



A TRANSFORMATIVE COLORADO COOKOUT

Denver Magazine recently joined “Five” Denver chefs and their families for a summer barbecue — and got the inside scoop on big changes to come in 2011. Here, we bring you their irresistible recipes and exciting news.



COCKTAIL HOUR

Rocky Ford Melon Sangria
Grant Family Farms Truffle
Deviled Eggs

DINNER

Chile-Rubbed Pork with Stranahan's
Peach Glaze
San Luis Valley Potato, Yam, and
Chorizo Hash
Colorado Heirloom
Tomato Napoleon
Olathe Corn and
Fava Bean Succotash

DESSERT

Grilled Palisade Apricot Shortcake

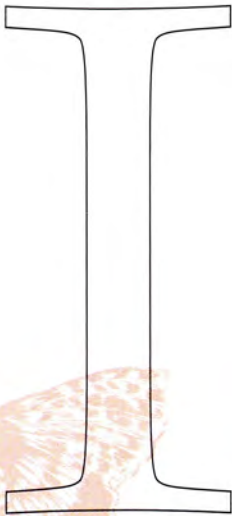


BY STACEY BRUGEMAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANNETTE SLADE & JEFF NELSON

STYLING BY CHAD SUITER

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In 2008, Leigh Sullivan-Guard, chef Troy Guard's wife and the marketing mind behind TAG restaurant, founded the Denver Five to show a national audience that Colorado was a contender in the food world. This third-generation Coloradan brought five Denver chefs (one for each course) to cook at New York's esteemed James Beard House, the West Village brownstone that was home to the American cookery icon of the same name that now houses guest-chef dinners for the James Beard Foundation, a nonprofit educational organization.

For the first Beard dinner two years ago, Sullivan-Guard tapped chefs Keegan Gerhard, Matt Selby, Goose Sorensen, Tyler Wiard, and her husband, Troy. "Denver's got so many talented chefs," she says, "I could have called it 'Twenty.'" She selected these chefs as much for their skills as for their collective vibe. "We were all at an event at Vesta and they just had this amazing energy," she says — something that's not always true among (often) hot-headed chefs who are also competitors.

Today, the group hosts a rotating dinner series at each of their restaurants. (The name "Five" is now trademarked by Sullivan-Guard, and the group includes Brian Laird and Jamey Fader instead of Gerhard and Sorensen.) They also appear at various food festivals across the state and make an annual pilgrimage to the Beard House, slated for September 22 this year. Many of their menus for these events feature ingredients that, like the chefs themselves, call Colorado home. The same is true when they get together in their spare time.

Denver Magazine recently joined the Five chefs for a backyard barbecue at the Sullivan-Guard home and got an inside look at the menu for their upcoming trip to the Beard House, which New York restaurants they'll hit while they're there, and the interaction among them that Sullivan-Guard loves so much — not to mention some irresistible recipes and exciting news (see sidebar, "Changing of the Guard").





The black truffles used in Brian Laird's deviled eggs (below) are easy to enjoy because they are so much more affordable than their white cousins. The Truffle Cheese Shop on Sixth Avenue carries black truffles from Umbria when available (About \$20 per truffle; 303.322.7363; denvertruffle.com).



Grant Family Farms Truffle Deviled Eggs

Makes 24

Barolo Grill Executive Chef Brian Laird loves Wellington-based Grant Family Farms so much that he doesn't just use the farm's eggs, he stuffs them with chicken meat raised there as well. With the Italian touch of black truffle, these starters will disappear almost as soon as you set them out.

12 hard-boiled eggs, sliced in half lengthwise, yolks removed and reserved

1 cooked chicken breast, meat pulled apart (precooked chicken breast can be found in the prepared foods section of most grocery stores)

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

1 Tablespoon mayonnaise

2 celery ribs, trimmed and diced

5 ounces fresh black truffle, grated with a cheese grater

Kosher salt to taste

Fresh ground black pepper to taste

Microgreens

1. In a medium mixing bowl, combine yolks, chicken, oil, mayonnaise, celery, and truffles.
2. Spoon yolk mixture back into egg whites and season with salt and pepper. Garnish with microgreens, a slice of any remaining truffle, and serve.



CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Over dinner with these chefs, we got much more than just fabulous recipes. We also got the inside scoop on the future of Five.

While personal reasons have caused annual shifts in the Five lineup (Goose Sorensen was replaced by Jamey Fader after the first year, and Keegan Gerhard was replaced by Brian Laird after the second), the members of Five have remained surprisingly consistent — even though Sullivan-Guard originally planned to rotate all the chefs every year. In fact, as Denver's restaurant scene has evolved, other local chefs have grown curious as to why only a particular five represent Colorado. We put that question to her, and were rewarded with big news: "We're going to have five brand new chefs next year," Sullivan-Guard confided. All five chefs, including her husband, will be swapped out entirely in 2011. "When it came time to switch 'em out [after that first year], I wasn't ready to let go," she said. "We were building momentum."

In the coming months, Sullivan-Guard will be looking for "people who are willing to separate themselves from their ego and their restaurants and stand united with four other chefs to represent Colorado." She hopes the existing members will become chef mentors. "I'm ready, the chef community in Denver is ready, Denver's ready," Sullivan-Guard said. — SB



Many chefs use grapeseed oil when cooking because of its high smoking point. Elway's Executive Chef Tyler Wiard also uses it on uncooked foods. It's a nearly flavorless oil and, in this case, lets heirloom tomatoes, summer cucumbers, and pickled shallots shine.



Chile-Rubbed Pork with Stranahan's Peach Glaze

Makes 8 servings

Matt Selby of Vesta is no stranger to using a wood fire. For Five's backyard barbecue, he cooked a 60-pound suckling pig steeped in Denver-distilled whiskey and cooked in a La Caja China roasting box (lacajachina.com). Here, we give you an everyday version of this sweet-and-spicy entrée using grilled pork chops instead. (For Selby's recipe for whole-roasted pig, go to denvermagazine.com/FIVE.)

4 cups water
1 cup Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey
½ cup kosher salt
½ cup sugar
2 Tablespoons minced garlic, about 6 cloves
½ cup whole cilantro leaves, torn into pieces
Chipotle powder to taste
8 8- to 10-ounce pork chops
4 fresh peaches, halved and pits discarded
Vegetable oil

1. In a saucepan set over high heat, combine the water, whiskey, salt, sugar, and garlic. Bring to a boil, immediately reducing to low heat to simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the alcohol is cooked off and the sugar and salt are dissolved, about 5 minutes.
2. Place the peaches in the simmering liquid and poach, cooking about 8 minutes. Remove mixture from heat and chill.
3. Once cool, puree the peach and whiskey mixture until smooth. Fold in the cilantro leaves. Place pork chops in a deep-sided dish and cover with peach puree, tossing by hand until fully coated. Cover, refrigerate, and allow to marinate overnight.
4. The next day, pour the marinade into a saucepan and bring to a simmer, cooking until the liquid is reduced by 25 percent.
5. While it reduces, light a fire in the grill and brush the rack with vegetable oil. Pat the pork chops dry and season with chipotle powder to taste, rubbing into every crevice if you like it spicy, just sprinkling with a few pinches if you do not. Place pork chops onto a hot, uncovered grill, turning after 3 minutes. After 3 minutes more, turn chops again to their original side, rotating them as you do so to create perpendicular grill marks. After an additional 3 minutes, turn and rotate once more, this time moving the chops to a cooler part of the grill. Cook on cooler part of the grill, still uncovered, until a meat thermometer inserted into the center of a chop reads 165°, about 5 to 8 minutes more.
6. Remove pork chops from grill and place onto a serving platter. Brush with reduced whiskey glaze and serve.



Troy Guard, his daughter Grace, Brian Laird, Tyler Wiard, Leigh Sullivan-Guard (above left, left to right), and Matt and Gina Selby (bottom right) celebrate Five's three-year run over dishes such as buttery Olathe corn and fava bean succotash (top right).

San Luis Valley Potato, Yam, and Chorizo Hash

Makes 8 servings

The arid and expansive San Luis Valley is potato country. Here, LoLa's Jamey Fader combines the spuds with the smoky flavors of freshly roasted peppers and chorizo.

Bonus: Leftovers are just as good with eggs the next morning.

- 1 whole garlic head
- Olive oil to taste
- 2 medium yams, peeled and cut into cubes
- 4 new potatoes, cut into quarters
- 3 Anaheim chiles
- 2 poblano chiles
- 4 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 ears corn, husked
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 chorizo sausage links, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 1 scallion, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1 Tablespoon smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Place garlic on a piece of foil and drizzle with olive oil. Wrap tightly and bake for 20 minutes, until softened but cloves still intact. Remove from the oven and let rest until the foil is cool. Remove foil, peel paper off cloves, and slice each in half. Set aside.
2. Place yams in a saucepan and add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook until yams are just fork tender, being very careful that they don't become soft. Place potatoes in another saucepan and add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook until potatoes are just fork tender. Drain both immediately to stop cooking and cool.
3. Meanwhile, roast chiles over a flame or under the broiler until skin is blackened on all sides. Remove skin, stems, and seeds. Chop and set aside.
4. Rub 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil over ears of corn. Cook under the broiler until slightly charred and fork tender, turning once, about 10 minutes total. Cut kernels off with a knife and reserve. Discard ear.
5. Into a large sauté pan, drizzle 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Set over medium-high heat and combine yams, potatoes, onion, bell peppers, and chorizo. Cook until potatoes are golden and chorizo cooked through, about 10 to 15 minutes.
6. Toss potato mixture with chiles, corn, garlic, scallions, and paprika. Season with salt and pepper and serve.



FOR MORE RECIPES
visit denvermagazine.com/FIVE.
Don't miss Guard's Rocky Ford melon sangria; Wiard's heirloom tomato Napoleon; and the whole suckling pig version of Selby's chile-rubbed pork.

Olathe Corn and Fava Bean Succotash

Makes 8 servings

August corn from the small Colorado town of Olathe is the star of this simple but stunningly delicious succotash from Tyler Wiard, the executive chef of Elway's in Cherry Creek.

- 2 pounds fresh fava beans, shucked (see Note)
- 8 ears Olathe sweet corn
- 3 Tablespoons butter
- 1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon grapeseed oil
- ½ cup minced red onion
- ⅓ cup minced red bell pepper
- Fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 2 scallions, green section minced and white section reserved or discarded

1. In a saucepan, bring 8 cups of salted water to a boil. Meanwhile prepare a bowl of ice water. Once the salted water is boiling, blanch shucked fava beans for 3 minutes and drain. Place beans in ice bath to shock. Once beans are cooled, take off the outer skin and discard. Set fava beans aside.
2. Shuck sweet corn and remove as much "hair" as possible. Working with a serrated knife and the cob placed tip down in a large mixing bowl to collect the kernels, slice the kernels off each cob.
3. Heat a large sauté pan to medium heat and add butter and grapeseed oil. Once butter is melted, add the red onion and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add corn and sauté for an additional 5 minutes. Add bell pepper and fava beans. Season with salt and pepper to taste and sauté for an additional 2 minutes. Spoon succotash into a serving bowl, garnish with green onion, and serve.

Note: If fresh fava beans are hard to find, a 1-pound bag of pre-shucked frozen lima beans or soy beans can be substituted. Thaw beans and omit step 1 of the recipe.



Brian Laird's son, 4-year-old Darius, thought the best part of dinner was Troy Guard's apricot shortcake.



The chef-driven desserts at TAG restaurant have developed a cult following. Here, Troy Guard treats his peers to a shortcake using grilled apricots from Palisade.



Grilled Palisade Apricot Shortcake with Haystack Mountain Whipped Cream and Thai Basil Coulis

Makes 8 servings

Palisade is known for its peaches, but the region is a hotbed for all stone fruits. Here, TAG's Troy Guard gives Western Slope apricots, Ambrosia Honey Co.'s wildflower honey, and Longmont-made chèvre his signature Asian touch for an irresistible shortcake.



- ½ cup Genovese basil leaves
- ¼ cup Thai basil leaves
- 1¾ cups wildflower honey
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon gelatin powder
- 3¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 stick cold butter, cubed
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- 2 Tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3¾ cups heavy cream
- Vanilla sugar to taste
- Sea salt to taste
- 4 apricots, cut in half and pits discarded
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Pinch of Korean dry chile flake or cayenne
- 2 Tablespoons Haystack Mountain chevre

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. To make the Thai basil coulis, prepare a medium bowl of ice water. Bring a saucepan filled with water to a boil. Add Genovese and Thai basil and blanch until color just changes, about 10 seconds. Remove from water with a slotted spoon and set into the ice water to shock. Reserve ⅓ cup of the blanching water and discard the rest. Remove basil from ice bath and squeeze out excess water.
3. Place basil in blender with 1 cup honey and reserved blanching water. Blend until bright green and smooth throughout. Pass through a fine mesh strainer and return to a clean blender. In a small bowl, stir together granulated sugar and gelatin, then add to blender. Blend on low. Pour basil mixture back into saucepan. Heat over high heat. As soon as mixture begins to boil, remove from heat and chill.
4. While it chills, make shortcake squares. Place flour, butter, powdered sugar, baking powder, and salt in a mixer and mix until the butter is broken up and evenly distributed. With mixer running, add 2 cups cream in a steady flow, just until dough comes together.
5. Onto a floured surface roll dough into a thick rectangle and cut into 8 equal-sized squares. Place on an ungreased baking sheet, brush with ¼ cup cream, and sprinkle with vanilla sugar and sea salt to taste. Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes.
6. When shortcake squares are done, turn oven to broil. Toss apricots in ¼ cup of honey, oil, and cayenne. Place on broiler pan directly under broiler until honey bubbles and begins to caramelize, about 90 seconds.
7. To make whipped cream, place cheese, 1½ cups cream, and 2 Tablespoons honey in a mixer and whip on medium-high until it forms stiff peaks, about 1 minute.
8. Spoon 1 teaspoon of honey onto each plate. Slice shortcake squares open and drizzle a spoonful of honey onto each bottom half. Place bottom half on plate, topping with a grilled apricot half. Add a dollop of whipped cream and top half of shortcake. Drizzle plates with Thai basil coulis. □