

# word *of* mouth



MICHAEL CHERNOW PHOTO COURTESY FYI; INSTAGRAM PHOTOS (FROM TOP) COURTESY MICHAEL CHERNOW (2) AND ALEXA MEHRABAN

Catch these #foodporn stars on the show



Austin's Frank, aka @hotdogscoldbeer, fills its #creolegator with alligator sausage.



The #cincolechecakes at @havanaharrys is a dulce de leche lover's dream cake.



@blueribbonfc's double-decker #smorgasbird

## Q+A with a #foodporn fanatic

Go behind the scenes of some of the nation's most hashtagged dishes with the FYI network's new show *Food Porn*, hosted by famed foodie and co-owner of NYC's Meatball Shop Michael Chernow. BY DAVID FARLEY

**Q: What are some of the craziest dishes you've found with the hashtag?**

**A:** I've got to say the Creole Gator [smoked alligator sausage, popcorn crawfish, slaw, scallions and rémoulade on a bun, *top right*] at Austin's Frank was pretty out of control. And the Smorgasbird [fried chicken, grilled pineapple, lettuce, tomato, special sauce and

barbecue sauce, plus a melty mix of fries, barbecue chicken, smoked bacon, aged cheddar, sour cream and pickled peppers on brioche, *bottom right*] at NYC's Blue Ribbon Fried Chicken was the biggest burger I've ever seen.

**Q: Why have we become so obsessed with food porn?**

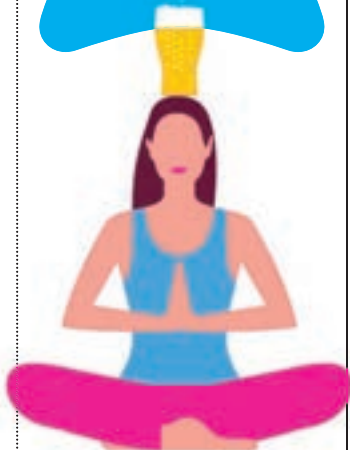
**A:** You know when you ride a crazy roller coaster and get

a shirt that says, "I survived the Cyclone?" This is the foodie equivalent. We want to show we were here, and we conquered this crazy dish.

**Q: Any major #foodporn fails you've seen?**

**A:** Two things that never look good when you photograph them, no matter how delicious they are: egg drop soup and oatmeal.

## NAMA-STAY FOR A DRINK!



Making happy hour happier, breweries, wineries and distilleries are adding yoga to the mix. So you can now pair, say, your Hatha practice with a pint of porter at the **Fargo Brewing Company's Yoga on Tap** event ([fargobrewing.com](http://fargobrewing.com)). Or your Yin yoga with Bloody Marys at the **Backwards Distilling Company's Happy Hour Yoga in Mills, WY** ([backwardsdistilling.com](http://backwardsdistilling.com)). Prefer sparkling cocktails? Try 'em with Power Flow yoga at **Bluewater Organic Distilling's YogaMosa** class in Everett, WA ([bluewaterdistilling.com](http://bluewaterdistilling.com)). You can even Vinyasa among the vines! Hit **Yoga in the Vineyard** at the **Stone Tower Winery** in Leesburg, VA, and finish with a glass of red ([stonetowerwinery.com](http://stonetowerwinery.com)). —ALEXANDRA PECCI



### GIVE BACK

## Do-good, taste-good trips

You already know that many restaurants give to charity. Now, just in time for your winter break, hotels and tour operators are serving up delicious ways to give back, too. BY ANJA MUTIC

### GIVE A LITTLE

Check into the Radisson Blu hotel at Minnesota's famed Mall of America, and order the White Chocolate Banana Cream Pie at the resident FireLake Grill House & Cocktail Bar. During the holiday season, proceeds will go to **Second Harvest Heartland**, a local food bank ([radissonblu.com/hotel-mall-of-america](http://radissonblu.com/hotel-mall-of-america); [2harvest.org](http://2harvest.org)). Meanwhile, for every special of the day sold at Station Kitchen & Cocktails in the Washington, DC, Embassy Row Hotel, 25 cents goes to **So Others Might Eat**, an organization that helps feed the hungry ([destinationhotels.com/embassy-row-hotel/some.org](http://destinationhotels.com/embassy-row-hotel/some.org)). Staying at San Diego's iconic Paradise Point Resort & Spa? Try the Tidal restaurant's Fenberry Collins, a gin, cranberry, spice and lime seasonal specialty. For each drink, Tidal will donate \$1 to the **Center for Community Solutions**, an agency that combats domestic and sexual violence ([paradisepoint.com](http://paradisepoint.com); [ccssd.org](http://ccssd.org)).

### GO DEEPER

G Adventures, which offers hundreds of budget-friendly trips worldwide, has been opening restaurants that give back through its **Planeterra Foundation**. One of the best-selling Peru itineraries, for example, takes you to the Parwa community restaurant, where every Andes-to-table treat you try benefits not just the people who work there, but also local farmers who get funding to supply produce and women's cooperatives contracted to blend the restaurant's tea ([gadventures.com](http://gadventures.com); [planeterra.org](http://planeterra.org)).

### DIG ALL THE WAY IN

Go Eat Give vacations blend food tours, cooking classes and volunteer work into one trip. In India, for example, you may **volunteer at a women's shelter** in the morning, enjoy the fruits of a Punjabi cooking class for lunch, and have dinner in a local home ([goeatgive.com](http://goeatgive.com)).



**IF YOU HAVEN'T CAUGHT RACH'S HUSBAND ON STAGE**, catch him online! John's band, The Cringe, was recently part of Mötley Crüe the Final Tour, and the YouTube clips are awesome. "Touring with two rock legends, Mötley Crüe and Alice Cooper, has been a dream," John says. "They bring the rock night after night. And despite their hard-partying reputation, the backstage is populated with wives, dogs and kids."

## Thanks a latke, General Tso!

Chinese food on Christmas? Yup, it's a thing for American Jews, as Chinese restaurants are among the few open that day. And now, chefs are taking the tradition to the next level with cool cultural mashups. **BY LEAH KOENIG**

**Manhattan** Iconic smoked-fish outpost Russ & Daughters Cafe is teaming up with hot spot Mission Chinese Food. Though the menu has yet to be revealed, last year's sold-out debut included kung pao pastrami and congee topped with trout roe and scallions, plus fortune cookies stuffed with pearls of Yiddish wisdom. [russanddaughterscafe.com](http://russanddaughterscafe.com)

**Boston area** Inspired by the Chinese Christmas dinners of his youth, chef Michael

Leviton of Lumière is serving up the likes of chow fun and chicken consommé with ginger and ginseng. For good measure, he's also offering latkes topped with house-smoked bluefish. [lumiererestaurant.com](http://lumiererestaurant.com)

**Philadelphia** Israel native and chef Michael Solomonov serves up dinner and a movie on Christmas at Philly fave Zahav. On the screen? Still a secret! On the plate? Thai treats. [zahavrestaurant.com](http://zahavrestaurant.com)

**New Orleans** Chef Alon Shaya is bringing a new tradition to New Orleans. He's slinging 5-spice barbecue brisket with pickled cabbage and tahini at his modern Israeli restaurant, Shaya. [shayarrestaurant.com](http://shayarrestaurant.com)

**San Francisco** A lineup of corned beef challah bao, potato-scallion latkes and sweet-and-sour schmaltz-glazed chicken wings may well make Christmas the busiest day of the year at San Francisco's Wise Sons Jewish Delicatessen. [wisesonsdeli.com](http://wisesonsdeli.com)

**New York City** The über-hip delicatessen Mile End is celebrating with Chinese dishes both expected (Peking duck, egg drop soup) and remixed (smoked-meat fried rice). [mileenddeli.com](http://mileenddeli.com)



## FACTOIDS YULE LOVE!



According to Google, ham takes 30 out of 50 states in the category of most-searched holiday entrée. A notable outlier? New Mexico, where brisket reigns supreme.



The elderflower-flavored St-Germain cocktail is the most-searched holiday drink. But Tennesseans go their own way... with the Slippery Nipple.



Gingerbread and no-bake cookies are tied for most-searched cookies. South Dakota, however, would rather have Oreo Cookie Balls—and Massachusetts, Italian cookies.

—LAMBETH HOCHWALD



## The new grub hubs

With killer kiosks, rocking restaurants and booming bars, food halls are equal parts flavor and fun. And these four dish out everyday amazingness as well as heavenly holiday treats. BY LANE LEE

### City Kitchen

*New York City*

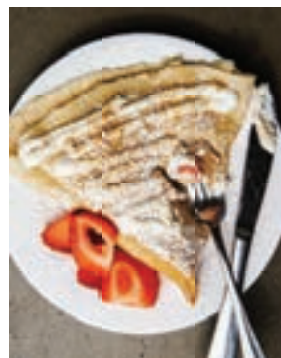
Overlooking Times Square from the second floor of the Row NYC hotel, **City Kitchen** (above) serves up views of the famed frenzy below, plus treats from Luke's Lobster, Kuro Obi Ramen and six other cult faves. Big bonus for the Big Apple: You can get a great meal here for \$20! [citykitchen.rownyc.com](http://citykitchen.rownyc.com)

#### ☀ Everyday amazingness

Make Elvis smile upon you and try the Whitmans PB&B—a beef short-rib burger topped with organic peanut butter and applewood-smoked bacon. Chase that with Dough's cocoa nib-spiked passion fruit doughnut.

#### ☀ Holiday treats

Get into the fiesta spirit with the Taco Navideño at Gabriela's Taqueria, where beef-pork picadillo and roasted poblano pepper party with walnut cream sauce and pomegranate seeds on fresh tortillas (left). The Wooly's Gingerbread Cookie Shaved Snow is part winter wonderland, part tropics, with the texture of freshly fallen snow, and the richness typical of Taiwanese-style shaved ice.



### St. Roch Market

*New Orleans*

Newly overhauled, the old-timey **St. Roch Market** (opened in 1875; closed when Katrina came through) is NOLA all the way—from the grand columns in the central hall to the live jazz on weekends. Still, among the

13 vendors, you'll find not just traditional Southern fare, but everything from Korean-creole (Koreole!) to organic nut milks. [strochmarket.com](http://strochmarket.com)

#### ☀ Everyday amazingness

King Creole's Crawfish Poutine, a Louisiana spin on Canada's famed gravy-and-cheese-topped fries, is an excellent beginning, complete with deep-fried new potatoes, pepper jack cheese and crawfish étouffée. If you can handle more melted cheese, move on to Dirty Dishes for the Munch Crepe—with smoked gouda mac-and-cheese and barbecue pulled pork. Or have dessert there instead, in the form of a crepe with cheesecake filling, strawberries and graham cracker crumbles (left).

#### ☀ Holiday treats

Toast with Mayhaw Bar's Adult Holiday Punch, a take on NOLA's famed milk punch, made with Old New Orleans Rum, milk, vanilla simple syrup and a dusting of nutmeg. Then soak up the booze with the Sweet Spot's chocolate cake with peppermint buttercream, chocolate ganache and crushed peppermints.

### Fourth Street Market

*Santa Ana, CA*

Fifteen minutes from Disneyland sits **Fourth Street Market**, where you should go before or after you visit Mickey. Actually,





go even if you're not visiting him. The offerings from the market's 16 vendors are that good. And once you've had your fill of, say, Vietnamese chimichurri tacos, work 'em off at the Ping Pong tables in the garden—also home to concerts, screenings and open-mic nights.

*4thstreetmarket.com*

#### **Everyday amazingness**

Waffle Inc.'s Red Mole, a mole-infused waffle topped with chicken, cotija cheese and more mole, makes for a luscious lunch. For dessert, hit Chunk-n-Chip, where the ice cream flavors change weekly, but include the likes of organic sweet corn with marbled apricot and fresh jalapeño or German chocolate cake (*above*).

#### **Holiday treats**

Score snowman-shaped Christmas Mallow Pops at Torch S'mores. Next up? Radical Botanicals' Cacao-Mint Christmas Cream Soda—organic raw cacao, Madagascar vanilla, peppermint essential oil and carbonated alkaline water, served over shaved ice with fresh peppermint and an optional hug. In fact, hugs are offered—and often accepted—with any order at this seriously So-Cal stand.



## **Latinicity**

*Chicago*

Meant to re-create the vibe of Spain's open food markets, chef Richard Sandoval's

**Latinicity** is the best kind of sensory overload.

Think food trolleys rolling across a Spanish tile floor, whiffs of Mexican, Cuban, Argentine and Portuguese dishes drifting from stands and Latin music playing throughout. There's also a tapas restaurant, café, wine bar and cooking classes.

*latinicity.com*

#### **Everyday amazingness**

Go for Tortas & Cocas's Cubano Torta—with ham, carnitas, pickles, Swiss cheese and habanero mustard—or the Mecheffe Taqueria's slow-braised Shortrib Barbacoa.

#### **Holiday treats**

Sold at the market's retail area, King's Cake is a crown-shaped confection of sweet bread, dried fruit, nuts and honey with a baked-in baby Jesus who promises good luck to whoever finds him. For something more secular, head to Latinicity's bar for Ponche Navideño (*above*), a warm Mexican holiday blend of stewed apples, dried fruit, cinnamon and tequila.