

**Exclusive: Our Annual Event Industry Forecast for 2021;  
Creative & unique appetizers from The Special Event + Catersource**

# SPECIAL EVENTS

**WINTER 2020**

**LOOKING  
FORWARD**  
*to 2021*

**Industry Professionals  
Share 22 Positive  
Predictions for 2021**

**ACTOR NIECY NASH  
MARRIES JENNIFER  
BETTS**  
**P. 10**

**FLORALS GO  
BIG & BOLD**  
**P. 46**



## FOOD FOR FÊTES



# Four flavors, four chefs

by Kathleen Stoehr

**IT WAS LITERALLY** one of the last “real” gatherings of 2020, even if we were only a quarter way into the year. Gala, ACE, and CATIE award nominees mingled prior to the industry awards ceremony at The Special Event + Catersource the evening of March 12, 2020 for small bites, conversation, and music that, who would have thought—was centered around a theme of The Roaring Twenties. The Roaring Twenties... a decade of opulence sprung from the jaws of a pandemic. Oh, the irony!

But there was nothing but joyful enthusiasm for the passed appetizer bites provided, by way of four chefs who truly know their way around a kitchen.



TOP: **CHEF KAREN O'CONNOR** (SECOND FROM RIGHT) OPENED THE CULINARY EXPERIENCE STAGE ON DAY 1 WITH FELLOW CHEFS JOANNE PURNELL OF GOOD GRACIOUS! (FAR LEFT) AND ELGIN WOODMAN OF A JOY WALLACE CATERING, NOW PIE HIGH CHEFS (FAR RIGHT). ROBIN SELDEN, MARCIA SELDEN CATERING AND EVENTS (SECOND FROM LEFT) SERVED AS EMCEE. PHOTO COURTESY KATHLEEN STOEHR

ABOVE: CHEF KAREN O'CONNOR'S CHICKEN ROULADE



LEFT: **CHEF MARK ELLIS**. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHEF

ABOVE: SMALL PIPETTES WERE FILLED WITH CAESAR DRESSING VIA SOUS VIDE

A little back story: the four chefs, Karen O'Connor of Daniel et Daniel, Toronto, Canada; Clay Brunton of Beets Hospitality Group, California; John Reed, Customized Culinary Solutions, Illinois; and Mark Ellis of The Chef's Table, Massachusetts presented demo sessions on the Culinary Experience stage at Catersource earlier in the week. Each offered an appetizer recipe for the awards event that would pair with their presentations. Go listen to the chef, then sample their creation at the reception. It was a dream to have such a beautifully curated experience for our The Special Event and Catersource audiences.

Each bite briefly transported us into the aesthetic each chef was attuned to for the conference. For Chef O'Connor, it was the many ways chicken can be utilized at events of any kind. Her chicken roulade, normally a center of the plate entree, became a delicious small plate.

Chef Ellis, who presented a session on sous vide, offered a tiny Caesar salad with an accompanying pipette that had been filled via his clever sous vide-style method, demonstrated earlier at his session.



ABOVE: **CHEF JOHN REED**. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHEF

LEFT: **POTATO TIKKA FRITTER** FROM **CHEF JOHN REED**. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHEF