

DINING OUT



BODEGA KITCHEN & WINE / Alek Comyford, owner/chef

Born and raised in Tucson, Alek Comyford grew up in restaurants, with his father managing a local Coco's. His first job was as a dishwasher at Marie Callender's. Over the years he was trained and performed nearly every position in the restaurant industry, as he worked his way through a degree in business marketing from the University of Arizona's Eller College of Management. After graduating he worked in commercial property management until opening Liv Cafe & Bistro in 2011. In 2013 the restaurant was expanded and re-branded into what is now Bodega Kitchen & Wine.



BRUSHFIRE BBQ CO. / Ben Rine, co-owner

Ben Rine started cooking at the age of 17 and found that he had a natural talent for it. Before opening Brushfire BBQ, he and co-founder Jared Wren had worked together in the kitchens of several local hotels. When the opportunity to open their own restaurant presented itself, they saw good, fast-casual barbecue as something that was missing in Tucson. They spent a year barbecuing meats every weekend to get their from-scratch recipes for meats, sauces and rubs just right.



CAFE DESTA / MINET ABAY, owner/chef

Chef Minet Abay cooks all the food at Café Desta, with no sous chef or kitchen staff. Abay does it all, including serving the food to patrons. She came to the United States in 2009 as a refugee from Ethiopia and is a majority shareholder in Café Desta. Other shareholders, all men, serve as hosts in the restaurant. She is a mother of two, a 9-year-old girl and a 5-year-old boy. Her cooking is authentic Ethiopian food from all regions of Ethiopia.



DANTE'S FIRE / KENNETH FOY, chef

Kenneth Foy's career began with winning a Careers Through Culinary Arts Program scholarship that led to an apprenticeship with the American Culinary Federation Nation's Capital Chefs Association.

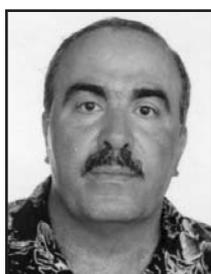
Over the past 20 years he's cooked for PGA luminaries and presidents in the Robert Trent Jones President's Cup and at some of Washington's finest private clubs. He was executive chef at country clubs including Lowe's Island Club (now Trump National) before coming west in 2005 as executive chef at Tucson Country Club.

In 2013, he opened Dante's Fire to bring scratch-made gourmet cuisine to all in a casual atmosphere. His foie pop recipe won Tucson Weekly's "Best Party in Your Mouth" award.



EL CISNE / PHIL FERRANTI, co-owner

Longtime Tucson restaurateur Phil Ferranti is back with his son, George Ferranti, a former professional golfer, and his chef of 25 years, Chef Alicia, with a new venture at El Cisne (*The Swan* in Spanish). Past owner of La Placita Café, Le Melange and Nonna's Italian Restaurant, Phil has a sense for good food and super drinks, including the best wines from all over the world. With an excellent location on Sunrise and Swan, his chef from Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico, and his son as partner, he became a corporate member of the Tucson-Mexico Sister Cities Association, to be host to Mexican clients that enjoy the foremost Mexican food.



FALAFEL KING / JOE ABI-AD, owner/chef

Joe Abi-Ad was literally born in his family's restaurant kitchen in Lebanon. He grew up in that kitchen, cooking as far back as he can remember. His family name has been known for hundreds of years in the Middle East for its outstanding preparation of classic Lebanese food.

Joe came to Tucson in 1976 and opened his first restaurant, The Lebanese Bakery. Over the years, he has opened many restaurants, including Joe's Pancake House, still a favorite in Tucson, Le Mediterranean and El Saage. Joe has catered events for Congregation Anshei Israel, the Tucson Jewish Community Center and more. Joe is married and has one son and two daughters.



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