

WINNER OF TWO 2013 PULITZER PRIZES

taste

meet our bakers The winners will be at Mill City Museum Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m.
live chat Talk cookies with Rick Nelson at noon today at startribune.com

STARTRIBUNE.COM/TASTE • SECTION T • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2013

front burner

what's cooking

We eat with our eyes

As if pairings of beer, wine, coffee and tea weren't enough, now you can learn how to pair foods with plates at a Dec. 12 event in Minneapolis. Sapor Cafe and Bar (428 Washington Av. N., Mpls.) and Circa Gallery have paired up to host several ceramic and glass artists who've worked with chef Tanya Siebenaler to match pottery and glass to food. The idea is that presentation, flavor, shape, color and design can merge to improve a dining experience. Each limited-edition piece of art will be available for purchase afterward. The four-course meal is \$65 and limited to 30 guests. To make reservations, visit www.saporcafe.com. If you don't make the cut, consider checking out the Winter Wares Pottery Dessert Formal from 7-10 p.m. that same night at Circa Gallery, nearby at 210 N. 1st St. The event is free and public, but attendees must buy a mug or plate before pastry chef Tom Lancaster will adorn it with a dessert.

Showcasing flavors of Italy

Broders' annual Fresh Off the Boot (as in Italy) event this Saturday always seems like a place to do some gift-buying, only to realize that you're just buying for yourself. Products include cheese, salumi, truffles, olive oil, vinegars, pasta, antipasti and sweets. This year's event, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., also includes a tour of the 50th and Penn intersection, with the Pasta Bar hosting tables of artisan products designed for focused tasting, and Terzo Vino Bar hosting seminars in wine and cheese led by Charlie Broder and Molly Broder. T. Bull Run Coffee and Indeed Brewing Co. will have representatives offering samples in addition to Italian wine. Cost is \$30, with \$10 contributed to Slow Food MN. Admission is limited and tickets may be purchased online at www.broders.com.

Baking with beer

Lift Bridge Beer Co., at 1900 Tower Dr. W. in Stillwater, is hosting its second Biscotti Beer Release Bake-Off on Dec. 14. The event is from 3 to 10 p.m. to showcase the release of its new Biscotti beer, but bakers can bake anything. They just need to have their treats in place by 6



Thomas, Danny and Charlie Broder will display the flavors of Italy at Broders' annual Fresh Off the Boot event Saturday.

p.m. and must preregister to compete by sending an e-mail to bake-off@lift-bridgebrewery.com. Judging is based on taste, texture, presentation and beer theme. Beer theme may be use of beer or beer ingredients in the recipe, or shaping and/or decorating in a beer theme. Entrants get two free tickets to the event and two beer tokens. After judging, the crowd gets to sample to determine its favorite, so bring plenty of whatever you bake. Please note that you must be 21 or over to attend this event. Best source for details is Lift Bridge's Facebook page.

A jarring development

No. 4,268 in the "I wish I would have thought of this" string of ideas: A canning jar adapter cup that enables you to "turn a canning jar into a lunchbox." The rigid plastic cup fits inside the rim of wide-mouth canning jars, letting you transport



Cuppow's BNTO lunchbox jar adapter.

dips, dressings or anything that you want to keep separate from the jar's contents. Inspired by compartmentalized Bento boxes, the thingie is called a BNTO and comes from a company called Cuppow (which puzzled us until we figured, "Kappow! — but for cups). The cup adapter is about \$8 and is being sold at various local co-ops and small specialty shops. For a store locator, visit www.cuppow.com.

Bakery bonanza

It has the makings of the ultimate cookie exchange, minus the baking. The Holiday Bake Sale at Union Depot (214 E. 4th St., St. Paul, www.uniondepot.org) will draw together more than a dozen local bakeries and chocolatiers — including the Buttered Tin, Bars Bakery and a Piece of Cake in St. Paul, and Angel Food Bakery, Sun Street Breads and Rye Deli in

Minneapolis — for two big sweets-buying days: Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission \$4 adults, \$2 seniors and kids ages 6 to 12 (proceeds benefit Share Our Strength, the childhood hunger relief program). Activities include baking tips, a kids' craft station and musical performances. Stick around on Saturday for the depot's (free) Christmas tree lighting at 5 p.m.

STAFF REPORTS

tidbits

Ch-ch-ch-Christmas

Mr. Tidbit has made no attempt whatever to keep up with the overwhelming multiplication of products from Kashi (the "seven whole grains on a mission" company). But the latest two of that firm's now 27 kinds of granola bars have an ingredient that, until now, would show up in stores only in December (or, OK, November — or, these days, October), to remind us that Christmas is coming and we need to find an odd but inexpensive gift.

Yes, both Kashi Berry Lemonade and Kashi Chocolate Almond & Sea Salt chewy granola bars contain chia. If you guessed that chia is the seasonal gift to which Mr. Tidbit referred, you deserve a very brief hand. (Clap on. Clap off.)

Simply unusual

Mr. Tidbit must now acknowledge that until recently he thought he would run into such ingredients as chia, triticale and kamut only at Whole Foods or the co-op. But not only have such brands as Kashi and many others that Mr. Tidbit might once have thought of as the health-food-store contingent made the leap to mainstream supermarkets, but those unusual ingredients are even turning up in some stores' house-brand products.

Separately, Mr. Tidbit is not surprised that Target would have entries in the "Simply Simple" branding trend that he has been documenting recently. He's referring to the emergence of lines of products with such claims as no artificial flavors or colors, no preservatives, no high-fructose corn syrup and so on. What Mr. Tidbit might describe as "no ingredients you wouldn't find in your pantry."

Imagine Mr. Tidbit's surprise to find, while browsing distractedly at Target, that although many of the products in that store's Simply Balanced brand merely belong to the no-chemistry-set set and are just rebranded Archer Farms items, some, such as Simply Balanced brown rice crackers, also have ingredients that wouldn't be found in most folks' pantries — but not because they are artificial ingredients. No, they are very natural ingredients, from that health-food-store set.

The full name on that box of Target crackers is "Simply Balanced gluten-free multi-grain with flax brown rice crackers," and they also contain quinoa, millet, amaranth and (of course) sea salt.

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