

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

Contact: Dina Roskin, DCA, 212/487.4283

NEW YORK CITY'S TOP RESTAURANTS STIR IT UP TO WIN 2ND ANNUAL SIDEWALK CAFÉ DRINK MIX-OFF

Blue Smoke's The Porch Swing and Bubby's Watermelon Lemonade Named Best Summer Sidewalk Café Concoctions

NEW YORK, N.Y. - In celebration of the booming sidewalk café industry, more than a dozen mixologists from the City's top restaurants competed for winning titles in the **2ND ANNUAL SIDEWALK CAFÉ DRINK MIX-OFF**, co-sponsored by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and the New York State Restaurant Association (NYSRA). A distinguished panel of judges, including noted industry expert Gael Greene, gave the winning nods to - ***The Porch Swing*** prepared by restaurant Blue Smoke (with alcohol) and ***Watermelon Lemonade*** prepared by Bubby's (without alcohol) - as the must-have drinks for dining al fresco this summer in the Big Apple. The winning restaurants, Blue Smoke (116 East 27th Street) and Bubby's (120 Hudson Street), are both located in Manhattan. DCA Commissioner Jonathan Mintz and NYSRA Executive Vice President Chuck Hunt emceed the event, which was held at The Institute of Culinary Education in Manhattan.

"Enjoying a winning café drink at one of the more than 900 sidewalk cafés in New York City is a great way to kick off the summer season and upcoming holiday weekend," said Jonathan Mintz, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. "We're thrilled with the enthusiasm of the participants, and were impressed with a mix of recipes that really showcased the diversity of outdoor dining options across the city." Mintz also thanked the contest's co-sponsors, the New York State Restaurant Association and New York's Institute for Culinary Education, as well as judges Gael Greene, Andrew Gold, Adam Kuban, and Kelly Choi.

"We're excited to partner with the Department of Consumer Affairs to highlight the City's sidewalk cafés," said Chuck Hunt, Executive Vice President of the New York State Restaurant Association. "The mixologists and restaurant owners that participated should be commended for their creativity and outstanding recipes, and we congratulate the winners."

All restaurants with legally operating sidewalk cafés were invited to submit one recipe per category - with alcohol or without - for consideration. Finalists were selected and asked to prepare their recipes in person. Judges sampled the finalists' entries prepared by restaurant mixologists and were judged based on appearance or "café curb appeal," taste, and overall presentation/technique.

Runners-up in the alcoholic mix category included ***Champrosia***, prepared by Wine & Roses Bar and Café (286 Columbus Avenue, Manhattan) and ***Moulin Rouge***, prepared by Café du Soleil (2723 Broadway). The runner-up in the non-alcoholic mix category included the ***Sparkling Watermelon Lemonade*** prepared by Josie's Restaurant (300 Amsterdam Avenue, Manhattan). Other restaurants participating in the final mix-off included Atlantic Grill, The Bubble Lounge, Cosmic Cantina, Isabella's, Ocean Grill, Red

Lion, Roc Restaurant, Rudy's Bar and Grille, and Tour Restaurant.

Restaurants with sidewalk cafés are at an all-time high, with more than 900 legally operating throughout the City - a 50% increase compared to five years ago. With the process for getting a new café faster and easier than ever, DCA works with the industry and neighborhood organizations to help ensure restaurants know the rules and requirements, as well as promote those that are licensed. New Yorkers and visitors alike can find an updated list of all sidewalk cafés operating this summer online at www.nyc.gov/consumers, as well as the mix-off recipes from winning restaurants.

About the judges: **GAEL GREENE** is *New York Magazine's* Insatiable Restaurant Critic, author of *Insatiable: Tales from a Life of Delicious Excess*, and co-founder of Citymeals-on-Wheels, which brings meals to homebound elderly New Yorkers. **ANDREW GOLD** is the Director of Student Affairs at The Institute for Culinary Education (ICE), New York City's most comprehensive center for culinary education. [In addition to judging, president Rick Smilow and the entire ICE staff made their state-of-the-art equipment and space available for the mix-off.] **ADAM KUBAN** is Managing Editor of *SeriousEats.com* and founding editor of New York City pizza blog *SliceNY.com*. **KELLY CHOI** is host of *Eat Out NY* on the Emmy-award winning NYC TV, where she checks out Gotham's culinary scene. [Ms. Choi selected the finalist drink recipes that were asked to be prepared in person.]

"We had a great time hosting the finalists' recipes for the Sidewalk Café Drink contest," said Rick Smilow, president and owner of New York's Institute for Culinary Education. "The choices were fantastic and showed great creativity. The winners deserve a nod for creating unique drinks perfect for relaxing at an outdoor café this summer."

The DCA licenses 55 different categories of business in New York City, including sidewalk cafés. For a license application and design guidelines, call 311 (or 212-NEW-YORK), or go online to the DCA Web site www.nyc.gov/consumers.

[Get the 2007 Sidewalk Café Drink Mix-Off recipes](#)