

Story from 

18 questions with Quiescence Executive Chef Dustin Christofolo

Executive Chef Dustin Christofolo to bring his farm to USA TODAY's Wine & Experience table.

By Wine & Food Experience

Published 6:00 a.m. ET Oct. 20, 2019



Grower Billy Anthony & Executive Chef Dustin Christofolo in Soil & Seed Garden. Debby Wolvos

Executive chef at Quiescence at the Farm at South Mountain will be attending USA TODAY's Wine & Food event, where he will no doubt showcase his knack for melding rustic with fine dining cu. After leaving Phoenix to attend culinary school, Christofolo found his way back to to showcase his passion for local and seasonal foods.

What's your morning routine?

I wake up around 9:00 am and eat a bowl of gluten-free cereal. Next, I hang out with my 7-month son, Baby Luca. Spending as much time with him as possible is important to me. We'll go to the garden to harvest and water the veggies. If the harvest is plentiful from our home garden, I'll bring some to the restaurant to highlight on one of our dishes. Typically, I'll make my way into Quiescence around 11:00 a.m. and brew an espresso as soon as I walk in the door.

What inspired you to be a chef?

I'm really fascinated by the techniques and the history of cooking. The ongoing education and unlimited opportunity for creativity keeps my ADD in check. I also love working with Arizona produce. Our seasonal sensibility shapes our menu.

Who's your mentor?

Mi madre, Pat Christofolo!

Describe your formal training

I'm a graduate of The Italian Culinary Academy, Manhattan, New York, and the culinary program at La Scuola Internazionale di Cucina Italiana in Parma, Italy. I also graduated from the Wine Immersion Program at the Culinary Institute of America, Napa Valley, California.

Advertisement

Notice our new look? As you get used to things, please let us know what you think!

More from Wine and Food Experience



Chef Christofolo to attend USA TODAY Wine & Food



Meet 'Queer Eye' star Antoni Porowski



Q&A with Chopped star Alex Guarnaschelli

**Executive Chef Dustin Christofolo brings his top game to Wine & Food event**

Executive Chef Dustin Christofolo of Quiescence will bring his farm to USA TODAY's Wine & Experience table. USA TODAY

What do you get out of participating in the USA TODAY Wine & Food Experience?

The most important thing to me is the exposure for my chefs and myself. Cooped up in a small kitchen all day working with the same five people, everyday can be emotionally and physically exhausting.

The connection between my staff and the guests enjoying the dishes we've created gives our profession more depth and employee appreciation. The Wine & Food Experience is great for Chef and restaurant exposure! We love the hype of this event!

What do you cook at home?

Gluten-Free French Toast is a guilty pleasure of mine.

What's your favorite dish?

It always changes, but right now I could never deny a good bowl of pho!

What's your favorite holiday dish?

I always like to make Sausage and Peppers. It reminds me of cooking with my grandfather.

What was best day in the kitchen:

So many great experiences in our kitchen! But the one that stands above the rest is the time we went to Manhattan to cook for The James Beard House.

It was quite the challenge travelling with staff and Arizona product across country to cook in a kitchen you've never worked in before. There were lots of obstacles that we overcame as a team. The struggle made the event that much more significant. An experience I'll never forget.



Kabocha Squash Soup, Apple Relish, Mangalitsa Bacon, Goat Cheese Mousse, Fried Rosemary. *The Farm At South Mountain*

Who is the coolest person you've cooked for?

My fiancé, Alison Christofolo.

What's your favorite food trend happening right now?

I'm a fan of the pop-up restaurant scene. It's great to see young chefs in the spotlight cooking the food they like to cook.

Tell us something you would like your followers to know about you.

I'm recently Gluten-Free. Not by choice, but I now have an overwhelming amount of compassion for dietary restrictions and autoimmune disorders. We always have options for those that are limited to what they can eat.

How do you end your day?

I leave the restaurant around 11:00 p.m. I like to relax and prepare myself for the next day of work. This is crucial for keeping stress levels down.



Quiescence Chef's Spread Local Cheese, Cured Meats, Brick Oven Baked Artisan Loaves, Seasonal Jams. *Aribella Photography*

What's the weirdest food combination that you enjoy?

Uni and Meringue

What's the next new concept percolating in your world? (What new plans do you have in store?)

Right now, I feel good about my current concept. I really don't have anything planned at the moment. My goal is to maintain the quality of my restaurant, the quality of my employees and keeping my personal life balanced with the professional.

What achievement are you most proud of (awards or recognition or other)?

Cooking at the James Beard House.

What advice would you give to aspiring chefs?

Keep it balanced! The kitchen can be very exciting to a passionate cook/chef and easily turn into an addiction. It's like a drug that you're being paid to take! But keep in mind every drug usually has its side effects.

What advice would you give to cooks at home?

Keep cooking! I'm jealous! Long hours in my restaurant kitchen keep me from being the home cook I'd like to. Cooking is important in every household. It encourages independence, healthy living, and culture. So, if I'm giving any advice... keep playing with your food and enjoy it!

To find out more about how to experience, enjoy, eat and imbibe, visit wineandfood.usatoday.com.