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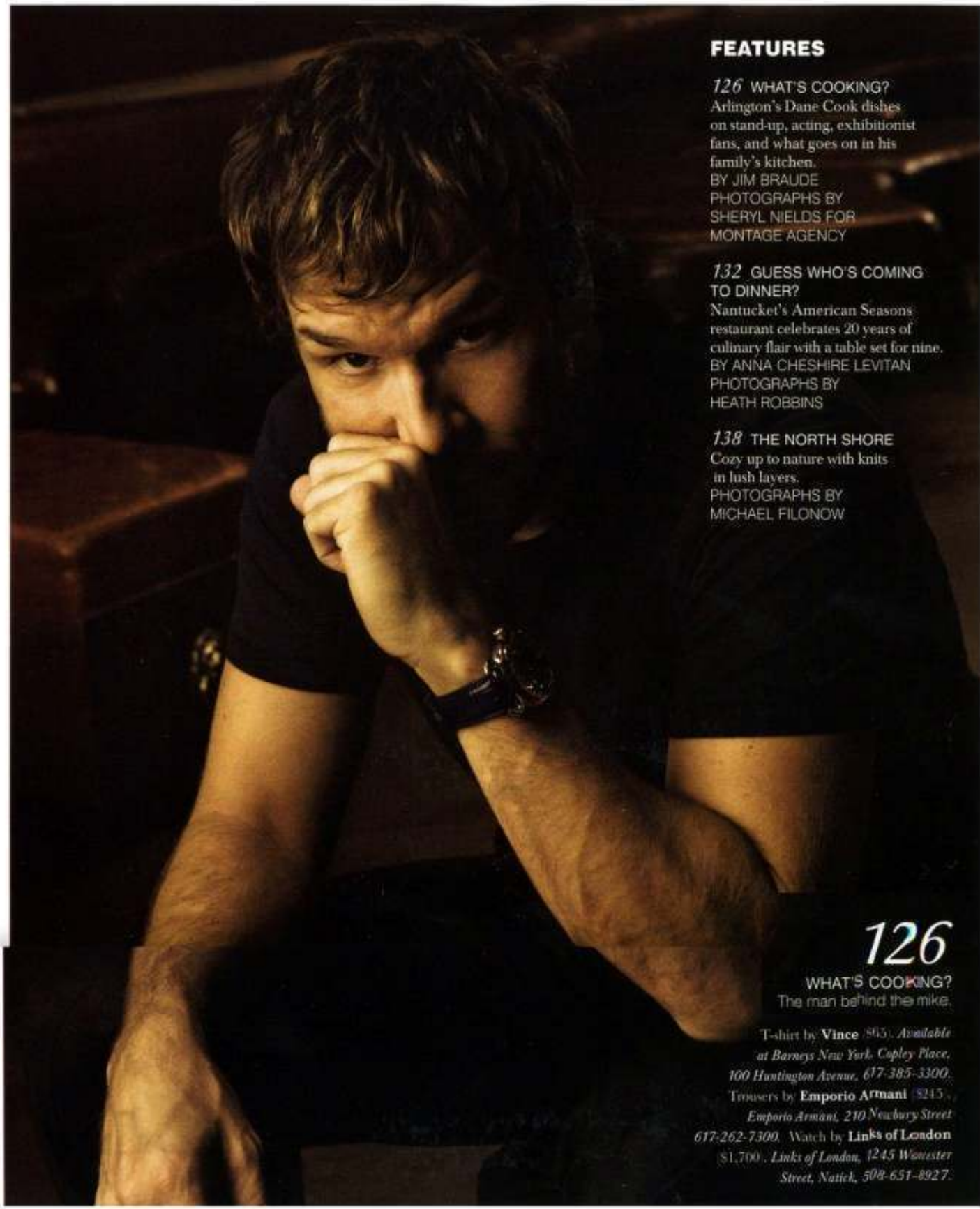
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BY ANNA CHESHIRE LEVITAN  
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**138 THE NORTH SHORE**  
Cozy up to nature with knits in lush layers.  
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**WHAT'S COOKING?**  
The man behind the mike.

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# 'tis the Season

A Nantucket bistro celebrates 20 years of culinary flair with a table set for nine.

BY ANNA CHESHIRE LEVITAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HEATH ROBBINS



A tiny, 100-seat bistro on Centre Street in downtown Nantucket, American Seasons is no quaint “chowda house.” It has been satisfying sophisticated palates for the past 20 years with creative fare from New England as well as from such far-flung locales as the Deep South, the Southwest, and the Pacific Northwest.

To mark their restaurant’s two-decade anniversary, owners Michael LaScola and wife Orla Murphy LaScola (he’s the executive chef and she’s both general manager and sommelier) have created a menu intended to wow even the most discerning foodies.

The LaScolas recently invited a party of American Seasons loyalists to sample their anniversary menu. The guests included Massachusetts Senator John Kerry and his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry; fashionable New York couple Ari and Coco Kopelman; CEO and Democratic Party insider Jack Manning and wife Lyle Howland (who assembled the guest list); Boston real estate magnate Peter Palandjian and wife Minou; and Nantucket fundraising charmer Robert Crowe.



Spring tasting: Parma ham, roasted asparagus, and quail egg with lemon aioli; cauliflower egg bouche with little pearl caviar; and baby beet terrine with peppered goat cheese and a blood-orange vinaigrette. OPPOSITE PAGE: Senator John Kerry and other American Seasons loyalists.







The evening began with cocktails and flutes of Taittinger Champagne on the patio. After being welcomed by the LaScolas, the group was guided through the dining room to a candlelit table adorned with fresh-cut flowers. There, the party sat down to a first course of Parma ham, roasted asparagus and quail egg with lemon aioli, a melt-in-your-mouth cauliflower egg bouche, and a baby beet terrine with peppered goat cheese and blood-orange vinaigrette. Comparisons to other famous gastronomic haunts ensued. "French Laundry has nothing on this," remarked one of the guests.

The second course—deceptively called "Peas & Carrots"—consisted of crispy duck confit with Nantucket mushroom ragout and English pea ravioli in a spiced carrot broth, and was perfectly complemented by glasses of Robert Sinskey Vin Gris Pinot Noir. The third course, a humbly named "Meatloaf Sandwich" served with the chef's smoked tomato "LaScola 57" sauce and Vidalia onion jam with house-cured foie gras, was, by all accounts, the evening's winner.







Grilled loin of Berkshire pork and pork belly with Cheddar cheese brioche pudding and peach jam. OPPOSITE PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: "Peas & Carrots": crispy duck confit with Nantucket mushroom ragout and English pea ravioli in a spiced carrot broth; strawberry "Slushie" with banana paper; "Meatloaf Sandwich" with house-made smoked tomato "LaScola 57" sauce, Vidalia onion jam, and house-cured foie gras; American Seasons' special menu for the evening.





🌿 To mark their restaurant's two-decade anniversary, owners Michael LaScola and wife Orla Murphy LaScola created a menu intended to wow even the most discerning foodies. 🌿

"I'm a huge fan of Heinz, no pun intended," exclaimed one guest, eyeing Senator Kerry's wife, "but this is positively sinful."

Murphy LaScola chose the perfect pairing for the course: a Paul Hobbs Russian River Pinot Noir, a small-production Pinot from the Hobbs Lindsay Estate Vineyard.

A grilled loin of Berkshire pork with Cheddar cheese brioche bread pudding and peach jam was the evening's main course. It was paired with Pax Cuvée Moriah from a locally owned winery. Murphy LaScola noted that the Moriah, for whom the wine is named, actually works at American Seasons in the summer. "Orla knows wines and finds good wines we might not have tried," noted Heinz Kerry after sampling the Moriah.

All chatter stopped when the towering grand finale arrived. In honor of the restaurant's birthday, pastry chef Natasha Misanko prepared a tall treat: a 20th anniversary lemon cupcake tower. (Upon viewing the dessert, the senator revealed that he's a huge cupcake fan.)

The group capped the evening with American Seasons' platinum dessert martinis. "American Seasons," said Kopelman by way of a toast, as he sipped the libation made from Patrón Platinum tequila, Patrón OX Café, half-and-half, and Godiva chocolate liqueur with a floater of Mathilde Framboise liqueur; "it begins and ends our season but is never the last supper."

*American Seasons, 80 Centre Street, Nantucket, 508-228-7111.  
Reservations are accepted one month in advance and are recommended.*







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:  
Minou Palandjian and Coco  
Kopelman; Peter Palandjian, Jack  
Manning, Minou Palandjian, and  
Bob Crowe; Natasha Misanko's  
cupcake tower. OPPOSITE PAGE,  
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Teresa  
Heinz Kerry; Jack Manning, Bob  
Crowe, and Senator John Kerry;  
Peter Palandjian and Lyle  
Manning; Teresa Heinz Kerry; Peter  
Palandjian, Ari Kopelman, Teresa  
Heinz Kerry, and Coco Kopelman.