

NOTABLE EDIBLES

KNIGHT SALUMI CO.

Knight salumi opens up shop in San Diego. Locavores rejoice: Another product has proudly joined the roster of San Diego foodstuffs—cured meats. Knight Salumi Co., founded by chef-turned-entrepreneur Rey Knight, produces hand-made cured meats from all-natural ingredients, right in our own backyard.

While Knight Salumi was launched in February 2008, it did not have a permanent home until recently. Rey was so eager to get the company started that he spent eight months operating out of a borrowed restaurant kitchen—working between midnight and 8 a.m. But he knew this was temporary. When I spoke to him in September, he was finalizing plans for the USDA-inspected facility that will become Knight Salumi's permanent home. "It's a long process, but I'm pushing through," he said.

The facility—on which Rey and his father are doing all the construction—gives Knight Salumi the opportunity to vastly expand production. Rey started making about 200 pounds a week but in the new space he expects to do about 1,000 pounds a week. This is no small feat when, except for the grinding of the meat, the entire process is done without the help of machinery. "We tie every string," Rey claims, adding that the calluses on his hands are worth it. "Making salumi by hand is pretty unique."

Knight Salumi products are all natural, with no added nitrates or preservatives. They are made with beef from Brandt Beef and pork from Van De Rose Farms, who raise Duroc breed pigs on an all-natural grain diet. "Both are sustainably farmed, with no antibiotics and no hormones," Rey says. One category of salumi is called salami. The company offers traditional salami products such as Genoa salami, Kosher-style salami and pepperoni, as well as other cured meats including pancetta, lardo, bresaola and speck.

Rey's favorites include Guanciale, a pancetta-like cured meat made from aged pork jowl cured with fennel, thyme, rosemary and juniper, and the Cacciatori salami, which is a Lombardy-style salami featuring pork seasoned with garlic, Chianti and black pepper. Of the Cacciatori, Rey claims, it is "hands-down one of the best ones I make." Rey's offerings are a combination of traditional recipes and his own spins on classics—he's experimented with ingredients like curry, cocoa and Korean chilies. "I'm slowly finding ingredients that I like," Rey says. "It's a lot of patience but it's not that hard."

If you haven't seen Knight Salumi yet, chances are you will soon. Rey's goal is to be able to go to 10 farmers' markets a week by November, and 20 markets a week by next February. While he plans to distribute to restaurants and gourmet shops nationwide, he would like his products to be available in the San Diego area only through farmers' markets.

"You have to come to us to get it," he explains. He is cautious about the "grocery store push" because he doesn't want to degrade the quality of his product. "I want Knight Salumi to be a household name, in households of the people I see every day who are conscious of what they eat."

—Lauren Duffy

www.knightsalumico.com

SAUCE GODDESS



Pacific Beach resident Jennifer Reynolds with the encouragement of friends and family has taken her Dad's recipe for sweet barbecue sauce and her love of cooking and developed a line of all natural, preservative free, and vegan friendly grill glazes and rubs. Started 10 years ago while still working full-time in the printing industry Jennifer's products have been so well received that she is now making Sauce Goddess her full-time endeavor. You can taste her products being used by the chefs at Liar's Club Bar & Grill in Alpine and find all her great glazes and rubs at retailers like Bristol Farms, Baron's the Marketplace, Whole Foods, and Harvest Ranch. See a complete listing of locations at www.saucegoddess.com and remember "If you don't lick your fingers somebody else will."

—MW





FENCE TOP GARDENING



Have you seen these upside down planters in garden supply stores and catalogs? They are made of fabric liners and steel cages with tomatoes growing upside down out of the bottom. While the concept is admirable, it requires that you have (or install) a sturdy post where you can hang the planter. El Cajon resident Tony Tangora, an avid backyard gardener, developed a new angle to upside down gardening when he and partners Greg Delawan and Giovanni Fima designed a fence top planting bracket with a 3-gallon pot attached. The bracket fits wood, chain link, or wrought iron fences. Their unique system works particularly well for urban residents, who are likely to have a fence where they can install the bracket. Other advantages of the

system include minimal water use, easy weeding and fertilizer application (no bending down), and the top and bottom planting. When your tomato plants grow upside down there's no staking, since the vines naturally take a u-turn looking for the sun and are easy to tie to your fence. These three entrepreneurs recently had their Fence Top Gardening Bracket patented and are taking it to market. They are currently looking for wholesale distributors and have established a toll-free phone number and web site that retailers and individuals may use to contact them. Happy gardening!

—MW

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