil

Lobster Ceviche:

Coconut Citrus, Mango Pico di Gallo

“Rodizio”

Brazilian BBQ

Chefs carving BBQ Rods of:

Beef Sirloin, House made Pork Sausages, Leg of Lamb, Salt Roast Pineapple, Potato Bravas

Dessert as Art

Salted Caramel Budino

Sea Salt, Caramel Pudding, Toffee Crunch, Whip

Chocolate Pudding

Smoked Chocolate Crunch, Whipped Cream

Best Buffet Presentation & Menu | 2015 CATIE Awards

Vegetable Ceviche

Ingredient	Measure	Method
Hearts of palm	1 14 ounce can	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drain hearts of palm and cut into ½ inch rounds. Steam the corn and sweet potato until they are cooked but still have bite to them. 2. Roast the poblano and peel and dice. 3. Mix all the ingredients together and season with salt and pepper. 4. Garnish with popcorn sprouts.
Fresh corn	1 cup (fresh kernels)	
Sweet potato	1 cup (diced)	
Red onion	1 medium (diced)	
Poblano chili	1 chili	
limes	2 (juiced)	
Olive oil	2 tbsp.	
Cilantro	1tbsp (chopped)	
Salt and pepper		
Popcorn sprouts		

Wild Salmon Ceviche

Ingredient	Measure	Method
Wild Salmon	9 oz.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sprinkle the salt on the salmon filet. Refrigerate for 20 minutes, and then wash off salt and dry salmon. 2. Dice salmon into ½ inch cubes. 3. Put apple cider in a non-reactive pot and bring to a boil. Reduce by half and cool. 4. Mix the salmon, cider, lime juice, apple, and sage. Season with salt and pepper. 5. Mix the crème fraîche and horseradish. Season with salt and pepper. Use to garnish salmon ceviche.
Kosher Salt	2 tbsp.	
Apple Cider	8 oz.	
Lime Juice	3 oz.	
Granny Smith Apple(diced)	1 Apple	
Fresh Sage(chopped)	1 tbsp.	
Salt and pepper	To taste	
Crème fraîche	½ cup	
Fresh horseradish(grated)	1 tbsp.	

Lobster Ceviche

Ingredient	Measure	Method
Lobster(1lb)	6 lobsters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cook the lobster in boiling salted water for 6 minutes then cool. Clean the lobster and cut into ½ inch pieces. 2. Put the rest of the ingredients into a blender and purée. 3. Toss the lobster with the dressing. 4. Top with Mango Pico de Gallo and garnish with toasted shaved coconut.
Jalapeno	1 (chopped with seeds)	
Sugar	1 tbsp.	
Coconut milk(unsweetened)	1 14 Oz can	
Ginger	2 tbsp.(minced)	
Lime juice	¼ cup	
Lemon juice	¼ cup	
Orange juice	¼ cup	

Mango Pico de Galo

Ingredient	Measure	Method
Diced mango	2 cups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mix all ingredients together. 2. Use to top the lobster ceviche.
Diced red onion	1 cup	
Diced red pepper	½ cup	
Chopped Cilantro	¼ cup	
Chopped Mint	¼ cup	
Orange juice	2 tbsp.	
Lime juice	2 tbsp.	
honey	1 tbsp.	
Kosher salt	1 tsp	

Fresh Mozzarella

Ingredient	Measure	Method
Water	1 ¼ cup	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measure out 1 cup water. Stir in the citric acid until dissolved. Measure out ¼ cup water in separate bowl and stir in rennet until dissolved. 2. Warm the milk, stir in citric acid solution. Heat milk with citric acid to 90 degrees F, stirring gently. 3. Remove milk from heat and gently stir in the rennet solution. Stir for 30 seconds then stop and cover, let sit for 5 minutes. 4. After 5 minutes the milk should have set and it should look and feel like silken tofu. If it is still liquid recover and let sit for another 5 minutes. 5. Once milk has set cut it into uniform curds, with several cuts both horizontal and vertical ensuring the knife goes all the way to the bottom. 6. Place the curds back on the stove and warm curds to 105 F. stir curds slowly as they heat but try not to break them up. The curds will solidify and separate from the whey. 7. Remove the pan from the heat and continue to stir for another 5 minutes. 8. Pour curds into a strainer and submerge the curds in a pot of water that is 190F. Keep the curds submerged until their inner temp. is 135F. 9. Once the curds have reached 135F remove from the water and stretch. 10. Sprinkle the salt over the cheese and squish it with your fingers to mix it in. then fold and stretch the cheese until it tightens and starts to take on a glossy sheen. Once this happens form the cheese into balls.
Citric acid	1 ½ tsp	
Liquid rennet	¼ tsp	
Milk(whole or 2%)Do not use ultra-pasteurized milk	1 gallon	
Kosher Salt	1 tsp	