

BLOGS & STORIES

CHRIS SANTOS

Fresh Picks

by *Chris Santos*



The Rising Star Chef award-winner tells us what he's loving right now.

Chris Santos

As a teenager working in his hometown of Bristol, Rhode Island, Chef Chris Santos was drawn to the creative and chaotic world of the kitchen. The constant racket, the searing flames, and the pirate-like swagger of his mentor all conspired to set his career course before he was old enough to drive. He later studied at Johnson & Wales University and graduated with honors, before honing his craft, palate, and style through his travels to Europe and the United States.



Upon his arrival in New York, Santos worked as an executive chef in various kitchens before opening The Stanton Social on the Lower East Side, which earned him the title of StarChefs' Rising Star Chef. Santos stars as a judge on the Food Network series *Chopped*, and has also worked behind the scenes food styling and consulting on movie sets including *No Reservations* starring Catherine Zeta-Jones.

Recipe

Thanksgiving may be over, but this is one Portuguese-influenced stuffing recipe you don't want to miss.

[Cornbread Stuffing with Linguica & Kale](#)

Being Portuguese and growing up in a large Portuguese community just outside of Fall River, Massachusetts, linguica and kale were staples of practically every home kitchen. In fact, having lived in New York for more than 16 years, I am often frustrated at how hard it is to find really good linguica. Linguica is sort of the Portuguese equivalent to Spanish chorizo (the fatty one from Spain, not the cured, dried version from Mexico). It's everything a good sausage should be: ground pork with a good amount of fat for moisture and flavor, heady amounts of garlic, and just enough paprika and chili to give the sausage a mild kick that intensifies subtly as you eat it. Caldo Verde soup—Portuguese kale soup with linguica—was on the stove of every family in the neighborhood growing up. As the recipe states, this is like Caldo Verde folded into stuffing. Making this recipe extra appealing to me, though, is how much I love cornbread stuffing. I mean, I love it. So the idea of combining corn & cheddar with linguica and kale? Yes, please. I'm going to go make a pan now.



Cookbook

What's the one thing men may love more than sex? Bacon, of course.

[Seduced by Bacon: Recipes & Lore About America's Favorite Indulgence](#) by Joanna Pruess

This is a great book not just for the recipes, but for the stories that appear throughout the book that tell the tale of how bacon was introduced to our table and how it became such a cultural and gastronomic phenomenon. There is even both an ode and a song to bacon in the book. As a bonus this time of year, there are some great seasonal recipes such as: Crispy Oven Roasted Chicken with Sage and Bacon, Cornish Game Hens with Cider Glazed Cabbage and Sautéed Apples, Roast Squabs Stuffed with Porcini and Chestnuts, and Pecan Brown Sugar and Bacon Ice Cream.



Restaurant

If you want to get everything on your Christmas list this year, this is the place to wine and dine dear Mr. Claus.

Scarpetta

My pick is Scarpetta, chef Scott Conant's restaurant. Simple, flawless modern Italian cuisine, impeccable service, great wine list, and a proper, upscale setting that isn't pretentious or stuffy. Can't-miss items: polenta with truffle and wild mushrooms, duck and foie gras ravioli, the house spaghetti, and the roasted capretto (baby goat). But I quibble—it's *all* delicious.



Food Destination

When the weather outside is frightful, board a plane and head to Florida.

Miami

This time of the year is so busy for chefs—holiday parties and the general rush of business as many people are out and about shopping or having a quick holiday meal with friends. Miami is a quick, easy flight and the perfect destination for a long weekend. There are also gorgeous hotels. The Fontainebleu is an opulent modern wonder, and you can't go wrong with any of the swanky boutiques on Collins (like the Delano or the Shore Club) that make you feel like you're in the Rat Pack era. There is a very impressive food scene, albeit a small one, but over the course of a weekend dining at the aforementioned Scarpetta's Miami location, Prime 112, Michael's Genuine Food & Drink, and Nobu will more than sate you. And the nightclub scene is as hot as it gets outside of New York and Vegas with celebrity hotspot LIV leading the way. Poolside with an ocean view by day, fine dining and clubbing at night.



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