

## A Culinary Journey

Fog City Diners Prove Men Do Cook

There are certain truths that can be counted on. The reassuring appearance of the sun each day, the rising of the moon each night, and the daily need for sustenance. Ah, food, glorious food. What would we do without it? Be hungry.

Nineteen years ago, in the aftermath of divorce, a man was faced with a “food challenge” worthy of an *Iron Chef* episode—how to cook for himself. With a friend in need, and inspired by a love for cooking, longtime friends from the Bay Area Tom Pickell and Bill DuBois recruited three other Bend friends and established Fog City Diners. This men’s cooking group has met monthly for nearly twenty years. (“Fog City” refers to Pickell’s and DuBois’ San Franciscan roots).

The current group includes Craig Moore, Greg Cushman, Tom Pickell, Bill Dubois, Joe Bankofier, Patrick Oliver, Steve Timm and Oran Teater. Many gourmet meals, bottles of wine and belly laughs later, the Fog City Diners have gained widespread notoriety for their impressive culinary skills, dinner parties and philanthropic efforts.

The host rotates monthly, setting the tone for the evening by choosing and cooking the entrée, which is accompanied by complimenting courses prepared by the rest of the group. Earlier meals may have consisted of simpler fare, but now, with nearly 200 dinners behind them, the group has mastered the art of cooking.

Everyone has a perfected “short list” of culinary masterpieces to entertain with, yet we fear straying outside the realm of familiarity. Cooking groups provide a comfort zone amongst friends to experiment and take risks. Always memorable are the great meals that stand out over time, but it’s the truly disastrous dishes (and we’ve all had them) that are worthy of a good laugh and make us better chefs in the end.

At the heart of this group is just that—great heart. Fog City Diners is comprised of active community members and leaders who care about Bend and its community. Though they may not be professional chefs by trade, these men are successful professionals in their own right. The





## Auction Dinner Menu

*'A Night in Tuscany'*

## ANTIPASTO

Crostini di Polenta ai Ammoghhiu  
grilled polenta with tomatoes and basil topping

Peperoni Arrostiti

roasted peppers with olives, sausage and anchovies

Verdura al Forno

assorted roasted vegetables

Prosciutto e Melone

prosciutto and melon with lime

## PASTA

Risotto al Cavaliere e Piselli  
risotto with cauliflower and peas

## SOUP

Zupa di ceci

chickpea soup

## MAIN COURSE

Arrosti d'Agnello all'Aretina  
grilled lamb with rosemary

Salsa di Cannella

tomato and cinnamon sauce

Spiedini Cape Sante e Gamberetti  
grilled skewered scallops and prawns

Spinaci Salati

sautéed spinach in olive oil with garlic

## SALAD

Panznella Insalata

bread salad with tomatoes and herbs

## DESSERT

Gelato Spazzacamino

ice cream with espresso and scotch

Biscotti

Italian cookies

Sambucca

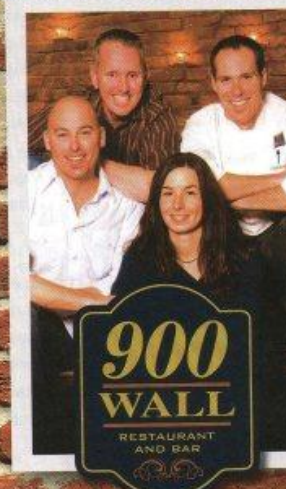
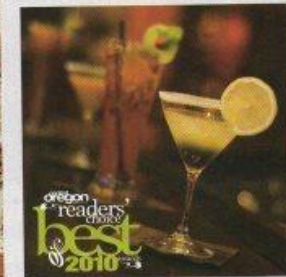
with whole espresso bean

group includes Bend business owners in finance, real estate and dentistry, as well as a former mayor and editor of *The Bulletin*.

Given the notoriety of some of the members, as the reputation of Fog City Diners grew it wasn't surprising that in 1994 they were requested to put up an auction dinner as a fund raiser for the COCC Foundation. The dinner went for \$600 and was a great success. Since, the group has continued to participate in fundraisers for the COCC Foundation, Heart Institute, Bend Community Center, The High Desert Museum and other worthy causes. At the 1996 High Desert Museum fundraiser, \$12,000 was raised by agreeing to do two dinners at \$6,000 each.

Bidding is heated and competitive for the splendidly lavish dinner parties which are as much fun for the Fog City Diners as the auction winners. Little did these guys know that a passion for fine cuisine and a talent for cooking combined with

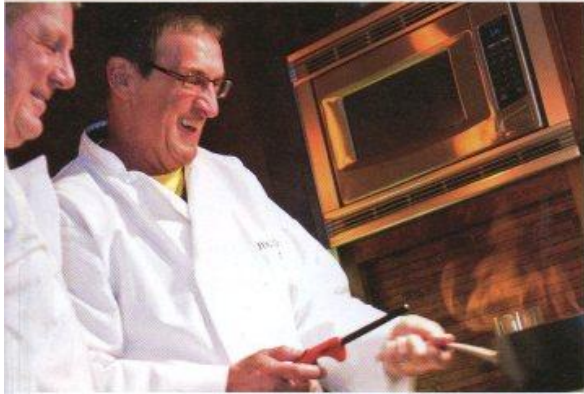
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→ fog city diners

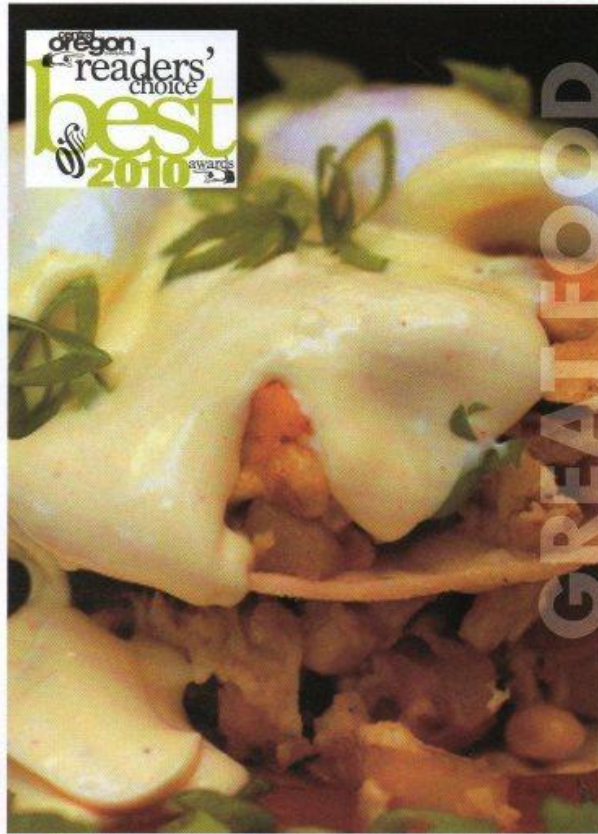


a commitment to community involvement would someday earn close to \$100,000 for local charities. Who says philanthropy can't be fun?

Let's talk food. One look at the auction dinner menu for "A Night in Tuscany" on the previous page and it's easy to see what all the excitement is about—authentic and well-conceived dishes paired with equally wonderful wine and liquor for an unparalleled dining experience.

Apart from two dinners a year at which spouses are invited as guests to be wined and dined, the Fog City gatherings are exclusively for men to cook together, catch up, joke and discuss the world at large. One thing you can count on is that all of the action happens to a background of very fine feasting.

Fog City Diners strive to be a model, inspiring fellow food lovers to follow in their footsteps by beginning or joining a cooking group for benefits that are immeasurable. What started as an effort to help out a friend learning to cook has turned into a culinary journey that has established friendships of a lifetime and contributed to the continued ongoing success of many local institutions. **CO**



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