



SUMMER NEWSLETTER & COOKBOOK UPDATE 2008 - JUNE

From Chef John Sharpe:

Greetings to you all from the high desert of Arizona. As the days reach their longest we are about to be blessed with a bounty of locally grown vegetables and fruits. I have had a wonderful supply of organic produce this winter from the beautiful farm of Bob McClendon in Peoria. He has, without doubt, a commitment that is unsurpassed in his goal to grow the finest citrus, vegetables, lettuce and other produce. I have been personally driving to the farm and picking up the squash blossoms so we can serve you our stuffed squash blossom appetizer. It is still our most popular item. His field grown heirloom tomatoes are now starting as well as his "super sweet 88" corn. We will be bringing up his produce until his farm closes for the summer.

Next Sunday is the opening of the Community Farmers Market in Flagstaff so my Sunday mornings will begin with my trip up to Flag at 7:00 a.m. With this comes the bounty from the high valley areas of Arizona. Many of the above ground crops are a couple of weeks late due to late frosts. We will have fruits from Sedona and vegetables and fruit from the Verde Valley and the Chino Valley. Heirloom tomatoes, squash, chilies, corn, eggplant, cucumbers, okra, beans, peas and so it goes on. It is one seemingly endless supply of food until the days get shorter and the mornings cooler. Then one day it is all gone. The summer gives way to the long shadows of fall. The smell of fallen leaves announce the promise of the cooler days and nights that lay ahead of us. A time to give thanks to all that have worked so hard to grow the foods I have been honored to cook for my guests.

Navajo Churro Lamb

We are now serving Certified Navajo Churro Lamb every day for both lunch and dinner so you can stop by and have a real treat. These lambs are from the Carrizo Mountains of the Navajo Reservation. The meat is lean, tender and delicious. I am serving a red chile posole, green chili stew over sweet corn tamale, grilled chop over local arugula and some very tasty little lamb tacos - all are a real treat.

Locally Raised Grass Fed Beef

Arriving the last week of June I am proud to announce I have purchased a steer from the North Rim Ranch. It is now hanging at Perkinsville Meat Processing plant in the Chino Valley until I pick it up next week. Following is some information on how the cattle are raised:

North Rim Ranch is a ranching partnership of two conservation organizations; Flagstaff based Grand Canyon Trust and The Conservation Fund from Virginia. The two organizations purchased two grazing permits, one of which, the Kane, borders the Grand Canyon National Park's famous North Rim for over a hundred miles. Both ranches encompass vast stretches of wild, remote country.

North Rim Ranch raises Angus-cross cattle. The individual cattle must be hardy enough to forage successfully in the rugged environment that makes up the ranch. The beef offered by North Rim Ranch is on native pasture. They are not given synthetic growth hormones or antibiotics. They live their lives in large pastures except for a brief time before being sent to a local, family-owned and operated packing facility. During that time they are fed locally raised grass hay.

I had the pleasure of purchasing one last year. We found the meat to be incredible. Taste, texture and overall flavor were all outstanding. I will only have some 80 – 90 superb steaks from this one steer. So if you want one you will have to show up within the first couple of weeks. Last time they were gone in two weeks. I will also serve braised brisket, top round and other secondary cuts. We will serve special burgers and a great chili.

Changes To Be Seen

We have now taken the gift shop space across from the bar and named it the Fred Harvey Dining Room. This is available every day for meetings or private dining. The room accommodates 40 guests. The trees and shrubs planted last year as part of the hotels restoration project are thriving. The front of the hotel (Route 66 side) with its new entrance, parking and shade trees is really looking nice.

La Posada's Turquoise Room Cookbook – Update

As I write this the final recipe testing, editing and designing are well on the way to completion. The most asked question after I sent out the first notice was size and price. The book will be full color with a full-color jacket. 9 1/2" x 12". Around 180 pages. We have a minimum of 35 full color pictures of the dishes. All of these photographed dishes will have complete recipes. We will announce the price once we have delivered the fully designed book to the printers. Only then will we know our costs. As you can imagine with prices increasing daily we cannot set this price until we have a firm price commitment from the printer together with the shipping costs.

An ordering button, complete with secure credit card payment processing, will be in place by then so you can pre-order at that time. We received a large response to our first "cookbook email", indicating a significant number of people desiring to purchase the cookbook. Those who responded will be notified first when the ordering system is installed on the website, providing them a better chance of receiving an autographed copy (I will sign the first 1000). We are still anticipating shipping the first books by the end of October. Our goal is to have ample books to ship for this Christmas season.

From all of us here at The Turquoise Room we would like to wish you a wonderful summer, drive safely and slowly so as to enjoy the vistas. Or better still for those to the east and west of us, take the train. The train still stops directly in front of the restaurant twice every day. Once in the morning with the train traveling through New Mexico and then on to Chicago. Once in the evening going on to Los Angeles. Train travel is very relaxing and will prime you for a laid back stay with us. We have rental cars available in Winslow.

We hope to see many of you here over the months ahead. Thank you for your support of and interest in The Turquoise Room.

Kindest regards,
John Sharpe

Chef/Owner, The Turquoise Room Restaurant
La Posada, Winslow, Arizona