

Kosher Nexus

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Wowzers Boys and Girls!

We did it! As the song said: "We're not a kid anymore; we're not a kid anymore!" Yuppers, your old pal the KN has reached its bar mitzvah year. Incredible. And they said it wouldn't last. They said that we were just a flash in the pan. They said we would fall flat on our face. They said lots of things. Who are "they?" Beats us! But it makes for a most dramatic intro to this issue of the Kosher Nexus. Actually, no one ever made any of the above statements, but we were going for the sympathy vote. Welcome to year number thirteen! Ready! Set! Go!

The Fancy Food Show

It was early July. It was hot in NYC. Even the dogs had short pants. Bottled water was selling like bottled water on the steaming streets of Manhattan. Suddenly, up ahead on the horizon, the Jacob Javits Center beckoned like a shimmering chimera of ice cream castles in the air.....

It was time for the mother of all food shows, the summer Fancy Food Show in New York. Your intrepid editor in chief spent two full days at the show. One day, we were accompanied by Super Studly Milton of Jamaica Estates. Studly Milton grew up in Da Bronx- his standards can be very exacting. Hearing him say to a vendor, "Yo, why should I like dis product?" is always a good way to spark some great conversation as they generally proceeded with a good answer. Along the way, we probably ran into about four hundred people who know Milton, all of whom wanted him to come to their booth and pose for a publicity shot, taste the food, make nice, or what-have-you.

As always, the Fancy Food Show is not for amateurs- only those with advanced foodie credentials (Milton used to be a restaurateur) are allowed in. With water stops and benches strategically placed all over the convention center, the show is a killer on the feet, but a true taste bud delight! So, tie those Nikes, and let's goooooooooooooooooooooo.

As always at the show, our first stop was to worship at the Temple of Bone Suckin' Sauce. We said hello to Sandi Ford and the Ford clan at the BSS booth. They gave us a new recipe for ribs: combine one 16 ounce jar of BSS with 12 ounces of orange juice. Mix together. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Put the ribs in a shallow pan and baste with the mixture you just made. Cover with foil. Cook three hours at 300 degrees. Uncover, baste with more BSS/OJ mixture. Raise oven temp. to 350. Cook the ribs another 30 minutes uncovered, basting again after the first 15 minutes. MMMM good!

We tried something else. We sautéed cubes of meat in onions and mushrooms and a bit of wine. Later on, we did a reduction of the pan and added some BSS to the wine that we used for the reduction. It was wonderful!

As always, the whole BSS crew was busy, busy, busy during the show. And no wonder- as we foodies are wont to observe: Bone Suckin' Sauce: don't go home without it!

Real Food

One of the bestest stops we made at the show was at the booth where they were promoting SWAD, The Best Taste In Town. The food is Indian food, and it is certified kosher in India. The kosher mark is a very large mark on the box, by the way- you can't miss it. The products are marketed by RAJA foods, 56-05 55 Drive, Maspeth, NY, 11378. The phone number is 800 800 7923. The foods are wonderful, and we had no idea what any of them are! Chana Masala (we thought it was a frum girl in Mississippi): chick peas in curry sauce
Gajar Halway : carrots in sweet cream sauce
Aloo Mutter: (aloo fadder, here I am in camp granada) peas and potatoes in a mild curry sauce
Arvi Masala: Indian yams in tomato onion sauce
Baghare Baingan: eggplant in cashew cream sauce
Mutter Paneer: peas and Indian cheese in a spiced sauce
Pav Bhaji: mixed veggies in spiced onion and tomato curry sauce
Shahi Rajma: red kidney beans in spiced tomato sauce
And the list goes on and on. They sure looked delish and smelled really good too! Give it a shot, why don't you?

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Royal George Cheese

Royal George is the largest manufacturer of kosher cheese in England. Other companies may be larger by importing more, but no one makes more kosher cheese in England than Royal George. We stopped by the booth many times, and we found the cheeses to be most delectable. Certification is by the OU. They offer English Cheddar, English Leicester, English Cheshire and English Double Gloucester. While we were visiting with them at the booth, we also got to taste the new Barkanit line as well. Barkanit is out of Israel and now has OU certification, as well. We will resist the temptation to fall back on some cheesy lines, but the fact is, the stuff was all quite good and quite tasty. On the web, you can find Royal George at www.coombecastle.com

Fillo Factory

The good folks at the Fillo Factory have introduced a new line of products called AUNT TRUDY'S. The line features gourmet, single serve vegetarian entrees and desserts. Certification is OU and OU-D. The products are all organic and natural. Take a good look at this incredible list:

Asian Vegetable pockets, Mediterranean Olive and Vegetable pockets, Organic Samosa, Zucchini and Tomato Samosa, Spinach and Feta pockets, Roasted Sweet Potato pockets, Mexicali pockets, Pizza Pockets, Eggplant pockets, Spinach and Potato pockets, Mushroom pockets, Apple pockets, Maple Walnut Baklava, Oatmeal Raisin Baklava and Soy Nut Baklava. Whew! We got tired just typing all of that. Hey, we gotta tell you- these are winners! Look them up at www.aunttrudys.com

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811 Palisade Avenue
Teaneck, NJ 07666
201-801-0707
e-mail: utj@aol.com

Editor in Chief:

Jeffrey Rappoport

Publications Editor:

Deborah Wenger



To reach the Kosher Nexus via e-mail:

rebrapp@utj.org

For information on membership in the Union for Traditional Judaism, please contact the UTJ office.

Rice Select Rice Mixes

shake it all up! The rice mavens at Rice Select have come up with some really super new rice mixtures. These Star-K certified rice mixtures are made for people not in a rush. You can't hurry these babies; the rice takes about 45 minutes to cook. We have to say, though, the wait is really worth it. Check these out: Texmati Brown and Wild Rice with Soft Wheat and Rye Berries, Texmati Brown and Red Rice with Pearled Barley and Rye Berries and Texmati White, Brown, Wild and Red Rice mix (that one only needs 15 minutes to cook), White, Brown and Red Rice with Red Lentils, and Red Rice and Beans with light Brown and Brown Rice. We say take either of the wild rice mixtures, add raisins and pine nuts and maybe even some cubes of cooked chicken, and you have quite a meal. Open a bottle of wine, light some candles, and sit back and enjoy a quiet dinner. You can reach Rice Select at 800-993-RICE.

Conifer Specialties, Inc.

This is a company with very few kosher products (compared to the rest of their line), but what they have is really special. Under the Canterbury Naturals label, they make: Kof-K certified Crepe Mix, Waffle Mix, Apple Cinnamon Pancake Mix and regular pancake mix. They also make Apple Cake Mix, Carrot Cake Mix, Pumpkin Cake Mix and Lemon Cake Mix under the same label. Under the Canterbury Cuisine label, they make Fudge Mix and Chocolate Orange Pound Cake Mix. Under the Fisher label, they make Fair Scone Mix, Blueberry Scone Mix, Cranberry Orange Scone Mix and Cinnamon Apple Scone Mix. All of the products above, by the way, are dairy. You can reach Conifer at 800 588 9160. On line, they are at www.conifer-inc.com

Fillo Factory Part Deux

We realized that we had missed part of the huge Fillo display, so we went back for more. T'was good that we did, because we totally missed the expanded line of Fillo Factory gourmet, organic and natural foods. All of these products are OU. Some are dairy, some are pareve- check each box.

Spinach and Cheese Fillo Appetizers, Cheese Fillo Appetizers, Party Masters Fillo Hors D'oeuvre ensemble, Party Masters Fillo Hors D'oeuvres Part II – pareve, Potato and Herb Petite Fillo Puffs, Broccoli and Cheese Pie, Spinach and Cheese Pie, Apple Turnovers, Assorted Pastries, Apple Strudel, Pastry Shells (in both large size and small), Organic Fillo Dough, Organic Whole Wheat Fillo Dough, Spelt Flour Dough, Country Style Fillo Dough, and Kataifi Shredded Fillo Dough {MK certified} (ie, like for baklava). These are all certified organic, vegetarian, yeast free, with no hydrogenated fats and they are kosher! You can reach Fillo at 800 OK FILLO. On the web, you can find them at www.fillofactory.com

Celebrate Responsibly

KEDEM isn't just great wine and regular grape juices anymore. Nope! Kedem invites you to celebrate without alcohol with what they are calling the champagne of non alcoholic beverages. Try Kedem Sparkling California Zinfandel grape juice, Sparkling California Chardonnay grape juice, and Sparkling Rose grape juice. All are 100% pure grape juice. We tried the Zinfandel and it was delightful!

Care for a Spot of Tea To Wash It All Down?

Twinings introduces a new line of green teas. Certification is by the London Bet Din. They offer: Decaffeinated Green Tea, Green Tea with Camomile, Green Tea with Jasmine, and, of course, plain old Green Tea, which is not plain by any means! We tried a chilled taste of the Green Tea with a hint of Jasmine. We loved it! Twinings has been selling tea since 1706, so they certainly have got it right!
www.twinings.com

Close the Door, I'm Dressing

We totally loved the dressings at Caroline's. These OU certified dressings were quite tasty and highly original, too. How about: Sweet French Onion, Sweet Greek Vinaigrette, Sweet Orange Poppyseed, Sweet Celery, Sweet Blue Onion and Sweet Razzmataz (raspberries and lime)? We have never had dressings like these. The taste was really remarkable. The blue cheese with onion dressing was a real treat! In fact, they were all worth a few trips back to taste them over and over. You can reach Cains Foods at 800 225 0601.

A sister company, Olde Cape Cod also makes some mighty fine condiments. They make four mustards under Kof-K certification: Honey mustard, Cranberry mustard, Dijon mustard and Horseradish mustard. Under OU certification, they make the following BBQ and Grilling Sauces: Sweet and Bold, Toasted Sesame, Lemon Ginger, Cranberry, Angus and Honey Orange. Also under OU supervision, they make the following Olde Cape Cod dressings (some are dairy, some are pareve- check labels): Honey Dijon, Honey French, Garlic and Herb, Raspberry Vinaigrette, Caesar, Sundried Tomato Olive Oil and Basil, Poppyseed, as well as tartar sauce, seafood cocktail sauce, and two different kinds of crackers. The phone number is 800 225 0601.

Remember Plochman's mustard in the little squeeze container meant to look like a tiny barrel? Well, Plochman's is still around, and they make some really fine mustards. Try these on for size: Sweet 'n Yellow Honey Mustard, Kosciusko Beer Mustard, Kosciusko Spicy Brown Mustard, and, under the Plochman's

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label:: Dill, Lemon, Sundried Tomato, Sweet Hot Jazz, Chicago Fire and Chili Dog mustards. They are seriously into mustard, and you will be, too, once you taste these mustards. Seriously, in this day of upscale, expensive product, who would have thought that we would end up coming home to Plochman's for some really fine mustards? Well, we wouldn't have thought it, and we would have been way wrong. This is some really good stuff. On the web, you can find them at www.plochman.com Their phone number is: 800 843 4566.

Time for Dessert

If you don't know about Max and Mina's Ice Cream, you must have been asleep for the last few years. Either that, or when you go to the doctor's office, you do not read People magazine. Or the New York Times. Max and Mina's are only the most famous hand made ice cream in America. Who else would give us lox flavored ice cream? Or pizza ice cream? Or chocolate covered potato chip fudge ice cream? Yup, you got it! This is not your mother's old fashioned ice cream store.

The store is located in Queens, NY at 71-26 Main St, Flushing. The phone number there is 718 793 8629. Supervision is by the Queens Vaad. Simply put, there is no one else out there who makes the kind of crazy flavors the Becker brothers do at their store. We'll forego the lox ice cream, but we would like to try the horseradish ice cream!

Galaxy Desserts make some really decadent desserts. The company is under KSA supervision and the cakes are Dairy. But what cakes they are! Chocolate Grand Teton, Triple Mousse, Grand Sequoia, Four Seasons, White Chocolate and Raspberry Grand Teton, Egg Nog Cheese cake, Key Lime Tart and a whole lot more. These are way, way upscale cakes. They are a delight to look at, and an even bigger delight to taste. You can reach Galaxy Desserts at 800 225 3523. On the web, you can find them at www.galaxydesserts.com

While we are doing desserts, let us pause a moment for a quick recipe. We stopped at the Louisiana State booth and picked up a copy of Louisiana Cooking magazine. Inside, we found the best and easiest recipe we have ever seen for crème fraiche from Chef Jeff Kleinpeter.

Makes four cups
One quart of whipping cream
4 tablespoons of sour cream

Pour the quart of whipping cream into a microwavable bowl. Heat to 98 degrees. When that is done, beat in four tablespoons of sour cream. Put the bowl on the counter and cover with a dish towel. Let it sit for 24 hours. The crème fraiche will be good for about ten days to two weeks. Use as a whipped topping.

Cake and Tikun Olam

Greyston Bakery is an incredible bakery with an incredible sense of mission- they make a point of hiring and training people regardless of work history. They provide training and good wages and benefits to those who often have never had any economic stability in their lives. In addition, they happen to be a real gourmet bakery, too. They also happen to be the sole supplier of brownies (over two million pounds per year) to Ben and Jerry's ice cream! The company is located in Yonkers, NY, and you can actually go there and buy their cakes on the spot! They are located at 104 Alexander Street. The phone number there is: 800 BUY CAKE. Certification is Kof-K Dairy.

So, what do they bake?

Well, little lady, hold on to your hat: Lemon tart, Key Lime tart, Pecan tart, German Chocolate cake, Peanut Butter Explosion, Carrot cake, Triple Mousse cake, Lemon Mousse cake, Venetian Wine cake, "Old Fashioned" Coconut cake, and (may we have a drum roll, please?) Lotus in Mud. That last one is to die for! It is made up of a dense chocolate base filled with ganache and pieces of chocolate cake, blanketed with a thick chocolate glaze. O my goodness, we are in sugar shock just typing the words! Mama put the coins on my eyes for surely I have died and gone to heaven!

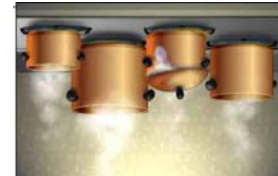
This is a true story: While we stood there silently crying and wondering how we could manage to taste all of the cakes in a relatively short span of time and still have time to see any part of the show, another man came along and stood next to us. He stared at the display. Then he said, "So, tell me, what do you recommend, aside from the whole bottom row?" We all laughed, and then we both sat down and said to the nice lady behind the counter, "Honey, bring it on!" She did. As we said before, "to die for, just to die for!"

Now it's time to say goodbye to all our company....

It's time we brought this issue of the KN to a close. From all of us here at the UTJ, best wishes for a shana tova. As always, you are the reason we do what we do. It is our pleasure to serve you and write for you. Your support and continued loyalty have been inspirational.

We would like to close on a very personal note.

This past summer in Jerusalem, we stood under the chupah at the wedding of our daughter, Tali, to her bashert, Yoav. It was a most special occasion. Tali and her father have always had a very special connection, and although she has remained behind the scenes vis a vis the Kosher Nexus, her influence is felt keenly throughout the things we write. Tali and Yoav are a beautiful couple and we pray that they be privileged to build a bayit neeman b'ysrael and may they merit 120 years of happiness together! Amen!



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