

FEAST

Inspired Food Culture / Saint Louis

Niche to Host Night of Culinary Innovation Through Ideas in Food Workshop, Dinner



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Chef Gerard Craft gets excited when he talks about the upcoming Ideas in Food dinner on Tue., March 5, at his restaurant Niche.

Led by food innovator H. Alexander Talbot, the seven-course dinner and discussion is Talbot's traveling seminar on all things new and exciting in food.

Talbot and partner Aki Kamoza have long been players in the field of molecular gastronomy. They founded the food blog, [Ideas](#)

[in Food](#), also the name of their book and Pennsylvania-based culinary consulting business. The two specialize in sharing creative cooking techniques, ingredients and innovative cooking equipment with professional chefs and home cooks. In addition to regular courses and seminars, they take their teachings on the road, holding special learning events centered around a theme or topic of the host's choice. Topics they cover can range from artisanal pizza to sous vide.

"They work with each hosting restaurant on what technique they want to focus on," Craft says about the Ideas in Food team.

The dinner at Niche will focus on flavor and color intensity. (See below for ticket info.)

"There's no preconceived notion about what's going to happen once we get there," Talbot says. "We'll have a workshop for Gerard's staff; then we'll all create our dishes around the theme based on what happens. We just surround ourselves with passionate and talented people and put our heads together, then see what comes out of it."

Talbot will roll into town a couple days ahead of the event for the workshop and to create two of the dishes for the seven-course dinner. Craft and his Niche crew will create three, and guest chef Kevin Nashan of Sydney Street Cafe will contribute two. After enjoying the fruits of the chefs' labors, participants will talk about skills and tools used to create and enhance the dishes, and share ideas about updating techniques.

"It'll be a conversation," says Talbot. "The main goal is to put really good food on the

plate.”

Craft met Kamazowa and Talbot several years ago when he attended one of their classes and has kept in touch with the two ever since. He's been working with them for nearly a year and a half to find the right time and theme for an Ideas in Food event in St. Louis.

Guests of all skill levels will take away plenty of tips that don't require fancy equipment like anti-griddles or CO2 tanks, Craft says.

“It's geared to anybody who's interested in food,” he adds. “Everyone should be able to take away a lot of great techniques to use in their kitchen.”

The event kicks off with an Ideas in Food cocktail hour from 6 to 7pm; dinner starts at 7. There are 34 seats available, and tickets are \$175 each with optional wine pairings for \$75. Call Niche for reservations.

Niche, 7734 Forsyth Blvd., Clayton, 314.773.7755, nichestlouis.com

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