

Sizzling on screen



Rick Ameil, owner of Grill-A-Burger restaurant in Palm Springs, is hosting his new cooking show "I Love Cooking" which is filmed at his Cathedral City home.

ILLUSTRATION BY KRIS DALE FROM PHOTO BY MARILYN CHUNG, THE DESERT SUN

Area man gets his own cooking show

BY RICHARD GUZMÁN
THE DESERT SUN

Rick Ameil long ago found the love of his life.

He is surrounded by it, with hundreds of books that talk about it.

He does it for friends, for fun and for a living, and now he will do it on TV, too.

"I want to get things back to the way things used to be and ignite interest and enthusiasm for cooking at home," he said from his spacious kitchen, which will serve as the set for "I Love Cooking," a local cooking show scheduled to premiere Saturday on KPSE channel 13.

"I'll be (preparing) easy-to-follow recipes that are really good and really simple," he said.

Filmed in his Cathedral City home, the 30-minute show will run every Saturday and join four other locally produced shows on the network station.

"The host has tons of personality, tons of talent and it shows our local community," said Tony Williams, vice president of sales for KPSE.

Ameil, who co-owns the Grill-A-Burger restaurant in Palm Springs, has long had his heart in cooking, and his eye on television.

Author of the book "Cooking With the Stars," Ameil owned and operated restaurants in San Francisco and Honolulu, opening the restaurant in Palm Springs in 2005.

Ameil then decided that he wanted to take his cooking skills from the pages of a book and the kitchen of his restaurant to the screen.

"I submitted some audition tapes to Top-Chef and the Food Network," he said.

Those auditions didn't get him on cable, but they got him thinking about doing it locally.

Please see TV SHOW, F2

Watch the show Show airs: 4:30 p.m. Saturdays on KPSE Channel 13.



TV SHOW: Cathedral City cook takes to TV

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He pitched the idea for the show and a theme familiar to many valley residents.

"The Food Network and cooking show are very popular. We are electing to do a show produced by a local because it'll create a local buzz," Williams said.

"I grew up with 'I Love Lucy' and I loved the theme song, so we're using the theme song," Ameil said.

The 12 scheduled episodes focus on various themes, such as cooking a romantic dinner, comfort food, a poolside barbecue, elegant dinner parties and Chinese take-out at home.

Although the show will be seen only locally, Ameil and Williams said that with the backing of a network channel, success here could lead to a broader audience.

"If it works, we'll pitch it nationally," Ameil said.

Like the Food Network's "Emeril Live" show, in which the chef's "Bam" catchphrase has become a crowd favorite, Ameil may also become known for his own catchphrase.

"I say 'yum' a lot. So that must be my thing," he said.

Meanwhile, here are a few of Rick Ameil's favorite recipes.

Mom's Pot Roast with Vegetables

Serves 4

4-pound boneless chuck roast, rolled and tied
Salt and pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 onions, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
¾ cup canned crushed tomatoes
¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon firmly packed brown sugar
1 bay leaf
1½ cups water
1 pound carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch thick slices
1 pound small red potatoes, peeled
1½ tablespoons cornstarch dissolved in 1½ tablespoons cold water
Flat leaf parsley, coarsely chopped for garnish

Instructions: Preheat oven to

350 degrees.

Pat beef dry and season with salt and pepper on all sides.

In a large, heavy flameproof casserole heat oil over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking and brown meat on both sides. Transfer beef to a plate.

Add onions and garlic to casserole and sauté until onions are golden. Stir in tomatoes, vinegar, brown sugar, bay leaf and water and bring to a boil.

Return beef to casserole. Cover and braise beef in oven 1 hour. Add carrots, cover, and braise 30 minutes. Add potatoes, cover, and braise 30 minutes more, or until beef and vegetables are tender.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer beef to a cutting board and let stand 10 to 15 minutes. Remove carrots and potatoes from casserole and keep warm in oven.

Strain juices and return to casserole. Bring juices to a full boil. Add cornstarch mixture, stirring constantly, to thicken gravy. Simmer gravy 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Slice beef and place on platter with carrots and potatoes. Garnish with chopped flat leaf parsley. Serve gravy on the side.

My Big Fat Greek Linguine

Serves 4

¼ cup olive oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 pound uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 8-ounce package of frozen artichoke hearts, thawed and halved lengthwise
1½ cups crumbled feta cheese (about 6 ounces)
½ cup chopped seeded tomatoes
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh oregano

Instructions: Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water until tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally.

While pasta is cooking, heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and sauté 30 seconds. Add shrimp and sauté 2 minutes. Add artichoke hearts, feta, tomatoes,

lemon juice, parsley, and oregano; sauté until shrimp are just opaque in center, about 2 minutes longer. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.

Drain pasta and transfer to large bowl. Add shrimp minute to pasta and toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Salmon Dijonnaise

Serves 4

1½ cups dry white wine
¼ cup bottled clam juice
½ cups shallots, thinly sliced
2 sprigs fresh tarragon
1 garlic clove, smashed
1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon black peppercorns
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
4 4-ounce salmon filets, skins removed
½ cup heavy cream
4 tablespoons cold unsalted butter thinly sliced
1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
1 tablespoon country-style Dijon mustard

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine first 8 ingredients in a large sauté pan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes.

Add salmon filets to wine mixture, cover, and place in oven; poach 10 minutes.

Remove salmon from pan; keep warm while you prepare sauce.

Boil poaching liquid 5 minutes, or until reduced by half. Add cream and boil 3 minutes, or until thick bubbles appear. Reduce heat to low.

Whisk in cold butter, one piece at a time. As each melts, add another, stirring constantly. Strain the sauce, stir in tarragon and mustard, and serve over salmon.

Country Apple Tart

Serves 4-6

Pastry:

1¼ cups all purpose flour
¾ teaspoon grated lemon peel
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) well-chilled unsalted butter, cut into 12 pieces
3½ tablespoons cold water
1½ teaspoons fresh lemon juice

2 8-ounce Golden Delicious apples, peeled and cored

1 8-ounce Granny Smith apple, peeled and cored

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

2 teaspoons Calvados or other brandy

¼ cup sugar

½ teaspoon nutmeg

¼ teaspoon cinnamon

3 tablespoons chilled unsalted butter

Powdered sugar

Instructions: For pastry: Blend flour, lemon peel and salt in food processor. Add butter and cut in using on/off turns until mixture resembles coarse meal. Combine cold water and lemon juice. With machine running, pour through feed tube and process until dough begins to gather together. Gather dough into ball; flatten into disk. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate 30 minutes. (Dough can be prepared 1 day ahead. Store in refrigerator).

For filling: Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 425 degrees. Cut apples into ¼-inch-slices. Toss with lemon juice and Calvados in large bowl. Combine ¼ cup sugar, nutmeg and cinnamon in a small bowl.

Roll dough out on lightly floured surface to 13-inch round (do not trim edges). Transfer to a large baking sheet.

Patch any tears in pastry by pressing together with fingers. Place apples on pastry, mounding slightly in center and leaving 2-inch border of pastry all around. Sprinkle apples with sugar mixture. Dot with butter. Fold pastry border in over apple filling.

Bake tart 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 375 degrees and bake until pastry is golden brown and filling bubbles, about 35 minutes. Using 2 spatulas, carefully transfer tart to rack. Cool slightly. Dust pastry edges liberally with powdered sugar. (Can be prepared 6 hours ahead). Serve apple tart warm or at room temperature.

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HELLO GRILL, NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN



BARBECUE PHOTO COURTESY OF STOCK XCHNG

LUIS OCHOA THE DESERT SUN

Just because summer's over, there's no need to skip your favorite barbecue

BY RICHARD GUZMÁN
THE DESERT SUN

With the end of the summer comes the end of a favorite summer pastime of backyard barbecuing.

But while most of the country is putting away the barbecues and getting ready for a frosty winter, here in the desert, the grilling continues.

"You can go on cooking here just about every day of the year and you can do so much," says Cathedral City resident Rick Ameil.

As host of the "I Love Cooking Show," which airs Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. on KPSE Channel 13, Ameil has dedicated a few episodes to barbecuing and he does it at home about three nights a week.

The opportunity to grill through the winter is here, so to take advantage of it The Desert Sun has compiled a few recipes and barbecuing tips from Ameil as well as recommendations on which grills to buy from Bradley Ellis, general manager of Leisure Max in Palm Desert.

- More barbecue recipes from Rick Ameil, PAGE D2
- Safety tips on grilling, PAGE D2

Choosing a grill

Not much is going to get made without a place to make it.

It's important to have a grill with a rotisserie back burner, an infrared burner that is good for searing meats and helps eliminate flame-ups, says Bradley Ellis, general manager of Leisure Max in Palm Desert.

Also, look for a barbecue made of stainless steel, which will last longer.

Ellis recommends these barbecues, which cover the gamut from beginner to experienced outdoor chef.

Cal Flame Chef 300



This free-standing grill is good for smaller yards and includes a walk-up bar area. It comes with an rotisserie and infrared burner for about \$2,500.

Cal Flame Bistro 100



This is an entry-level barbecue for those willing to start getting serious about their grills. You can bake and grill with this one and it has accessories such as griddle tray, for cooking fish for about \$1,900.

Twin Eagle Extreme



For those who want to spend a little less, there is the \$999 Extreme grill. It's free-standing and comes with the rotisserie backburner and built-in smokers.

Tuscan-Style Porterhouse Steak

Serves 8

- 4 Porterhouse or T-bone steaks, 1½ inches thick
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided use
- ¼ cup garlic, minced
- 4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons fresh rosemary leaves, minced
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice

Instructions: Preheat gas grill to high; leave one burner off. If you are using a charcoal grill, build a fire and let it burn down until the coals are glowing red with a light coating of white ash. Spread the coals in an even bed on one side of the grill. Clean the cooking grate.

Brush the steaks with a bit of the olive oil and season generously with the garlic, salt, pepper and rosemary.

Grill steaks over direct heat until marked, about 2 minutes on each side. Move the steaks to the cooler part of the grill and continue to grill over indirect medium heat until medium-rare, another 6 to 7 minutes on each side.

Transfer the meat to a cutting board or a large platter. Drizzle each of the steaks with 2 teaspoons more olive oil and finish by sprinkling the steaks with lemon juice.

Let the steaks rest for about 10 to 15 minutes before carving into slices.

GRILLING: Fall grilling is a cool dinner treat

Continued from D1

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Grilled Chicken Kabobs with Lemon and Thyme

Serves 4

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 small shallot, minced
2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest

½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

4 large, boneless, skinless, chicken breast halves

2 lemons, each cut into 4 wedges

Instructions: In medium bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, thyme, garlic, lemon zest, salt and pepper. Place in large re-sealable plastic food storage bag.

Using a fork, pierce each chicken breast several times to help marinade penetrate. Cut each chicken breast into about 8 large chunks. Place chicken in marinade in plastic bag; toss to coat thoroughly. Refrigerate for about an hour.

Preheat grill. Thread chicken onto skewers (if using bamboo skewers, soak for 30 minutes in water first to prevent burning) with lemon wedges.

Grill kabobs over medium hot fire for about 8 to 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through, turning once.

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New Mexico Grilled Pork Tenderloin

Serves 6

3 pounds pork tenderloins
New Mexico Dry Rub (Recipe follows)

1 cup pomegranate juice

¼ cup molasses

¼ cup sherry vinegar

Olive oil, as needed

Instructions: Blot the tenderloins dry with paper towels. Sprinkle all sides of the tenderloins evenly with some of the dry



Watch the grill



View video of one of our best local chefs, Rick Amell, teaching you grill basics online at thedesertsun.com

Preparation safety tips:

- Be sure the grill is clean since old food particles can be a source of bacteria.
- Preheat gas grills at least 20 minutes.
- Hot air and steam accumulate inside a covered grill so open it slowly.
- Use baking soda to control small grease flare-ups. Use a fire extinguisher, sand or a water hose to put out bigger flames.

rub. Cover the tenderloins and refrigerate for at least 2 and up to 12 hours.

Preheat a gas grill to medium-high. If you are using a charcoal grill, build a fire and let it burn down until the coals are glowing red with a moderate coating of white ash. Spread the coals in an even bed. Clean the cooking grate.

While the grill is heating, make the mop: Simmer the pomegranate juice in a small saucepan over high heat until it reduces by half. Add the molasses and sherry vinegar, stir well, and bring to a simmer. Remove the mop from the heat and reserve 3 tablespoons to drizzle on the pork after it is cooked.

Brush the tenderloins with a little of the olive oil. Place the tenderloins on the grill and cook until the meat is marked on the first side, about 3 minutes. Turn carefully and brush the upper side of the tenderloins with some of the mop. Turn the tenderloins again when the second side is marked, about 3 minutes, and brush with the mop once again. Grill for another 8 to 9 minutes, covered, then turn once more and brush with mop again. Finish grilling on the second side, covered, until the pork is cooked, another 8 to 9 minutes.

Remove the tenderloins from the grill. Allow them to rest for 5 to 10 minutes before slicing. Place slices of the tenderloin on heated plates and drizzle the reserved mop over the pork slices and serve.

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New Mexico Dry Rub

1 tablespoon coriander seeds (or 2 teaspoons ground coriander)

1 tablespoon cumin seeds (or 2 teaspoons ground cumin)

6 tablespoons chili powder

1 tablespoon onion powder

2 teaspoons garlic powder

2 teaspoons dried Mexican oregano

2 teaspoons salt

½ teaspoons black peppercorns (or 1 teaspoon ground pepper)

Instructions: Heat a small sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the coriander and cumin seeds and toast, swirling the pan constantly, until the seeds give off a rich aroma, about 1 minute. Immediately transfer the seeds to a cool plate and allow to cool a few minutes.

Transfer the seeds to a mortar and pestle or a spice grinder. Add the chili powder, onion and garlic powder, oregano, salt, and pepper. Grind the spices to an even texture. The rub is ready to use now, or you can transfer it to a jar, cover it tightly, and keep it in a cool, dry cupboard or pantry for up to 1 month.

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Grilled Sweet Corn with Lime-Chili Butter

Serves 8

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

8 ears corn, shucked

2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

Lime-Chili Butter (Recipe follows)

Instructions: Preheat gas grill to medium-high. Leave one burner off. If you are using a charcoal

grill, build a fire and let it burn down until the coals are glowing red with a moderate coating of white ash. Push the coals to one side of the grill. Clean the cooking grate.

Lightly oil the corn and season with salt and pepper. Grill the corn, covered, over indirect heat, turning as necessary, until the corn kernels are soft and grill marked, about 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the corn from the grill. Serve immediately with the Lime-Chili Butter.

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Lime-Chili Butter

1 cup softened butter

3 tablespoons lime juice

1½ teaspoons dried oregano

1½ teaspoons chili powder

1½ teaspoons hot chili powder

1½ teaspoons sweet Hungarian paprika

¼ teaspoons ground cumin

¼ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

2 to 3 dashes Tabasco sauce

Pinch garlic powder

Pinch onion powder

Instructions: Blend all of the ingredients together in bowl. Serve with grilled corn. Butter can be stored in the refrigerator for 3 or 4 days or kept in the freezer for up to 3 weeks.

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Grilled Tropical Fruit Skewers

Serves 8

8 bamboo skewers, 10 inches long

2 mangos, peeled and seeded

2 small papayas, peeled and seeded

¼ pineapple, peeled and cored

8 strawberries

Instructions: Soak the skewers in cool water for 30 minutes.

Preheat a gas grill to medium. If you are using a charcoal grill, build a fire and let it burn down until the coals are glowing red with a moderate coating of white ash. Spread the coals in an even bed. Clean the cooking grate.

Cut the fruits into relatively equal-sized pieces. Thread the fruit onto the skewers, alternating them. Grill the fruit skewers, turning as necessary, until slightly charred and hot, about 6 to 8 minutes, depending on the ripeness of the fruit.

Serve the fruit skewers with a scoop of vanilla or buttermilk ice cream.

Source: Recipes from Rick Amell

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