

On the Plate

Chef Josh Capon returns to the New York City Wine & Food Festival with his own event and to hit another one outta the park at Burger Bash

Words by Vanessa Pascale

“Are we live? Testing. Testing. This is Josh Capon with Vanessa Pascale. Lure Fishbar New York City,” Chef Josh Capon takes the reins, adopting an announcer’s cadence. We’re seated inside his seafood driven restaurant Lure Fishbar New York, in its tenth year of business. Chef Capon along with partners, Josh Pickard and John McDonald, took the Lure Fishbar brand to Loews Miami Beach Hotel a year ago in November and have planted their feet “firmly in the sand” here.

“I’d like to be in Miami every night right now,” says the New York-based chef. “We’re still building a new business down there. Lure is one year in Miami, that’s just a baby, and you need to nurture it.” Lure Fishbar South Beach is Chef Capon’s first restaurant away from home. His other restaurants: El Toro Blanco, B&B Winepub, Lure Fishbar NY, and recently opened Bowery Meat Company, are all a bicycle’s ride away from one another --so being faraway from one of his restaurants is not easy.

“I’m not doing anything until you eat that deviled egg with caviar,” Chef Capon interjects. I pick up the halved egg and take a bite, relishing the seasoned center and tiny bursts of salty perfection. “Vanessa is now chewing. She seems to be enjoying the deviled egg.”

The four-time champion of Rachael Ray’s Burger Bash returns to the Food Network Wine & Food Festival in New York this month.

Miami Living: Wow! Four-time burger champ, what’s your secret?

Josh Capon: There’s no secret. It’s about having a lot of fun and a lot of love in the burger. I definitely think we provide one of the best burgers in the bash. Burger Bash is honestly one of the greatest events of the year: Super Bowl, Thanksgiving, and Burger Bash.

ML: Were you surprised that you won?

JC: Honestly, the first year I won I was blown away. We’re Lure Fishbar in a burger competition. I thought it was a bit of a fluke. Then we won the second year in a row and I was like, ‘Wow, I think we got something here.’ If you’ve ever competed in something, obviously you want to win, but it’s not about winning. It’s really a great event. We’re raising a ton of money.

ML: And you have your own event this year.

JC: The New York Yankees All-Star Brunch. Lee Schragar knows I’m a Yankees



“Ruth Reichl said in an interview that chefs are very generous by human nature, and I feel that way. We all love to take care of people and give back.”

fan. A bunch of players are going to come, great group of chefs --I’m sure we’ll have a good time. I hope it becomes another annual event. We’re also doing Burger Bash and Tacos & Tequila. You have to eat that shrimp now or I’m not talking to you.

ML: Did you ever think that you would take on the celebrity aspect of this business?

JC: No. My mom was always pushing me, ‘you should be on TV,’ but I didn’t think she knew what she was talking about. I’ve done appearances on *Rachael Ray*, *The Chew*, *Good Morning, America*. I just got my own show, *Frankenfood* on Spike. They’ve been talking about

doing another season. We had a great time shooting it and we’ll see where that takes me. Right now, I’m just going with the flow as they say. Going with the flow. Vanessa is now doing a shot of patron. [He’s kidding about the latter part.]

ML: What was the worst thing you tasted on Frankenfood?

JC: There was an octopus jell-o shot. I like baby octopuses. I like jell-o shots, but I really could not get this thing down. I think I did 18 jell-o shots this past Friday night --speaking of jell-o shots.

ML: Do your kids cook with you?

JC: Having my kids come to the restaurant is always very special. One of my favorite things is when my kids come through the door and I’m waiting right here, and they sprint down the runway and jump in daddy’s arms. My daughter’s shucking oysters and my son is eating deviled eggs with caviar.

ML: What is your best culinary tip?

JC: I think if you enjoy cooking, do it. If you hate cooking, don’t. I think eating with friends and family is important. Kosher salt and black pepper go a long way.

ML: Anything you’d like to add?

JC: My wife and kids are at the beach for two weeks now and I had to come home for three days this week to take care of some work. My 7-year-old daughter asks me, ‘why do you have to go home? I want you to stay.’ There’s nothing I’d rather do than stay but I have to work. She asks, ‘why do you have to work?’ Well, the most important reason is for people to make money... I tried to explain to her, find something you like to do that’s work, something that you enjoy and love. You’ll probably be a lot happier and I think more successful --she wants to be a gymnastics instructor, she loves gymnastics-- I think it’s important. **ML**