

Foodie Resolutions

This year, pledge to uncork more wine bottles, try more off-menu dishes and discover the renaissance of Little Italy

The \$100,000 Question

The Drawing Room's **Charles Joly** is the Stephanie Izard of mixologists: He wins every award, challenge and competition there is, but he's so laid-back about it that you can't hate the guy. Most recently, Joly placed first on the NBC reality show *On the Rocks*, winning \$100,000. He spills his plans for the dough.

So, what are you going to do with the money? First, pay taxes!

That's no fun! But it's a reality. Outside of that, there are quite a few things that I want to do. I bought a place right when the economy bombed out, so this will go a long way to getting the renovations finished. My home bar is designed to be a fully functional wet bar, just like you would have at a regular bar, but that's kind of in shambles. Getting that completed will be awesome so I can work more at home on my cocktails. Oh, and my bathroom door is currently a giant painting that slides in front of a doorway, so a door will be pretty cool.

Where's your place? In Logan Square. Oh, and there are a couple of charities I'd like to give a little bit to: Share Our Strength, who we work with every year with the USBG [United States Bartenders' Guild], and the Museum of the American Cocktail.

The Museum of the American Cocktail? Yeah, who knew we had one, right? The actual space is in New Orleans but it's curated by some of the top people in the industry, some really good folks who are trying to preserve the history of the cocktail.



Q&A

Speaking of cocktails, what's happening to your winning recipe? [For] the end cocktail, I did [Absolut] Wild Tea, Plymouth sloe gin, fresh grapefruit juice and lemon juice, and a little fresh ginger. It's going to be on the menu at The Drawing Room (937 N. Rush St., 312.266.2694), but the Wild Tea isn't on the market quite yet, so we're going to have to substitute a similar flavor until we can get it. The trend right now is sweet tea vodka, but this one has a straightforward tea infusion flavor. I'd rather have that because I can easily sweeten it myself.

Back to the cash—any more plans? My grandmother is the one who raised me and she is... how old is she this year? In January she's going to be 98. So she's still kicking, but I'd love to be able to find her a hearing aid that actually works so she can go back and see the show and actually hear what happened.

Bottle Rocket

So you think you can sommelier? If you're serious about breaking into the biz—or just throwing way better dinner parties—the International Sommelier Guild brings its legendary six-week **Wine Fundamentals** night class to Kendall College (900 N. Branch St., 888.905.3632) starting February 6, with enrollment open now. Taught by certified instructors, each class is two hours of tasting and talking about different terroirs, regions and varietals. The Peninsula's Michael Muser, one of the coolest somms we know, is a grad. internationalsommelier.com.



Wannabe sommeliers at an ISG class.

TASTE TEST

Shhhh!

Every good chef has a secret recipe. The *really* good ones will share when asked. When we heard that Jam chef Jeffrey Mauro had actually put his hush-hush favorite on the restaurant's winter menu, it inspired us to share a few of our favorite off-menu marvels.

- ▶ Spicy enough to warrant an extra glass of water, the unlisted buffalo calamari at the very unsuspecting **Northside Bar & Grill** in Bucktown are a find you won't forget—the same sauce that coats the restaurant's wings is generously smothered over meaty grilled rings of squid. Just say the word to your waiter and he'll know what to do. 1635 N. Damen Ave., 773.384.3555, northsidechicago.com.



- ▶ Once a secret among hungry Chicago chefs, the Scotch egg at **Jam** (which, for the winter season, is back to being brunch only) is finally listed on the menu. Expect a soft-boiled egg that's wrapped in sausage, deep-fried and set atop sage waffles laced with a tart cranberry vinaigrette. The mix of textures—oozy yolk, crispy batter and pillowy waffle—makes for one hell of a bite. 937 N. Damen Ave., 773.489.0302, jamrestaurant.com.
- ▶ Why stick to one dish when you can have an entire off-menu menu? Go for the full Monty at tiny Logan Square spot **Bonsoirée's** Saturday dinners, where all five courses are never-before-seen—and even more inventive than usual. Reserve your space now; the menu may be a secret, but, with its recent snag of a Michelin star, the 26-seat dining room certainly is not. 2728 W. Armitage Ave., 773.486.7511, bon-soiree.com.