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FOOD & WINE

Taste of the Town

By Angela Pettera
Photograph by Alex Neumann

A WIN FOR CHEF TIM

Innovative food pairing takes the prize.



TIM KILCOYNE OF THE SIDECAR RESTAURANT in Ventura won the first-place prize package at The Best in Fest Culinary Competition, held at the Casa Pacifica Wine & Food Festival in June. The judges, including *805 Living* editor in chief Lynne Andujar, loved his dish: Niman Ranch crispy pork belly with organic blueberry-chipotle barbecue sauce and Tamai Family Farms creamed corn. Kilcoyne was “pretty happy” about taking top honors when we talked to him: “The whole BBQ thing was on my mind and corn was just starting up. Pork belly is one of the perfect foods. I love it.” He prepared it by overnighting it with a dry rub, then slowly roasting the belly for about four hours; next he braised it with veal stock before cooling overnight. The next morning he cut it into cubes so he could deep-fry it on-site until crispy. For the sauce (which he serves on his short ribs at the restaurant), he took the braising liquid, added chipotle chilies, fresh blueberries, and red wine, and then reduced it. “Creamed corn” was something of a misnomer because it didn’t really contain cream. Kilcoyne grated the kernels, then made a stock with the cobs. He reduced the stock, added the kernels, and cooked the whole thing some more before adding mascarpone cheese. “It’s completely different from the creamed corn you’re used to, which is really heavy,” he confessed. Different enough to win. ■

The SideCar Restaurant is located at 3029 E. Main St., Ventura, 805-653-7433 or www.thesidecarrestaurant.com.