

Long Island BusinessNEWS

Where Business Gets Down to Business

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LONG ISLAND LIFESTYLE



LIBN'S TOP CHOICES FOR FINE FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT

OF FOOD AND CHEFS

An East End salon-style discussion planned to feature four top restaurateurs

By ADINA GENN

Food-lovers with raised dining-out expectations have the chance to hear from four of the region's top restaurateurs in a salon-style conversation at the Southampton Arts Center on July 13.

That's the date for "Restaurants: Where's the Fork in the Road," the third event in this year's "Out of The Question" series.

Warren Strugatch, the series' producer and host, will chat with Eric Lemonides, the co-owner of Almond Restaurants in Bridgehampton and Manhattan; Mark Smith, a partner in Nick & Toni's, La Fondita and Rowdy Hall; David Loewenberg, the owner of Bell & Anchor, the Beacon and Fresno; and Guy Reuge, the chef and founder of Mirabelle, Mirabelle Tavern and Le Vin.

Strugatch said the restaurant scene is "a competitive sport in the Hamptons."

In the four years that Strugatch has run the series, the show with the restaurant stars tends to draw a big crowd, he said.

"People go to their restaurants and love the opportunity to talk with them about what goes on behind the scenes," he pointed out.

As for this year's food trends – that's anyone's guess.



Restaurateurs ERIC LEMONIDES, MARK SMITH, DAVID LOEWENBERG, and GUY REUGE to talk food.

"I really don't know exactly what my guests will say – that's part of the dynamic of the series," Strugatch said.

But based on previous shows, he said "we'll probably hear about continuing popularity of farm-to-table and dock-to-table supply channels, specific new entrees at their restaurants, and increasing appeal of organics."

But, he noted, "Audiences are also part of the conversation, and likely to tell restaurateurs what they could be doing. Our audience is not shy."

The "Out of the Question" series covers a wide array of topics, including real estate and art. Upcoming events include architecture in August, and business and economics in September.

"There are tons of interesting and creative people on the East End," Strugatch said. "People don't always get to mingle with their neighbors, but see them on TV and read about them in newspapers. They don't have the

chance to converse and exchange ideas."

With this series, he added, he is able to "invite people who are successful in different fields to the chance to share perspectives. It's beyond a panel discussion – it's genuinely a conversation. The audience can and does ask questions and offer opinions and insights."

That back-and-forth exchange is especially prevalent now, Strugatch said.

"Look at the sorry state our national conversation is in – can't we do better than that? This is my small way to contribute" to meaningful dialog, he said.

Of course, a restaurant conversation would seem lacking without food. After the show, a reception – sponsored by Golden Pear, which has cafes and a catering option on the East End, and Citarella, a gourmet grocery chain – will include small plates and desserts from the restaurateurs.

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