

## Evening of food, music to benefit symphony

**By Linda Fradkin**

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Can't promise a live-and-in-person symphony, but you can expect the next best thing — the recordings of the Clear Lake Area Symphony — as background music at "A Rhapsody on a Theme By Great Chefs" taking place Sept. 21 at the Hilton Houston NASA Clear Lake Hotel Ballroom.

A magnificent way, indeed, to savor the gamut of courses produced by an ensemble of chefs, who are chiming in with their own personal compositions in order to raise funds for the 31-year-old musical group.

Wingstop, represented by Tina Madrid of the Bay Area Boulevard location, sets the evening in motion with her eatery's rendition of garlic parmesan and lemon pepper boneless wings. Madrid confides the flavorful fowl snacks have become one of the hottest celebration edibles in the area.

"It seems as though there's not a wedding, graduation — or in this case, benefit — that takes place that doesn't include a platter of our one our products."

In addition to touting the lemon pepper and garlic parmesan recipes, Madrid is an enthusiastic promoter of the chain's Hawaiian and Cajun wings.

Next up is a spinach salad with champagne raspberry vinaigrette, a leafy presentation thought up by Tamara Vogt of Grand Finale Catering. In addition to tossing together the salad course, she's taken over responsibility for the next course as well — roasted red bell pepper soup. The cateress also operates Mario's Flying Pizza Restaurant in Seabrook.

"I didn't plan on entering the catering field," Vogt said, "but I received so many requests from my customers at Mario's that I couldn't help but start Grand Finale as a spin-off of the restaurant business."

Nowadays, Vogt acknowledges she can barely fit in all the catering demands, like the recent weekend of catering aboard the 112-foot Lady Raye, which docks at Lakewood Yacht Club. The boat was afloat to transport dignitaries following the journey of the submarine USS Texas to Galveston.

There's an international element to the meal, as well, represented by the culinary works of Alex Salmassi of Portofino's Italiano Ristorante and Bar. The Kemah restaurateur, who grew up in the south of France, pursued a culinary career by studying hotel-restaurant management in Geneva, Switzerland, and continued his culinary studies at Cordon Bleu in France and the University of Nevada. Professional stints at restaurants in South Africa, France, Italy, New York and Tony's in Houston followed.

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"That's why I'll be serving smaller portions of three different pastas," Salmassi said, "a ravioli stuffed with lobster, a penne dish with homemade Italian sausages and bell peppers and a potato gnocchi with Mozzarella and pesto sauce."

The Hilton's Tony Gladamiro and Kourtne Tyson have taken on the task of the filet mignon entrée. Chef Arthur Thomas puts together an accompaniment for the steaks — twice baked potatoes that get their satisfyingly rich taste from a mixture of fontina cheese, artichoke hearts, horseradish and cream. Galvestonians may recognize Thomas from his days at the Tremont House; most recently, however, he has presided over the kitchen at Star Fleet Yachts, where party-givers can look forward to a sailing version of any wedding or corporate party they plan.

Rounding out the entrée course — a carrot soufflé contributed by Brent Feibelman, general manger of Tommy's Seafood/Steakhouse.

Still have room for dessert? Of course, since the last course is who-could-say-no-to rendition of Italian cream cake, the masterwork of Nadia deTomaso of Specialty Cakes.

The festivities continue if you bid on a silent auction prize like the penthouse suite at the Hilton, where dinner for eight will be served, or Haak Winery tours and wine tasting for 25.

To make reservations, contact Sherrrie Matula, 281-486-0224 or e-mail [slmatula\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:slmatula(at)hotmail.com).

WHAT: "A Rhapsody on a Theme by Great Chefs"

WHEN: 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sept. 21

WHERE: Hilton Houston NASA Clear Lake Hotel Ball Room

COST: \$60 per person

DETAILS: Proceeds benefit the Clear Lake Symphony Scholarship Fund

ON THE WEB: [www.clearlakesymphony.org](http://www.clearlakesymphony.org)

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#### Carrot Soufflé

2 pounds peeled carrots 1 1/4 cups sugar 1/4 cup flour 2 teaspoon baking powder 2 teaspoon vanilla extract 3/4 cup margarine 4 eggs Nutmeg Cinnamon Powdered sugar

Steam or boil carrots until extra soft. Drain well. While carrots are warm, add sugar, baking powder and vanilla extract. Whip with mixer until smooth. Add spices to flour; add flour mixture to carrot mixture. Whip well. Whip eggs and blend with carrot mixture. Add softened margarine and blend with carrot mixture. Pour mixture into greased baking dish — fill about half full as soufflé will rise. Bake in 350 F oven about 1 hour or until top is a light golden brown. Sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar over top before serving.

— Recipe courtesy of Miriam Tollett, Tommy's Seafood/Steakhouse

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