Lisa Postl Russell, Founder and President at Mr. Frank's Kitchen.

Family. Legacy. Tradition.

The Founder's Story Behind Mr. Frank's Kitchen.

Lisa, the visionary behind Mr. Frank's Kitchen, has built her brand on a simple yet powerful belief: food should be both flavorful and authentic. What began as a passion for experimenting with spices in her own kitchen has grown into a company that celebrates creativity, culture, and the joy of cooking. With each blend, Lisa aims to capture not just flavor but also the stories and traditions that seasonings can carry, transforming everyday meals into memorable experiences.

As the founder, Lisa has navigated the journey of turning a personal passion into a thriving business, successfully balancing artistry with entrepreneurship. Her commitment to quality, innovation, and community has made Mr. Frank's Kitchen a name that resonates with both home cooks and professional chefs.

In this conversation, Lisa shares the inspirations that shaped her path, the challenges she has overcome, and her vision for how seasonings can continue to bring people together around the table. ~ Diana DeLucia

GK: Your father's journey from Austrian woodcarver to a successful Canadian entrepreneur is remarkable. What values or lessons from his immigrant experience and craftsmanship shaped your approach to leadership and creativity?

LPR: My father, Mr. Frank, instilled strong work ethics as well as taught me never to fear a challenge or failure. He also always told me to, "Never let anyone tell you that you can't do something." He was an old- world woodcarver who immigrated to Niagara Falls, Canada, from Austria in 1953. He arrived with his wife and three children, spoke no English, and had only $47 in his pocket after enduring the horrific hardships of World War II.

Dad worked in construction for a while, but inspired by his love for food, he eventually started a business called Tasty Treats, which found great success selling soft-serve ice cream and foot-long hot dogs. He later opened an additional five locations.

My father had a friend who jokingly dared him to build a restaurant, which was a natural fit for him as a woodcarver. Despite having no prior knowledge of cooking, Dad accepted the challenge and built the restaurant from the ground up. He had his often-hilarious mishaps, but within a few years, Frank's Steak House & Tavern, became one of the most successful restaurants in "The Falls.

"One of the catalysts to his notoriety was a unique seasoning blend he created –The Original - which he used on his steaks and in his seafood butters. Now, almost 70 years later, people still talk about my dad's steakhouse and the remarkable flavors of his food.

I had always wanted to bring Dad's seasoning to market, and when he passed away in 2008, I had a visceral "ah ha" moment one day while in TJ Maxx and came across a stainless-steel shaker, which my dad had used in his kitchen. With his words and face in my mind, I knew it was time to act. I recreated his seasoning using only clean ingredients, with no fillers or additives–just premium-quality herbs and spices and launched Mr. Frank's Kitchen in 2016.

> **"I genuinely feel like I've found my niche in the service industry, where the passion for food and hospitality really lives."**

GK: How does your family fit into the business you're running? You have a daughter who is a photographer and a son who is a golfer.

LPR: My family is my driving force. My daughter, Jordynn, is a very talented artist and photographer who has been incredibly helpful in taking photos for social media and for marketing purposes, while also bringing valuable and creative insights to me. She assists me with putting together photo layouts and inspires me in areas where I lack creativity. While I have an innovative vision for my seasonings, I struggle with imagery, and she's been instrumental in that aspect.

My son Shay is very much like me regarding healthy eating, working out, and being nutritionally conscious. He is also deeply passionate about golf and has ambitions to become a pro golfer. We live on a golf course, and he works very hard every day to improve his craft. He also loves to cook and will often get in the kitchen with me, wanting to learn how I make things so "he will be able to make them for his family one day," which are some of my most cherished moments. I genuinely feel like I've found my niche in the service industry, where the passion for food and hospitality really lives. I've learned so much about the golf space thanks to working with Golf Kitchen, and with Shay being

a golfer, the opportunities are abundant. I feel like I'm finally on the right path, which honestly feels really good.

GK: Can you tell us about the creation of Mr. Frank's Kitchen logo?

LPR: The design for Mr. Frank's Kitchen logo originated from my dad. He had carved a beautiful wooden sign for his restaurant - Frank's Steak House & Tavern - we wanted our logo to be as authentic to his original design as possible. We recently included a sketched image of my dad in our new branding, as well as a small green symbol that represents heart health and the idea of clean eating with good, wholesome ingredients.

GK: You started with one seasoning blend. How did you develop the other five? What was your approach?

LPR: Early on, someone told me, "Lisa, the Original Blend is amazing and goes on everything. People love it. But if you want to be taken seriously, you need to have more than one blend." That prompted me to reflect and get creative. I sat at my kitchen table, pondering the flavors I loved and how I could innovate. I've always been a fan of Mediterranean flavors, which inspired one of my blends. It features roasted garlic, whole tomatoes, and French tarragon. I aimed to create something light and airy that would stand out from existing Mediterranean seasonings, which tend to use oregano, which has a much harsher flavor profile.

Then there's the Garden Sriracha, inspired by my love for spicy foods. This blend is my take on traditional sriracha sauce, using only clean ingredients like whole tomatoes, jalapeño powder, and California garlic.

The Tropical Sriracha was truly one of the most enjoyable and fun blends for me to develop. My friend Ellie, who is of Mexican and Hawaiian descent, inspired this blend with its unique combination of chilies and fruit. I wanted to capture the essence of tropical flavors with a sweet-and-spicy twist.

The whole process of creating these blends was a lot of fun, and even more exciting are the many more ideas I have waiting for in the R&D pipeline.

GK: Do you collaborate with any chefs?

LPR: Yes, I'm the CEO but also the creative director behind our products, so working with other chefs to create custom spice blends is something I'm very passionate about, and I have the ability, contacts, and network to get it done efficiently, saving time and costs for the chefs who want to collaborate.

Mr. Frank's Kitchen was a sponsor of the prestigious Cayman Cookout culinary festival in 2025, and we collaborated with French celebrity Chef Bernard Guillas, who used Mr. Frank's Seasonings in all of his dishes and events, which was truly an honor. Seeing Mr. Frank's Kitchen featured during his presentations was definitely a special moment for me. He was incredibly kind and gracious, making sure to promote Mr. Frank's Kitchen at every opportunity possible. It was an extraordinary culinary event and experience that has left indelible footprints in my journey.

GK: How do you believe your products could enhance not just a recipe, but the overall dining experience in a private club setting?

LPR: The distinct flavor profiles we offer are incredibly unique. There's nothing quite like them available anywhere else. So, if you create a Spicy Mango Margarita mixed with our Tropical Sriracha, it's a delicious, unforgettable combination your patrons won't find anywhere else. The uniqueness of our flavor profiles, along with the chefs' creativity, plays a significant role in enhancing the dining experience.

Mr. Frank's blends provide fantastic flavors and variety in one dish, allowing for a complex accumulation of taste beyond just garlic or salt. With our products, you're getting a rich tapestry of flavors without the cost.

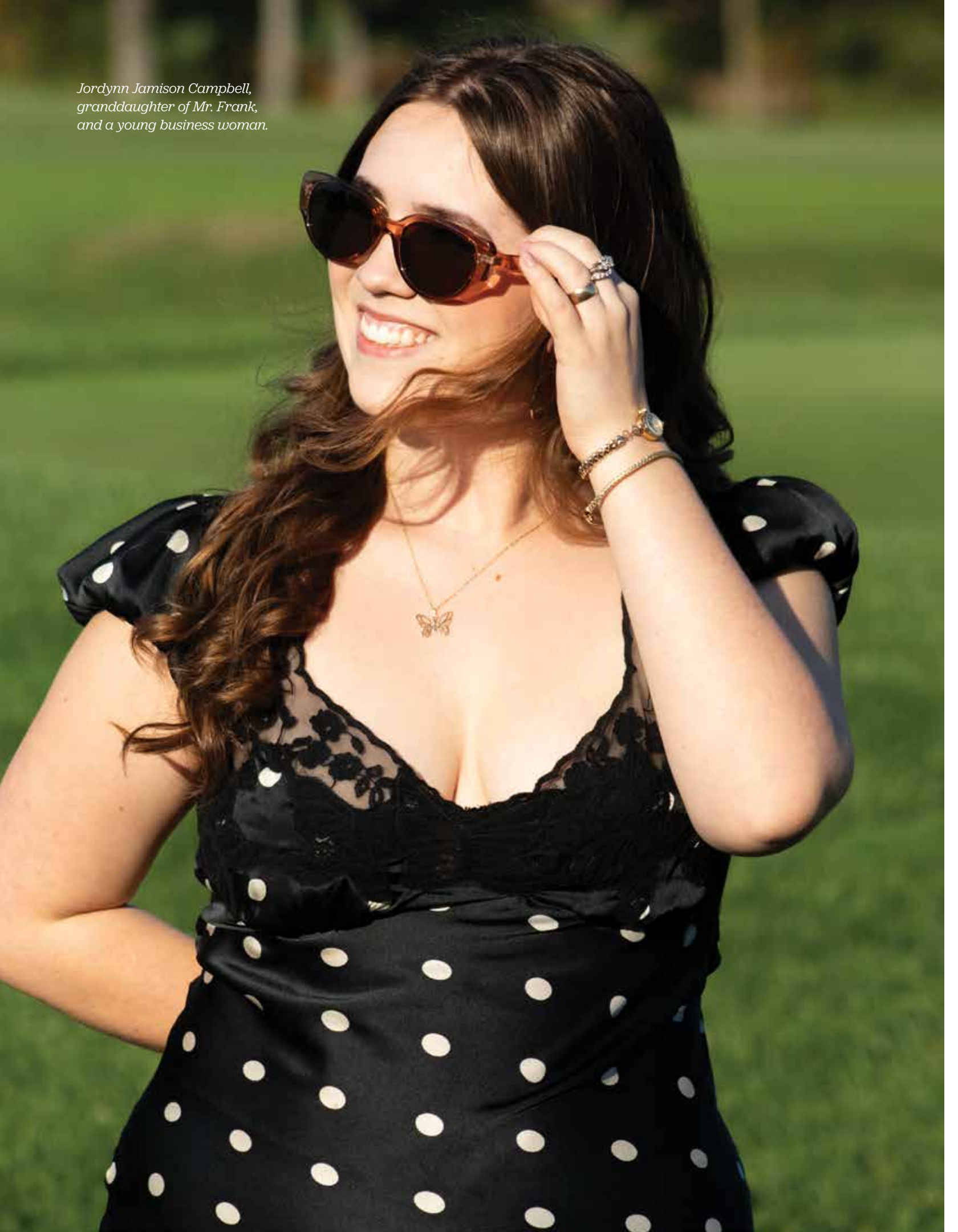
GK: What have you learned about the diversity of the use of your products in the private golf industry so far?

LPR: I find the creativity to be the most fascinating aspect. For instance, Chef Gerard Clinton from Aspetuck Valley Country Club in Weston, Connecticut, recently created a dish using three types of seafood and four different seasonings, which was remarkable. Additionally, during the GK Golf Bar program at Westhampton Country Club, I was impressed by how the mixologists creatively incorporated our blends into their cocktails. The most significant takeaway for me is not just the level of skill, expertise, and passion exhibited by people in the club business, but simply put, the artistic creativity they bring to their work.

GK: Tell us about your work with the American Culinary Foundation.

LPR: The American Culinary Federation (ACF) is a professional organization for chefs and cooks that promotes the professional image of American chefs worldwide through education, certification, and other resources. I have been networking with and becoming friends with many of the ACF Chefs the past few years, whom I got to meet when I attended the big ACF

Besides being a successful restauranteur, Mr. Frank Postl was a skilled, old-world woodcarver by trade from Austria.



Jordynn Jamison Campbell, granddaughter of Mr. Frank, and a young business woman.

convention in Las Vegas this past July. It was also my greatest honor to have Mr. Frank's Kitchen sponsor the seasonings for the "Chef's Freedom Challenge," which is a culinary competition featuring military chefs from various branches of the US Armed Forces, held annually at the ACF National Convention. It's a mystery basket style competition where chefs showcase their skills and creativity, often raising funds for military charities and supporting the ACF Culinary Team USA.

I recently became a national member of the ACF, which will also enable Mr. Frank's Kitchen to be more involved and support the ACF on a significantly larger scale, for which I am incredibly proud.

GK: Can you tell us about the K-12 program? Do you see an opportunity to create culinary education initiatives in clubs, such as kids' cooking classes or programs for young cooks?

LPR: Absolutely! We are making significant progress in K-12 nationally by focusing on better school nutrition, which makes me immensely proud. We are collaborating with K-12 chefs and nutritionists who use our seasonings in their cooking, but we also plan to set up flavor stations in schools. These stations will feature condiments like mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, and barbecue sauce, alongside our seasonings. Kids will be able to mix and match to create a spicy ketchup or seasoned aioli, fostering their creativity and helping them experience new flavors.

This mission to improve nutrition for our school kids is something I am deeply passionate about. I have witnessed firsthand, with my own children, how starting them early with flavor experimentation and cooking can spark their creativity. By encouraging kids to be open to new flavors and to experiment on their own, we can help them begin their culinary journey.

In the golf scene, a significant percentage of members have children, providing an opportunity to run a kids culinary school program during the summer. Kids could come in, work with the chefs, and experiment with flavors, creating items like French fries and dips. This would be a fantastic initiative for the clubs to offer members.

GK: From your perspective, how do you teach children about spices and flavors?

LPR: One of the most valuable lessons to impart on children from a young age is the importance of being open-minded and willing to try new things. Encouraging them to experiment independently is key. This approach fosters creativity, makes the process fun, and helps them develop a mindset that embraces experimentation. They must overcome the fear of trying unfamiliar flavors. We need to help children move past their initial hesitations, which often stem from a fear of the unknown. Giving kids the courage to say, "Hey, let's try this and have fun with it," is vital. I strongly feel that making learning enjoyable is essential. Even as adults, if we are not having fun while doing something, we are less likely to engage fully. Therefore, creating a fun environment ensures that kids not only learn but also enjoy the process.

> **"I've never been one to fear adversity. If you strongly believe in something, be confident and stand firm in your convictions."**

GK: As a woman leading a culinary brand, how have you been able to navigate the industry, and what is your advice for other female entrepreneurs?

LPR: Navigating the industry is about staying true to yourself. When you have a dream, a vision, or a legacy that you want to carry forward, it's essential to remain authentic. I don't concern myself with what others are doing, regardless of who they are. I focus on my vision, listen to my instincts, and consider myself my most significant competitor.

As a woman in the culinary world, it can be particularly challenging, but so is any worthy goal or aspiration, and I've never been one to fear adversity. If you strongly believe in something, be confident and stand firm in your convictions. Stay true to your dreams and trust your intuition.

On my journey, I have found people are quick to offer up negative comments – choose positivity. Only allow people to have a seat at your table if they truly deserve it—those who will support, encourage, listen to, and lift you up. I always say it takes a village to accomplish anything, and it takes that and more to bring a product or dream to life.

GK: What have been some of the most rewarding experiences you've had while developing Mr. Frank's Kitchen as an entrepreneur?

LPR: Many people get so focused on the end result that they forget to enjoy the journey. In my opinion, the journey is the most enjoyable part. Whether you're in the developmental stages, starting distribution, or embarking on any new venture, it's the connections you make along the way that form your "family." That aspect has been incredibly fulfilling for me and I have been very fortunate

to meet and have the wonderful people on my team at Mr. Frank's that I do.

I've also been amazed by the diversity in how our blends are being used. Initially, I thought they would only be used in the traditional cooking sense, however, seeing them also being used as condiments and beverage rims across a wide range of applications and cuisines has been one of the most exciting aspects for me.

GK: What advice do you have for other entrepreneurs interested in the spice industry?

LPR: I would say develop a solid business plan and expect costs to be 3x what you budgeted. Do not substitute quality for costs; find an exceptional co-packer; don't be afraid to ask for help and build your "village" of support early. Most importantly, every failure is an opportunity to learn, so expect dark days, but so long as that fire within you is burning brightly, never give up on yourself.

Also, there's no greater honor than being an inspiration to someone. Creating something meaningful takes a lot of effort, and when you have a platform or the ability to give back, I feel that you should. I made numerous mistakes along the way – as any new founder does- but personally, if I can help someone else avoid those missteps, especially another mom or female founder starting out, I find great personal fulfillment in that.

As you become more successful, I strongly believe that you have an increased responsibility to share your knowledge and expertise with others. When someone approaches you for guidance, make time for them. "Reaching back" is an essential part of leadership and being a good human, and can make a significant difference, especially to someone starting out. So, I would say to others that if you are given an opportunity to help another founder, do so.

GK: What are some of the trends you're seeing in the seasoning world right now, and how are you staying ahead of them?

LPR: I'm not a trend follower - never have been. I feel when you spend time listening to the noise of others that it clouds your vision and dims your instincts. Trends to me are much like diets - with a beginning and an end. I have always been an independent thinker and unintentionally aimed to be authentic to myself, carving my own path in life. One that is consistent, scalable, and sustainable.

My focus is on innovation, creating unique flavor profiles, providing the best quality possible, delivering excellent customer service, and constantly evolving - both as an individual and as the CEO of my company. In short, I simply don't care about being "trendy." I care about being known for consistency and quality.

> **"I simply don't care about being trendy. I care about being known for consistency and quality."**

GK: What are your visions for the future of Mr. Frank's Kitchen? What's your dream?

LPR: While my dream is for Mr. Frank's Kitchen to become a household name, my biggest aspiration is to be able to give back. Mr. Frank's success will allow me to contribute to various causes that are important to me, whether that be supporting the military, feeding those in need, promoting education, helping children learn about nutrition and spices, or assisting women in business. I would also love to provide scholarships to women who want to start their own businesses.

I've been incredibly fortunate to have many wonderful people support me in my dreams and help me reach where I am today, despite the many hardships and challenges I've faced. Because of this, being able to do philanthropic work and give back is what truly brings me tremendous joy.

GK: In closing, do you have a final thought you could share with our readers?

LPR: I had so many people tell me how difficult it was to bring a product to market. Every great business started with a vision, so if you genuinely believe in something, DO IT! There's no greater regret than not having at least tried. The worst thing that can happen is failure, but at least you've made the effort.

I'd also say never to underestimate yourself. This has been the most challenging journey I've ever experienced. I've been knocked down more times than I can count. The mental strength and fortitude I've developed by getting back up each time have shown me who I truly am and what I am capable of achieving. The immense pride I feel when I see chefs around the world using my spices, or when I see my dad's face knowing he's in that kitchen, is truly the most fulfilling and rewarding feeling in the world. I know he's up there, proud as hell and smiling down on me.

Shay Kingston Campbell, grandson of Mr. Frank and an aspiring golfer.

Seared Yellowfin Tuna

Featuring Mr. Frank's Kitchen Seasonings

recipe by Gerard Clinton

Serves: 6

Ingredients

Seared Yellowfin Tuna (Mr. Frank's Kitchen Tropical Sriracha Crust)

- 1 x 5-ounce Yellowfin Tuna Block (sushi-grade)
- 1½ teaspoons Mr. Frank's Kitchen Tropical Sriracha Seasoning
- ½ teaspoon Sea Salt or Maldon Salt
- Neutral Oil (for searing, e.g., grapeseed or rice bran)

Homemade Furikake with Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha
Yield: ½ cup

- 2 Tablespoons White Sesame Seeds (toasted)
- 2 Tablespoons Black Sesame Seeds (toasted)
- 1 sheet Nori (finely shredded or crushed)
- 1 teaspoon Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha Seasoning
- ½ teaspoon Sugar
- ¼ teaspoon Flaky Sea Salt

Mango-Passionfruit Coconut Espuma
Yield: 1 quart

- 240 grams Mango Purée
- 80 grams Passionfruit Purée
- 160 grams Full-fat Coconut Milk
- 4 grams ProEspuma Cold (1% of total weight)
- 3 teaspoons Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha Seasoning
- 2 teaspoons Lime Juice (freshly squeezed)
- 2 pinches Kosher Salt (to taste)
- 1 Tablespoon Agave

Compressed Summer Melon

- 1 ea. Summer Melon (cut into six cubes)
- 1 Tablespoon Mr. Frank's Kitchen Original Seasoning

Sesame Kewpie

- 3 Tablespoons Kewpie Mayo
- 1 Tablespoon Toasted Sesame Oil

Ginger Soy Glaze

- 3 Tablespoons Soy Sauce
- 1 Tablespoon Honey
- 1 Tablespoon Ginger (grated)

Preparation

Seared Yellowfin Tuna (with Mr. Frank's Kitchen Tropical Sriracha Crust)
Pat the tuna dry and lightly coat with oil. Sprinkle Mr. Frank's Kitchen Tropical Sriracha Seasoning evenly on all sides. Add a pinch of sea salt. In a smoking-hot pan, sear each side for 5-7 seconds to form a crust while keeping the interior rare. Let the tuna rest for 2 minutes, then slice into clean ½inch slices.

Homemade Furikake (with Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha)
Toast the sesame seeds in a dry pan if not already toasted. Crush or finely shred the nori sheet into flakes. Mix all ingredients in a small bowl. Store in an airtight container. ***Chef Note****: Use with tuna, rice, or vegetable dishes as a garnish.*

Mango-Passionfruit Coconut Espuma
Combine all the ingredients in a high-speed blender and blend until entirely smooth. Strain the mixture through a fine mesh sieve or chinois to remove pulp or solids. Pour into a 1-quart (1 liter) iSi siphon. Charge with 1 C2 O cartridge, shaking well after each charge. Chill the siphon for at least 1 hour before serving to hydrate the ProEspuma fully. ***Chef Note:*** *The mixture should be pourable, like light yogurt.* Adjust acidity and sweetness as needed based on your fruit purées.

Compressed Summer Melon
Season the cubed melon with Mr. Frank's Kitchen Original Seasoning. Place it into a bag and compress it.

Sesame Kewpie
Mix both ingredients, place in a squeeze bottle.

Ginger Soy Glaze
Mix all the ingredients to a smooth consistency.

Assembly

In 6 decorative spoons, dispense the Espuma, and place the compressed melon on top. Layer the sliced tuna over the melon. Brush with the ginger soy glaze. Sprinkle each with Furikake. Place a dot of sesame aioli on top.

Serve immediately.

Chilled Summer Melon Soup

Featuring Mr. Frank's Kitchen Seasonings

Recipe by Gerard Clinton

Serves: 4

Ingredients

Goat Cheese Panna Cotta

- 250 grams Goat Cheese (fresh)
- 200 grams Heavy Cream
- 100 grams Whole Milk
- 15 grams Pronto Powder (1% of total liquid weight)
- 6 grams Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha Seasoning
- ½ teaspoon Kosher Salt

Melon Soup (Top Layer)

- 400 grams Cantaloupe or Honeydew (ripe)
- 100 grams Orange Blossom Water
- 1 teaspoon Lime Juice
- 1 teaspoon Lime Zest
- 1 teaspoon Ginger (freshly chopped)
- Pinch of Salt
- 3 Mint Leaves

Compressed Melon Garnish

- Diced Melon (watermelon, cantaloupe, or honeydew)
- Mr. Frank's Kitchen Tropical Sriracha Seasoning
- Agave

Final Garnishes

- Compressed Melon
- Goat Cheese Crumbles
- Pumpkin Seeds (toasted)
- Microgreens (shiso, basil, or mint)

Preparation

Goat Cheese Panna Cotta

Gently warm the cream and milk. Whisk in goat cheese until smooth and entirely melted. Blend the Pronto powder, Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha Seasoning, and salt. Strain and pour into bowls. Chill for at least 2-4 hours until fully set.

Melon Soup (Top Layer)

Blend all the ingredients until smooth and strain through a fine mesh sieve. Chill thoroughly. Once the goat cheese base is set, pour the soup gently on top just before plating.

Compressed Melon Garnish

Vacuum-seal the diced melon with Mr. Frank's Kitchen Tropical Sriracha Seasoning and Agave syrup. Chill for 30-60 minutes before use.

Assembly

Float the soup on top of the goat cheese. Garnish with three cubed melon pieces spread out. Sprinkle gently with the goat cheese crumbles, pumpkin seeds, and the microgreens.

Serves: 6

Ingredients

Sous Vide Pork Belly

- 2 pounds (900 g) Pork Belly (skin on or off, you choice)
- 2 teaspoons Kosher Salt
- 1 teaspoon Black Pepper
- 2 Tablespoons Brown Sugar(optional, for a caramelized flavor)
- 2 cloves Garlic (smashed)
- 2 sprigs fresh Thyme (or ½teaspoon dried)
- 1 Tablespoon Soy Sauce
- 1 Tablespoon Rice Vinegar or Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon Neutral Oil (for searing)
- 3 Tablespoons Mr. Frank's Kitchen Garden Sriracha Seasoning
- 3 Tablespoons Mr. Frank's KitchenTropical Sriracha Seasoning

Warm Kimchi Slaw

- 1 cup Kimchi (chopped, with a few tablespoons of juice reserved)
- 2 cups Napa Cabbage (thinly sliced)
- ½ cup Carrots (julienned)
- ½½cup Scallions (sliced)
- 1 Tablespoon Sesame Oil
- 1 Tablespoon Vegetable Oil (or neutral oil)
- 1 clove Garlic (minced)
- 1 teaspoon Ginger (grated)
- 1 Tablesppon Gochujang
- 1 Tablespoon Rice Vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Soy Sauce
- 1 teaspoon Honey or Sugar (to balance acidity)
- Sesame Seeds (toasted)
- Cilantro or Scallion Greens

Coconut Okinawan Sweet Potato Purée

- 2 pounds Okinawa Sweet Potatoes (purple variety, peeled and cut into chunks)
- 1 cup Thai Coconut Milk
- 2 Tablespoon Unsalted Butter (or coconut oil for dairy-free)½
- ½ teaspoon Sea Salt (to taste)
- 1-2 teaspoons Lime Juice (optional, for brightness)
- 1 Tablespoon Honey, Maple Syrup, or Palm Sugar (optional, for balance)

Balsamic Soy Reduction

Yield: About ½ cup

- 1 cup Balsamic Vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons Soy Sauce
- 2 Tablespoons Brown Sugar (or honey for a lighter flavor)
- 1 teaspoon Garlic (minced, optional but adds depth)
- ½ teaspoon Black Pepper (freshly cracked)

Preparation

Pork Belly

Pat the pork belly dry. Season evenly with salt, pepper, and brown sugar. Place in a vacuum-seal or freezer bag with garlic, thyme, soy sauce, and vinegar. Seal the bag (vacuum or water displacement method).

Sous Vide the Pork Belly

Set sous vide bath to 165°F (74°C) for tender, pull-apart texture (or 155°F / 68°C for firmer, sliceable texture.) Submerge sealed pork belly and cook for 10 hours. Chill (optional but recommended) After cooking, remove the pork belly from the bag and save the juices. ***Chef Note:*** *Juices will be used as the base for the balsamic-soy reduction.* Let it cool slightly, then refrigerate or overnight, this firms it up for easier slicing and a crispier sear. Mix Mr. Frank's Kitchen Sriracha Seasonings and crust the pork belly before searing. Sear in a hot cast iron pan, allowing the fat to render slowly and the spices to caramelize. Rest, slice and serve.

Warm Kimchi Slaw

Heat the pan in a large sauté pan or wok, heat sesame and vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and ginger; cook for 30 seconds until fragrant. Stir in the chopped Kimchiand cook for 2-3 minutes, letting it caramelize slightly. Add napa cabbage and carrots, sauté 2-3 minutes until just wilted but still crisp. Stir in gochujang, soy sauce, vinegar, honey, and a spoonful of kimchi juice. Toss well to coat. Remove from heat, mix in scallions, and taste; adjust with more vinegar or honey if needed. Top with sesame seeds and cilantro or scallion greens.

Coconut Okinawan Sweet Potato Purée

Place the peeled, chopped Okinawan sweet potatoes in a pot of cold salted water. Bring to a boil and cook until fork tender, about 20-25 minutes. Drain well and let steam off for 2-3 minutes to remove excess moisture. Blend or mash. Transfer to a blender or food processor. Add coconut milk, butter, and salt. Purée until smooth and velvety. You can adjust the texture with more coconut milk if needed. Finish and balance Taste and adjust seasoning: add lime juice for a hint of acidity or a touch of honey for roundness. For ultra-smooth texture, pass through a fine mesh sieve or chinois. Keep warm before serving or reheat gently with a splash of coconut milk.

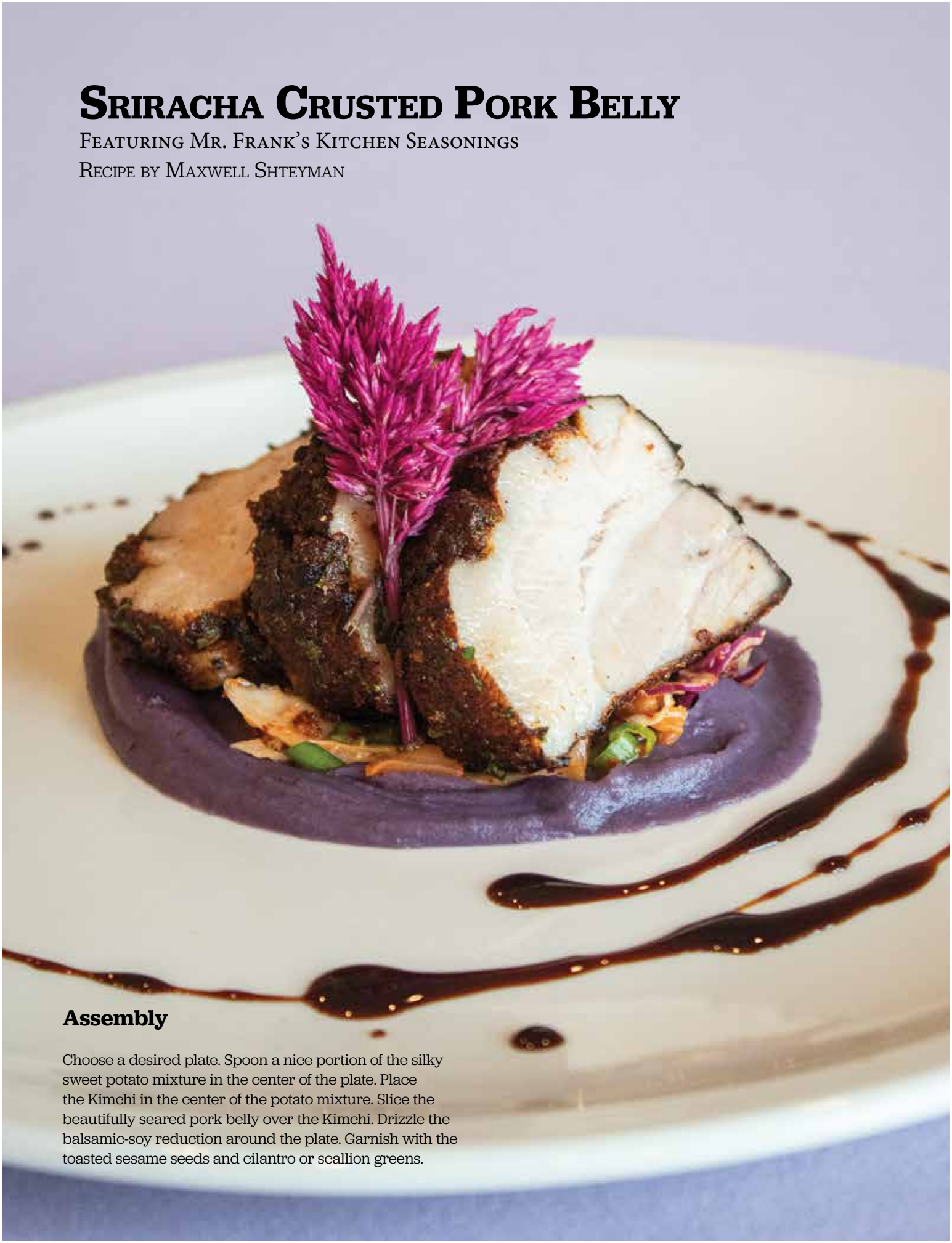
Balsamic Soy Reduction

In a small saucepan, combine the balsamic vinegar, soy sauce, brown sugar (or honey), garlic, and pepper. Bring to a gentle boil over medium heat, then reduce to a low simmer. Let simmer for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce has reduced by about half and coats the back of a spoon. Strain. Let cool before using. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Warm gently before use.

Sriracha Crusted Pork Belly

Featuring Mr. Frank's Kitchen Seasonings

Recipe by Maxwell Shteyman



Assembly

Choose a desired plate. Spoon a nice portion of the silky sweet potato mixture in the center of the plate. Place the Kimchi in the center of the potato mixture. Slice the beautifully seared pork belly over the Kimchi. Drizzle the balsamic-soy reduction around the plate. Garnish with the toasted sesame seeds and cilantro or scallion greens.

Smoky Duck Meatballs

Featuring Mr. Frank's Kitchen Seasonings

recipe by Maxwell Shteyman

Yields: 16 meatballs.

Ingredients

Meatballs

- 1 pound Jurgiielewicz & Son Duck Meat (finely ground)
- 6 ounce Slab Bacon (ground)
- 1 large Egg
- ½½cup fresh Breadcrumbs (panko or soft white)
- ¼ cup grated Aged Cheddar (optional, adds umami for richness)
- 2 Tablespoons Shallots (finely minced)
- 2 cloves Garlic (minced)
- 1 Tablespoon fresh Thyme Leaves (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 1 Tablespoon Parsley (chopped)
- 1 teaspoon Smoked Paprika
- 1 teaspoon Mr. Frank's Kitchen Mediterranean Seasoning
- ½ teaspoon Black Pepper (cracked)
- ½ teaspoon Kosher Salt (adjust to taste–bacon adds saltiness)
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons Milk or Cream (to moisten the mix)

For Cooking

- 1 Tablespoon Olive Oil or Duck Fat
- 1 teaspoon Honey or Maple Syrup

Pimento Cheese White Corn Grits

- 1 cup White Stone-ground Corn Grits
- 4 cups Water (or 2 cups water + 2 cups milk for creamier texture)
- 1 teaspoon Kosher Salt (plus more to taste)
- 2 Tablespoons Unsalted Butter
- ½ cup Heavy Cream (optional for richness)
- 1 cup Sharp Cheddar Cheese (shredded)
- ¼½cup Cream Cheese
- ¼ cup cooked Bacon (chopped)
- ¼ cup Corn (grilled)
- ¼ cup Pimentos (diced, drained or use roasted red peppers finely chopped)
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire Sauce (optional, for depth)
- ½ teaspoon Smoked Paprika (or hot sauce, to taste)
- Black Pepper, freshly cracked, to taste)
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Hominy Guajillo Broth

Yield: 2 quarts

- 6 dried Guajillo Chiles (stemmed and seeded)
- 1 to 2 dried Ancho Chiles
- 1 small White Onion (quartered)
- 4 cloves Garlic (smashed)
- 2 Tablespoon Tomato Paste
- 6 cups Chicken or Vegetable Stock
- 1 ½ cups cooked Hominy (drained and rinsed)
- 1 teaspoon ground Cumin
- 1 teaspoon Smoked Paprika
- 1 Tablespoon Lime Juice
- Salt (to taste)
- Oil (for toasting)

Preparation

Meatballs

In a large bowl, combine duck, bacon, shallots, garlic, breadcrumbs, aged cheddar, thyme, parsley, paprika, Mr. Frank's Kitchen Mediterranean Seasoning, pepper, and salt. Add the egg and just enough milk to bind the mixture; it should hold together but not feel wet. Roll into 1 ½ inch balls (about 2 Tablespoons each). Chill for 15 minutes to firm up. Heat olive oil or duck fat in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Brown meatballs on all sides (about 6-8 minutes total). Transfer browned meatballs to a 375°F oven for 8-10 minutes until internal temp hits 160°F.

Pimento Cheese White Corn Grits

In a medium saucepan, bring the water (or water + milk) and salt to a boil. Gradually whisk in the grits to prevent clumping. Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring frequently, until thick and tender – about 25-30 minutes for stone-ground grits. Stir in butter and heavy cream until smooth and creamy. Reduce heat to very low. Stir in cheddar, cream cheese, and pimentos until melted and fully incorporated. Add Worcestershire and smoked paprika (or a dash of hot sauce). Taste and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper and paprika.

Hominy Guajillo Broth

Heat a dry skillet over medium. Toast guajillo chiles on both sides for about 30 seconds until fragrant. ***Chef Note:*** *Do not burn.* Transfer to a bowl and cover with hot water to soften (10-15 minutes). In a pot, heat 1-2 Tablespoons oil. Add onion and garlic; cook until lightly golden. Add tomato paste and cook for 1-2 minutes to caramelize slightly. Drain the softened chiles and place them in a blender with the sautéed onion mixture, 2 cups of stock, cumin, and paprika. Blend until smooth. Strain the blended mixture into a clean pot (for a silky broth). Add remaining stock and the cooked hominy. Simmer gently for 20-25 minutes. Add lime juice and adjust salt to taste.

Assembly

Choose a long rectangle plate. Put a 3 small spoons of grits in the middle of the plate. Place a meatball on each point of the grits. Spoon a small amount of broth over each meatball. Top with the chopped vegetable jardiniere (store bought).

Image: Mr. Frank's Kitchen Mediterranean Seasoning.
By Jordynn Jamison Campbell.

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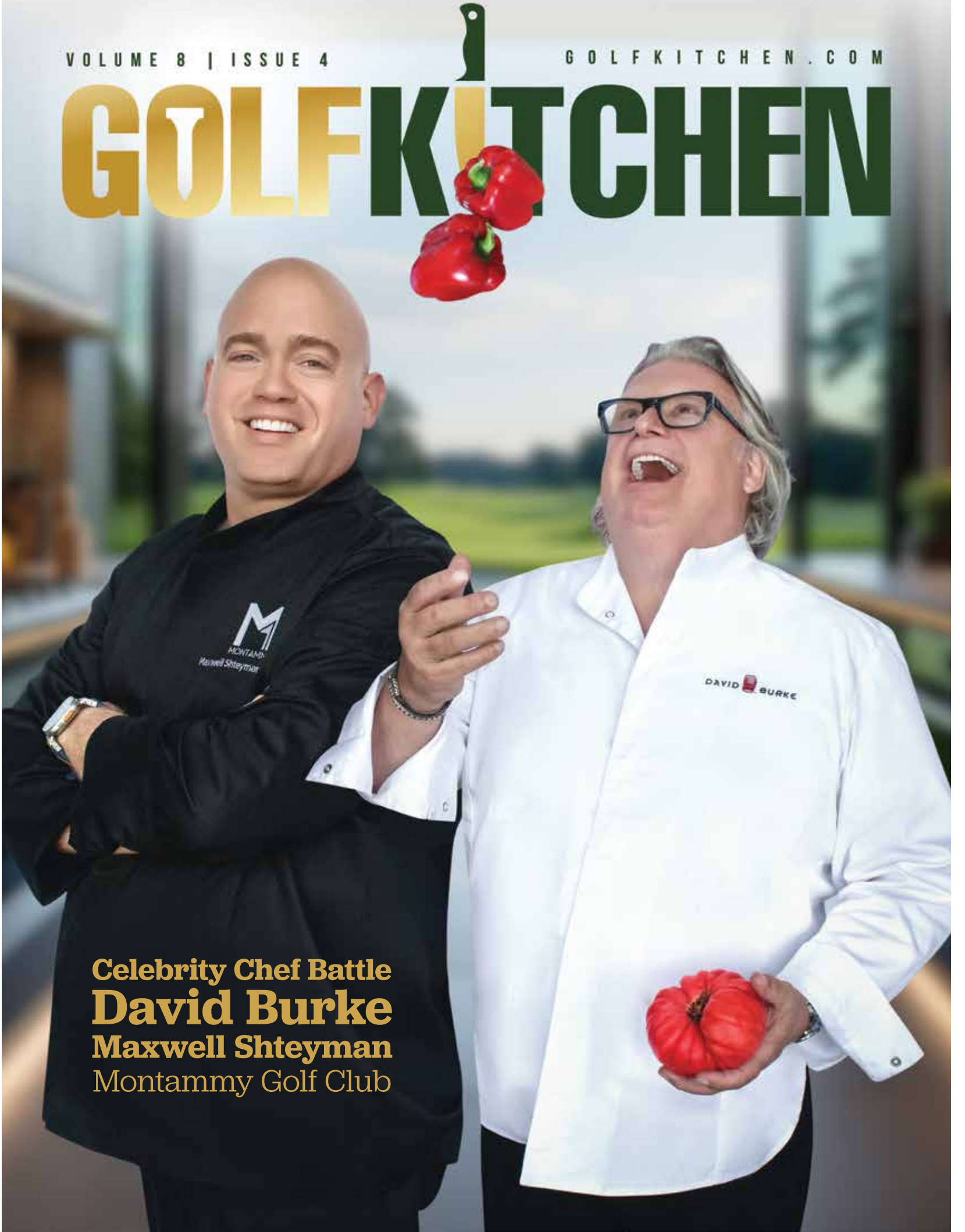

Celebrity Chef Battle

David Burke

Maxwell Shteyman

Montammy Golf Club