

# Local chefs battle at the Silly Market

Submitted by  
Alexandra Hynes

On Sunday, July 25, at the Park Silly Sunday Market, St. Regis Deer Crest Resort presented its first St. Regis Chef Challenge, a new culinary showcase where two top chefs from Park City dining establishments test their cooking talents against one another.

The St. Regis Chef Challenge will take place on the last Sunday of each month in Park City this summer, with remaining Challenges on Aug. 29 and Sept. 26 from 1 to 2 p.m. Each event will feature new chefs testing their talents, new judges evaluating the results, and new chefs' assistants being selected from the audience.

In these competitions, The St. Regis provides each competitor with identical market baskets of locally sourced ingredients, including fresh produce, protein, starch and a "secret ingredient". Volunteers are selected from the audience to assist each chef with prep work. The competitors have 30 minutes, a cooking burner and their imaginations and experience to transform raw ingredients into delectable dishes.

Wired with live microphones as they work, the chefs explain to the crowd the choices and techniques for their respective creations.

The resulting dishes are evaluated by a panel of judges based on presentation, use of ingredients, flavor and seasonality. As the chefs prepare their dishes, sample bites from each chef's restaurant are passed out to the audience so that they can enjoy a taste of the competitors' talents.

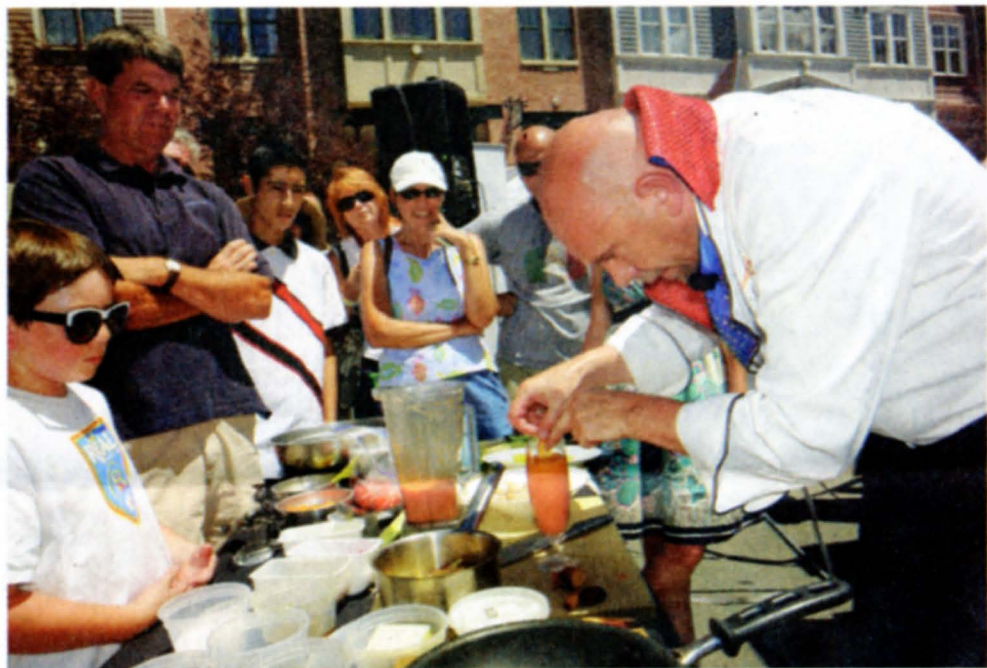


PHOTO BY TOM KELLY

**Chef Jean Louis puts the finishing touches on his creation during The St. Regis Chef Challenge at the Park Silly Sunday Market July 25.**

This past Sunday, Chef Jean Louis Montecot of Jean Louis Restaurant and Chef Dean Hottle of Snake Creek Grill were introduced to the crowd and presented with identical coolers of fresh local ingredients assembled from the St. Regis kitchens.

Both chefs got right to work with the assistance of two volunteer chef assistants selected from the audience – Kali Mowers from Salt Lake City assisted Chef Jean Louis, and Terri Stoddard, also from Salt Lake, assisted Chef Dean. Ingredients included fresh Ahi tuna, dungeness crab, mushrooms, fennel, strawberries, blood oranges, fingerling potatoes, salad greens, assorted fresh herbs including basil, mint and chervil.

Working under the hot sun with the encouragement of the

fascinated crowd, the two competing chefs crafted a total of five varied dishes and two blended fresh drinks. While the chefs labored at a furious pace, samples from Snake Creek Grill and Jean Louis Restaurant were passed out to the audience to familiarize them with the cuisine of the chefs' respective establishments.

The results of the chefs' rapid work at the Main Stage was evaluated by volunteer judges including Salt Lake's Gabi Marshall, lifelong cook, former professional baker and writer of the food blog, [TheFeastWithin.com](http://TheFeastWithin.com); Rick Marshall, Gabi's husband, artist, home wine-maker and discerning palate; Terri Gentry, Director of Catering at the St. Regis Deer Crest Resort; and Maggie Alvarez, Executive

Assistant to the General Manager at The St. Regis Deer Crest Resort.

After carefully tasting each of the dishes and the drinks, the panel of judges conferred and were unable to name a clear winner – both chefs had created such flavorful, creative, fresh and artfully presented items that the judges deemed that both chefs were winners.

Both contestants were awarded gift certificates for dinner at J&G Grill, the signature Jean-George Vongerichten restaurant at the St. Regis Deer Crest Resort. As the judges departed and the chefs commenced cleaning up their work stations, the remains of their creations were quickly consumed by members of the crowd, who polished off every delicious morsel within moments.