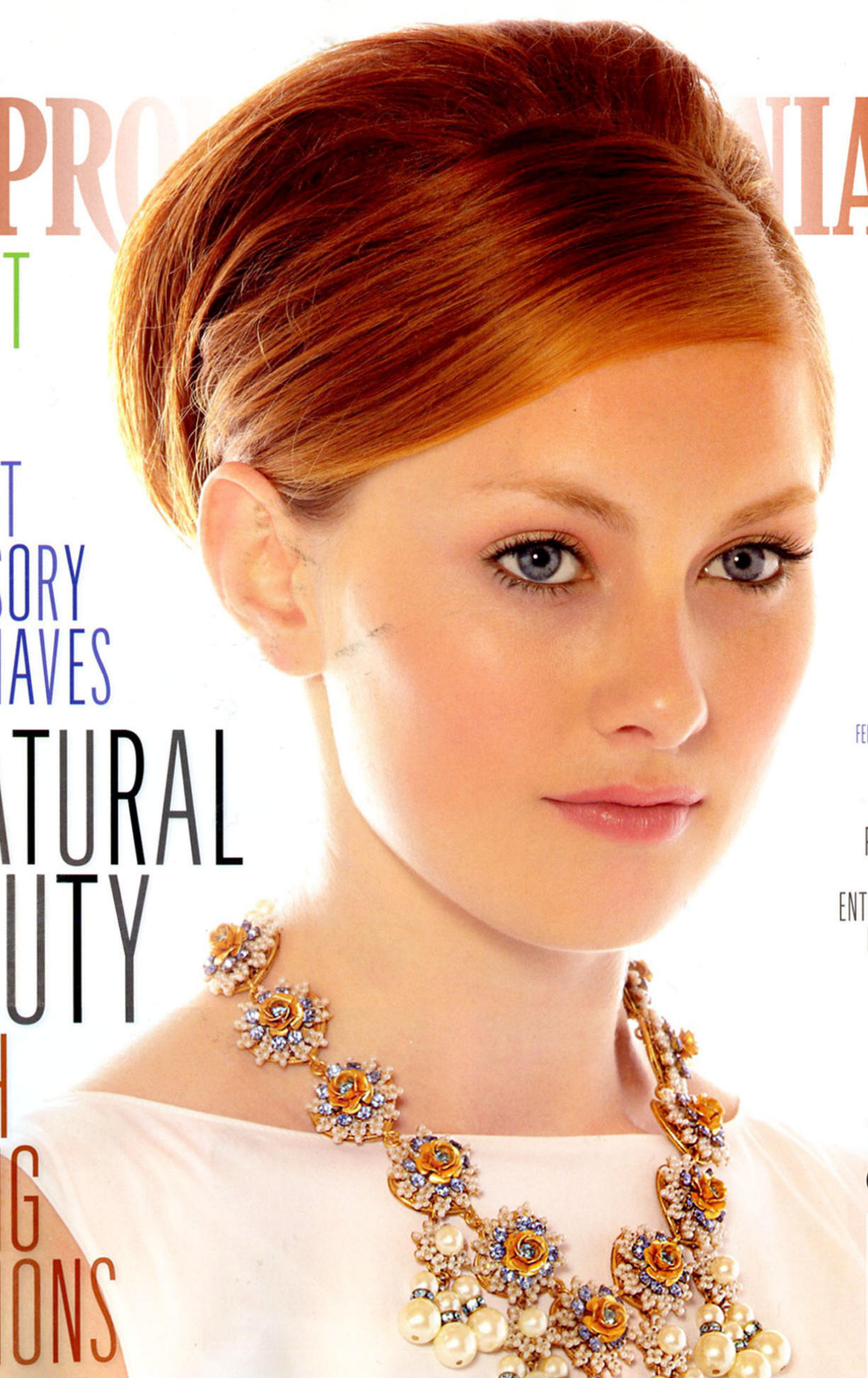


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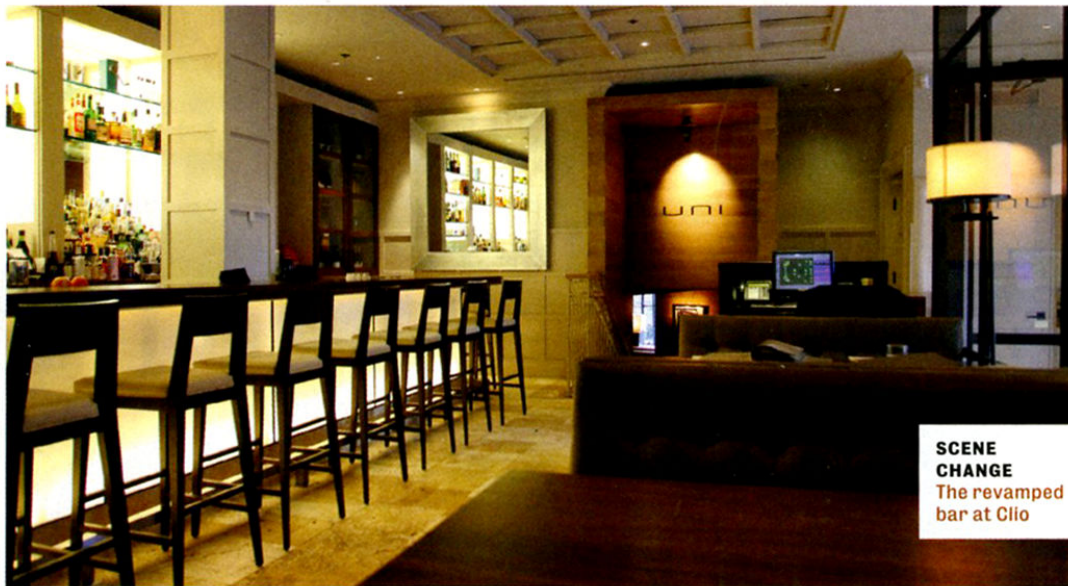
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SCENE CHANGE
The revamped bar at Clio

First Taste

REMAKING HISTORY

If restaurants obey Darwinian law, then chef Ken Oringer's Clio/Uni amalgamate has evolved to become an even stronger force on our dining landscape. For 15 years, Clio has been one of the city's top destinations for special occasions, but times, and Oringer, have changed.

"My food has evolved, it's cleaner and more minimalist now," he says. "I wanted the restaurant to reflect that. It's still elegant, but it's less formal. People don't want to celebrate with a jacket and tie anymore."

The renovations give a new platform for cocktail chemist Todd Maul. Says Oringer, "If there's one thing I love more than food, it's cocktails, and if you have Michael Jordan on offense, you play him." Maul's followers will find relief from the crowds in the spacious new lounge area, complete with an extended bar and added booth seating. His molecularly twisted menu of rotovaped vodka Aviations and smoked ice cubes is designed to pair with Oringer's updated list of bar bites, like bone marrow topped with pickled ramps, kumquats and capers or duck drummettes with XO sauce.

Another goal was to establish a unique identity for Uni. "It

felt like it was stuck between Clio and the hotel lobby," Oringer says. "What I really wanted was for it be a true Japanese izakaya." The small lounge has been consistently busy since it colonized the space 10 years ago, but a revamped entryway bar now makes it clear that you're entering a fully separate experience. Sushi's still the draw, but Oringer and chef Chris Gould have started dishing up Asian streetfood like pork-belly steam buns and kimchee-topped fried chicken.



"MY FOOD HAS EVOLVED."



CLIO AND UNI
370 Comm. Ave., Boston, (617-536-7200)
cliorestaurant.com; unisashimibar.com

The most popular addition, however, is the steaming bowls of ramen available after 11 pm, Thursdays through Saturdays. Ramen is currently having a moment in Boston with Guchi's and Myers + Chang also attempting to bowl people over, and the two versions on Uni's menu attracted some 70 hopefuls who lined up outside on the first weekend it was offered.

Lest Oringer fans fear his flagship has changed course, the tweaks are, in the end, mostly cosmetic. "After all the changes we've made, I feel like this is still the same restaurant," says Oringer. "It just got a boob job and some liposuction."

KYLE WRIGHT

Q&A

FIGURE OF SPEECH

Olympic figure skating champion Kristi Yamaguchi is the author of the children's book, *It's a Big World, Little Pig!* She'll sign copies at Barnes & Noble Prudential Center on March 8 and Wellesley Books on March 9.



How are you like Poppy the Pig?

Mostly in her determination in not giving up, in being nervous and feeling vulnerable in certain situations.

Why a pig?

I've always been a pig person. My house is filled with pigs I've collected over the years or have been given to me. [I was born in the] Year of the Pig, so there's a big connection to me and pigs. And being a pig presents its own set of challenges when you want to skate.

Has this impacted your consumption of pork products?

I've always eaten pork or bacon or whatever. I have friends who love pigs and won't eat pork. I'm fine with it. I am sensitive though. We kept saying "Maybe Poppy should go to Hawaii," and I don't know if she should be going to any luau's.

Your motto is "Always dream." Have all of your dreams come true?

I'll keep dreaming. There's always something else out there, and I think it keeps me young to always have a challenge. My priority right now is being a mom, and with the kids being as young as they are, I'm trying to be involved with their school as much as possible while I have some influence.

What's the most important lesson you've tried to teach them?

Treat others how you want to be treated. It's a cliché, but I want them to be happy in life, and I think it's much easier to be pleasant than, well, unpleasant.

KYLE WRIGHT

FOR MORE FROM KRISTI YAMAGUCHI ON PARENTING, VISIT POP TART ON IMPROPER.COM/BLOGS.