

## CHRISTINE FERRIS CATERING



NEWSLETTER  
**CFCATERING.COM**  
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Welcome to the first Christine Ferris Catering newsletter. Our newsletter offers recipes, features on local Southwest Michigan [artisan food resources](#), news and announcements.

We look forward to your reaction, and to suggestions as to how we can make this newsletter better for you. Please email comments to [newsletter@cfcatering.com](mailto:newsletter@cfcatering.com)

### FROM CHRISTINE

January has always been a pivotal time for me. I look back on the year behind and ponder the year to come. The catering season slows down and I think about all of the incredible events that we did the previous season. I think about how lucky I am to work in the atmosphere that I do. I get to see the most magical moments of people's lives, when they are surrounded by their family and closest friends, celebrating the milestones of their life.

I am remembering a six course wine dinner in a horse barn lit with white candles and crystal chandeliers...crisp white linens, sparkling glassware, shimmering silver.

Juxtaposing the rustic with the refined was stunning.

We set up a makeshift kitchen between barns and sent out six courses of beautifully presented miniature entrees ending with a trio of miniature desserts consisting of a little crème brulee served in a tiny square ramekin with a tiny matching spoon, a little whiskey fudge cake and a tiny little pavlova nest filled with whipped cream topped with fresh berries.

This truly delightful evening was beautifully reported by Chicago Home & Garden magazine, and will be featured in the May 2010 issue.

Now I am remembering walking down a winding path thru an absolutely ethereal secret garden to a hidden dinner tent wrapped in hundreds of yards of gossamer fabric, vines and twinkling lights, flowers everywhere...with seating for 100 guests, the sound of bottles of champagne popping as guests entered the tent!

In my minds' eye I am watching a storm come across Lake Michigan as the last of the 200 guests trickle out of the tent and the band slowly packs their instruments. My staff and I are alone, quietly blowing out candles, pulling linens off tables as lightening dances across the water, exposing the lake for a moment then a distant crack of thunder echoes across the water.

I could go on like this for hours. I am overwhelmed with gratitude, not only that I get to work in the most beautiful locations but that I get to be a part of some of the most important moments of people's entire lives. What an honor.

I am thankful also that I get to work along the shore of Lake Michigan and into the verdant countryside.

This is a momentous time to be the food industry in Michigan.

I remember years ago when the best produce we could get was a box of romaine lettuce shipped in from California and we had to pluck down to get the good stuff.

Today, we find rows of perfectly fresh organic greens twice a week at our Farmer's Market. Every day we can select from literally dozens of kinds of tomatoes, and crates of the most perfectly ripe produce.

We get to work directly with the farmers who grow the produce. They offer me samples of strange and wonderful specimens to ponder what to do with. We have a weekly chat about how things worked out the previous week and what is going on next week.

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They have watched me grow from a gal with a little red headed son who bought a bag or two of this and that to a business lady whose red headed teenage son loads the van with hundreds of pounds of various produce twice a week!

The flavors, varieties and sophistication of choices are growing up too. There are local cheese makers making award winning cheeses, gelato makers making word class gelato and wine makers making great wines right here! Microbreweries, wineries, herb farms, flower farms, organic orchards, creameries are all within a bike ride from my kitchen.

It is a very exciting time to be here indeed.

Today it is in January and there is no Farmer's Market, but Visser's Farm continues to provide onions, potatoes, beets and more. This is a new trend this year.

Cheers to Vissers!

We will feature a favorite local product in each newsletter. This first newsletter features Evergreen Lane Creamery's luscious goat cheese.



Cathy and Tom Helinski are the owners of Evergreen Lane Farm. The farm has an organic apple orchard and a herd of LaMancha goats. Cathy has been making cheese for almost a decade and their production creamery opened in the spring of 2009. Boy, have they sprung upon the market.

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Literally everyone who tasted their cheese at my events was immediately smitten with their products. You can purchase their cheese at Saugatuck's summertime market in the summer and year around. As we continue to feature more and more Michigan cheese, I am so proud to put their cheeses on our boards!

Evergreen Lane makes three great cheeses: Pyramid Point, LaMancha Moon and fresh chevre are all equally wonderful in their own ways.

The recipe featuring Evergreen Lane's fresh chevre...



## **BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND GOAT CHEESE ENCHILADAS WITH ROASTED POBLANO PEPPERS**

1 small butternut squash-split, seeded scraped out and roasted at 350 degrees until soft (about 45 minutes)

4 Tb olive oil

4 poblano peppers- roasted over an open fire until lightly charred then peeled and seeded

1 onion- cut lengthwise into thin strips

1 jalapeno – seeded and minced

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2 cloves of garlic

½ pound of Evergreen Lane's fresh chevre-crumbled

10 freshly made whole wheat tortillas

Sometimes I add shredded roasted chicken if I have some leftover)

NOTE: If you are lactose intolerant like me, I love them without the sauce

## **SAUCE**

2 of the roasted poblanos from above

1 pint of heavy cream (this is not a low fat dish)

2 cloves of garlic-minced

4 oz cream cheese

## **PREPARATION**

- 1.) In a large mixing bowl, scrape the cooked butternut squash, until you have about 5 cups of cooked squash. Once the charred poblanos have cooled, skin and seed them then cut them into long thin strips. Add 2 of them to the squash and set the other two aside for the sauce.
- 2.) In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil over high heat. Add the onion and shake in the pan for a few minutes before adding the garlic and minced jalapeno, then continue to shake the pan with the jalapeno and garlic for another minute or two. Add this to the bowl with the squash and Poblano. Gently stir the ingredients together.
- 3.) Add the crumbled goat cheese gingerly and just barely fold the ingredients together. I like to taste melted chunks of goat cheese in the enchiladas. I bet mushrooms would be a good addition to this!
- 4.) Put about ½ cup of filling into each tortilla and roll loosely. Place the filled tortillas in a 9" x 13" baking pan. Leave a fingers width between each enchilada.



- 5.) To make the sauce, pour the heavy cream into a sauce pan and bring to a simmer. Add the poblanos (dice the strips first) and the garlic then simmer for a few minutes. Turn off the heat and add the cream cheese in little spoonfuls. Just let it sit in the hot sauce for a few minutes until it melts - then whisk it in.
- 6.) Pour the sauce over the enchiladas and bake them for about 30 minutes at 375 degrees - or until heated thru and the edges get a little crisp.
- 7.) Serve immediately with a side of black beans ( I garnish the whole plate with freshly chopped cilantro then zest a lime with a microplane over the plate!

## NEWS FROM THE WORKPLACE

2010 promises to be a sweet year for us.

We pounded and labored our way through 2009 and while we had fun cooking and working at all of the beautiful parties that our clients had, we also worked hard at creating more structure, from an all new office, computers, an office manager (you may have talked to Lady on the phone, she is wonderful) to a beautiful new website, to our brand new commercial kitchen.

It has been a dream of mine for a very long time to have a commercial kitchen that was more like an artist's studio and less like a commercial kitchen. We certainly achieved it. It is located in an old ladder factory and has 15 foot ceilings, tons of natural light pouring in all day, wasabi green walls, chocolate brown floors and a walk in refrigerator and freezer that I think might be larger than my first apartment!

There is enough room to teach cooking classes to small groups. We will be offering a limited number of classes this spring. Check out the list on the website!

As I look ahead at 2010 and beyond, I am so excited to watch everything unfold before me. I can't wait to see what we cook up next and where we will do it! Hope to see you there!

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