

RESTAURANTS

OUT OF THE CELLAR AND ONTO YOUR PLATE: A HOT SAUCE WITH HARD ROCK CRED

By Linnea Covington | May 25, 2012



Chris Santos might not have hair, but his hair metal cred is authentic enough that hot sauce maker and **heavy metal cookbook** author Steve Seabury thought it was time Santos create a rocking hot sauce. It just so happened Stephen Percy from the '80s band Ratt also wanted to craft a hot sauce, so Seabury introduced the pair via email in which he wrote to Percy that, "Chris is a brother of the metal." Subsequently, also a chef.

One year later the trio released their first of three hot sauces called Top Fuel, named after Percy's car racing team. I met up

with Santos at his restaurant **Beauty and Essex** where the tattooed chef slathered a healthy dose of the sauce on to a thick, juicy steak. The savory umamai of the meat harmonized beautifully with the tangy, bright heat of the fresh tasting salsa verda, making it a pairing almost as fun as the drum-playing Santos and hot sauce-loving Percy.

This collaboration isn't something Santos ever imagined. He, of course, knew about Percy and, given that Ratt was the first concert he ever saw when he was 14 years old and living in Rhode Island, he held the band dear to his heart. When Seabury approached him about doing a bottle for his company **High River Sauces**, the timing was perfect. Not only did he have a burning love for the condiment, but he also had been thinking about making his own brand.

"There is nothing in my fridge at home but hot sauce," says Santos. "I remember always putting it on things since the time I could pick up a fork."

Top Fuel will soon be available in the pawnshop at the front of Beauty and Essex. In the meantime, Santos is working on the next type of hot sauce: a spicy red this time called Detonator.