

New restaurant part of reno at George Brown College

TORONTO—From butchery to baking in the kitchen, and wine service at the front of the house, culinary and hospitality students at George Brown College get practical experience in all facets of working in a restaurant at The Chefs' House.

Working under the direction of chef de cuisine Oliver Li, they are learning to operate a restaurant kitchen at lunch and dinner, and other dayparts may be added in the future.

"From the contemporary design and layout of the restaurant, to the full week's worth of programming we make available to students and the public, we're hoping to train the next generation of chefs and restaurant owners using a newer, more elevated industry standard," says John Walker, dean of the George Brown College Centre for Hospitality & Culinary Arts.

"The training is intense and the hours can be long for a school program. But upon graduation, our students will be ready for any role given to them in the workplace," says John Higgins, director of the George Brown Chef School.

The new restaurant opened last month in a brownstone building on King Street East and Frederick Street, a block south the Centre for Hospitality & Culinary Arts. It replaced the teaching restaurant that was shut down when the centre underwent a recently completed \$20-million renovation.

With an open kitchen taking up the majority of space at the 70-seat restaurant, diners get a clear view of their meals being prepared. Just to make sure they don't miss anything, there are flat screen monitors positioned throughout the dining room to give a close-up look at the action in the kitchen. Monitors in the restaurant windows show the same action to people passersby outside.

The Chefs' House has been designed as more than a restaurant. The college defines it as "an urban culinary retreat; a contemporary space that profiles and celebrates the bounty of locally grown food products and pays homage to the local and international chefs and cuisine that influence Toronto's culinary scene."

On weekends it features a variety of food and wine classes for the public.

It also has a 16-seat room downstairs for private dining.

The restaurant will cater special events such as weddings, anniversaries and conferences.

It also houses the Culinary Foundation for Chefs, a joint venture of the Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts and the Ontario Hospitality Institute. The foundation's goal is to promote excellence in culinary arts and the Canadian hospitality sector, through a variety of initiatives, including awards programs and educational partnerships with leaders in the hospitality industry.

A group of former students who have made their name in the culinary industry were on hand for The Chef's House opening last month. They included Roger Mooking of Kultura and Nyood restaurants in Toronto, who is also the host of Food Network Canada's Everyday Exotic series; Rob Rainford, host of Licensed to Grill on Food Network Canada; and Donna Dooher, owner of the now closed Mildred Pierce and the recently opened Mildred's Temple Kitchen in Toronto.

A man who is part of the wine history of Canada, Inniskillin Wines co-

founder Donald Ziraldo, has shown a special interest in the restaurant and was also present at the opening.

With its recent renovation, the Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts had another 18,000 square feet added, housing shiny new student kitchen labs equipped by Garland. The existing 20,000 square-foot building has been given a more open look, the eight cooking and pastry labs in it have been updated and a

computer room has been opened for students.

The renovations also include a room for wine learning and a chocolate lab to support the Advanced Pastry and Chocolate Program.

George Brown College had to raise \$5 million on its own towards the total cost of the makeover. As of November it had raised \$3.6 million with its Yes Chef! Campaign, and was still looking for another \$1.4 million in donations.



(L-R) John Higgins, director of the George Brown Chef School; Donna Dooher, owner of Mildred's Temple Kitchen; Oliver Li, chef de cuisine of The Chefs' House; and Rob Rainford, host of Food Network Canada's Licensed to Grill, in the kitchen of The Chefs' House.



Large windows allow the public to view George Brown culinary students in their cooking lab.

Ontario student chefs egged on to produce winning meals

MISSISSAUGA—Students 'beat' up the competition to take top prizes in the "Eggspress" Yourself recipe contest put on by the Egg Farmers of Ontario.

Open to culinary students in the province, the contest awarded prizes in two categories. Just the Good Stuff covered appetizer and dessert recipes while Real in the Kitchen required recipes prepared in 20 minutes or less using at most five ingredients.

In the Just the Good Stuff contest, Christopher Stecko, a student at George Brown College, took first place for his poached egg with guaca-

mole and asparagus tempura.

Susan Dimma from Liaison College in Kitchener placed second for her green eggs and naan recipe.

Line Lefebvre from Algonquin College rounded out the top three with divinity eggs.

In the Real in the Kitchen category, Sarah Hess, a Liaison College Kingston student, won with gratin of fresh berries. George Brown College student John Vetere came in second with his mini grilled cheese 'n egg sandwich.

A strawberry dessert omelette earned Jennifer Politi, a student at

Fleming College, the third place prize.

"I am very proud to say that Egg Farmers of Ontario understands the importance of providing valuable learning experiences for students," said Egg Farmers of Ontario chair Carolynne Griffith. "It is my hope the participants will take what they have learned from this competition on to benefit them in their culinary careers."

The contest, with cash prizes from \$500 to \$1,000, ran from September 29 to October 26. Cora Tsoufidou, founder of Chez Cora and Cora's Restaurants, was one of the judges.



Sarah Hess, 21, of Liaison College in Kingston, and Christopher Stecko, 19, of George Brown College in Toronto, show off their winning dishes at the contest held Nov. 19th at George Brown College in Toronto.