

By Patrick Evans-Hylton

## A Smorgasbord of CoVa Food Happenings



PHOTOS BY GEORGE CULVER

### FIND CHEF PATRICK

Find *Coastal Virginia Magazine* food editor Patrick Evans-Hylton: the first and third Tuesdays of each month on *The Hampton Roads Show* on WAVY TV-10 ([www.TheHamptonRoadsShow.com](http://www.TheHamptonRoadsShow.com)); and the last Wednesday of each month on *HearSay with Cathy Lewis* on 89.5FM, public radio in Hampton Roads ([www.HearSay.org](http://www.HearSay.org)).



### COVA GOES GLOBAL WITH PASSPORT TASTING EVENT

The Norfolk Sisters Cities hosted its first culinary trip around the world, pairing top area restaurants with the different countries where the group has ties, with the event PassPORT. The fete took place April 3 at the Norfolk Sheraton Waterside.

The non-profit group, with established relationships with 10 global municipalities, works to foster understanding and cooperation by promoting people-to-people exchanges and strengthening relationships.

Critics' Choice went to **Mike Farrell** of Still Worldly Eclectic Tapas for his Crab, Rockfish and Okra Stew over Basmati Rice with Crispy Plantain Chips, Ground Nuts and Sweet Potato Mousse, inspired by the cuisine of Tema, Ghana.

Farrell will be afforded an opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. and cook at the private residence of Francois Delattre, the French ambassador to the United States, with Christophe Tanneau, the embassy chef, for a private diplomatic event.

Best Country Interpretation, also selected by a panel of culinary critics, went to **Scott Simpson** of Swan Terrace Grill for his Cured Sturgeon with Root Vegetable Salad, based on the foodways of Kalinigrad, Russia.

People's Choice was awarded to **Amit Arora** of Nawab for his Seafood Kerala Curry, inspired by the sister city of Kochi, India. Chefs' Choice, a peer award, went to **Jesse Wykle** of Eurasia for his Kitakyushu, Japan-inspired Orange-Miso Cured Duck Tataki with Pickled Spring Vegetables, Mango Crispies and Soy Bubbles.

Other participating chefs and their inspired city/country were:

**Todd Jurich** of Todd Jurich's Bistro; Halifax, Canada

**Rodrick Lawson** of Press 626; Ningbo-Beilun, China

**Jerry Bryan** of Coastal Grill; Norfolk County, England

**Steve Eda** of City Dock at Sheraton Waterside; Toulon, France

**Bobby Huber** of Bobbywood; Wilhelmshaven, Germany

**Leon Buenviaje** of CP Shuckers; Cagaya de Oro, Philippines

**Gerrell Cox** of Small's Smokehouse and Oyster Bar; Norfolk, Virginia (land dish)

**Scott Dickenson** of The Green Onion; Norfolk, Virginia (sea dish)

For more information, visit [www.PassportNorfolk.com](http://www.PassportNorfolk.com)

### WINE IS JUST THE BEGINNING

Wine is just the beginning of festival season at Town Point Park in Norfolk with Festevents kicking off its signature events for 2014 with the Eighth Annual Spring Town Point Virginia Wine Festival on May 3 and 4.

May 17 and 18 are the dates for the 13th Annual Virginia Beer Festival, offered in partnership with the Virginia Arts Festival, and

the venerable Harborfest, now in its 38th year and billed as the area's biggest dock party, takes place June 6-8.

For more information, visit [www.Festevents.org](http://www.Festevents.org)

### THREE OF VIRGINIA'S FINEST SHINE

Three regional specialty food companies came out top winners at the Virginia Food and Beverage Expo. The show, held March

26 in Richmond, promotes items under the Virginia's Finest banner.

Awards for the Best New Product, Best New Food Product and Best New Beverage Product are presented.

Wilard Ashburn's Ashburn Sauce Company ([www.AshburnSauce.com](http://www.AshburnSauce.com)), based in Virginia Beach, won Best New Product Overall for his Crabby Mary Bloody Mary Mix.

Ashburn describes the mix as a seafood lover's dream, mixing traditional bloody mary mix elements with bits of blue crab, shrimp, lobster, fresh horseradish, Worcestershire sauce, Italian sea salt and other spices.

Also based in Virginia Beach, Kenny Letner's Molina Salsa ([www.MolinaSalsa.com](http://www.MolinaSalsa.com)) took the Best New Food Product award.

Letner says his blend combines tomato sauce, sweet onion, roasted red peppers, minced garlic, habaneros and a blend of seasonings and spices. It is named for 16th-century Spaniard Alonso De Molina, who translated Mexican documents and coined the word "salsa."

Pamela Barefoot's Blue Crab Bay Co. ([www.BlueCrabBay.com](http://www.BlueCrabBay.com)) on the Eastern Shore won Best New Beverage Product for her Jalapeno Infused Margarita Mixer, which she says is a sweet-tart, all-natural mixer.

More than 100 Virginia exhibitors present their items at this bi-annual, trade-only show, presented by the state's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Products are evaluated on originality, taste/aroma, creative packaging, visual appearance and presentation.

For more information, visit [www.VAFinest.com](http://www.VAFinest.com).

### GETTING REEL: SEAFOOD FEST

The fifth Sensible Seafood Fest at the Virginia Aquarium takes place May 22.

The event celebrates foods prepared with regionally sourced, sustainable ingredients from around two dozen of the facility's Sensible Seafood partner restaurants; a full list of partner restaurants is on the Aquarium's website.

There is lots of food to sample and a people's choice award.

The Virginia Aquarium is at 717 General Booth Blvd., Virginia Beach. Call 757-385-0272 or visit [www.VirginiaAquarium.com](http://www.VirginiaAquarium.com) **CoVa**

Have food news to share? Email: [patrick@coastalvirginiamag.com](mailto:patrick@coastalvirginiamag.com)