

Best of WNY- Buffalo Spree Magazine- 07/09 Iron Chef Buffalo?

There's never been a category for top chef in our best of WNY, mainly because we're afraid it would likely stump a lot of our readers, as well as our panelists. Buffalo certainly has its share of talented chefs, but in Buffalo, like everywhere else, the real chef of a real restaurant works behind the scenes. He or she doesn't have time to become a "personality." In real life, anybody who tried to act like Gordon Ramsay—or Rocco DiSpirito would simply be fired by an exasperated restaurant owner, and disappear from the scene pretty quickly. Restaurants are not show biz; they are businesses that need to run on an even keel.

But still. Wouldn't it be fun to have our own celebrity chef competition, if only for a few nights in the summer? It would be and it's going to happen, thanks to uber foodie Christa Glennie Seychew. Seychew has created a Buffalo-based chef competition, which will be taped in front of a live audience this summer. It's called Nickel City Chef.

Here's how Seychew has configured it. Four Nickel City chefs have already been chosen. Each will be challenged by another local chef on four Sundays this summer; the challengers are being chosen as we go to press. The two competitors will prepare three dishes each, at Artisan Kitchens and Baths on Amherst Street, in front of a live audience. As on *Iron Chef America*, a different secret ingredient will be the theme upon which each chef will prepare his or her "succulent variations." Emceeing and commentary will come from Bert Gambini of WNEB FM and chef Mike Andrzejewski of SeaBar.

You can attend these competitions, and you can vote, though the ultimate outcome will be decided by a panel of judges. Here's the schedule:

June 21—Chef Krista VanWagner of Curly's

July 19—Chef JJ Richert of Torches

August 23—Chef Paul Jenkins of Tempo

September 20—Chef Adam Goetz of Sample

Tickets are only \$20; for more information visit

nickelcitychef.com

—Elizabeth Licata

