


The
FOOD ISSUE

July 13, 2012

The Daily Dan

CHIC
HAMPTON



The
Law & Order
(and joy!) of organic
farming!

Steal From Jean-Georges!

Outsource Your BBQ!

Publicize Your Efforts!

*Stephanie March,
Scott Chaskey and
Monica Forman*

at the Peconic Land Trust's Quail Hill Farm

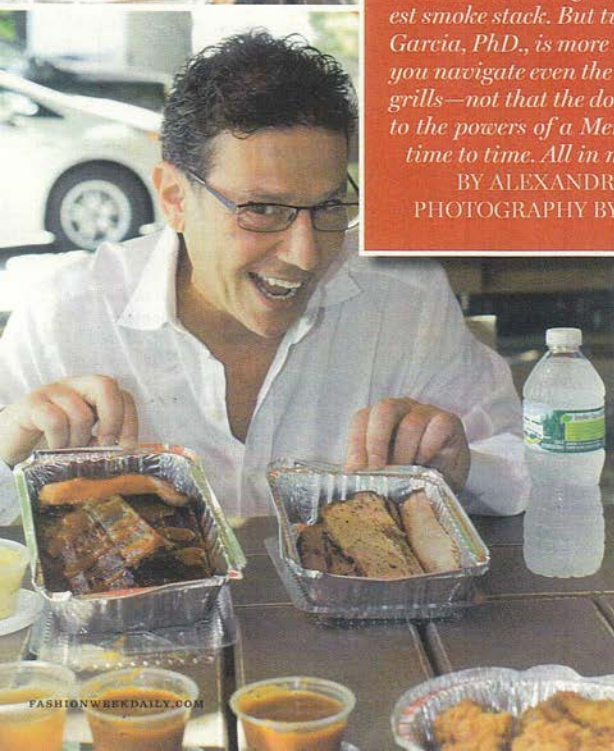
The Daily Dan is a joint venture of The Daily Front Row & Dan's Papers



SHOCK and OZ

Where is the least likely place to hunt down one of the country's top nutritionists? The Millers' Real BBQ, East Hampton's newest smoke stack. But turns out that Dr. Oz Garcia, Ph.D., is more than willing to help you navigate even the most treacherous of grills—not that the doc is totally immune to the powers of a Merlot and steak from time to time. All in moderation, baby!

BY ALEXANDRA ILYASHOV
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GIORGIO NIRO



You're really into that sauce.

Yes! Barbecuing is a summer ritual, just like running on the back roads, hitting the beaches, and going to parties. It's a lifetime ritual, too! I'm Cuban, and I grew up in Florida and New York having healthy barbecues with organic pork or venison sausage. When I visit my family in Miami, we do really traditional Cuban barbecues, which are mind-blowing. At Christmas, for instance, we barbecue a pig in a pine box, which we bury in the ground, cover in coals, and cook for about 24 hours. It tastes like heaven.

No kidding!

It's kind of central to the Cuban diet. But I've also gone through very strict periods; I was a vegetarian for many, many years. There was even a time when I was vegan!

Clearly, that ended.

When I re-introduced meat, it was primarily fish. Now, when I do my own barbecues, they tend to be Mediterranean—lots of fish, shrimp, and lobster. I'm still into eating a lot of vegetables, which I throw on the grill and roast 'em up.

How often do you eat meat nowadays?

I don't deny myself; I probably have fish almost every day, and I'm a vegetarian for a day or two each week. I do love meat, though, and I'll have it once or twice a month.

Once or twice a month?

Let's just say, I'm not going to deny myself something when I'm out in the Hamptons for the weekend.

You're not as strict as we expected.

Well, if you're going to eat meat, it should be very, very minimally processed. Goat meat is great, too! I encourage people to eat as much organic food as possible.

What food do you unequivocally avoid?

Pizza. I just don't want to eat anything that is high in salts and processed fats.

What are your seasonings of choice?

I don't use much salt but, I like a lot of spices and condiments: garlic, scallions, chives, rosemary, bay leaves! Rosemary goes with everything. At a barbecue last summer, we used rosemary as a skewer for shrimp because it's a really sturdy herb that's on a twig, basically.

What's the best trick you've cribbed lately?

David Bouley is a dear friend of mine, and he's probably one of the top five chefs in the world. He had this completely tricked-out, amazing barbecue upstate once, and he used lavender on roasted lamb.

Sounds delightful! Any other flavor forays to recommend?

If I want something that's a little more on the hot side, I'll use jalapeños, which are healthy and great for digestion because they help break down meat. I also use Indian spices like cumin.

From spicing up to slimming down, what are the dumbest diets out there?

All of them, probably! Most people don't know how to eat, and when they go on diets they don't understand how food affects them. Then they beat themselves up when they break the diet. That's just an eventuality for every dieter. If a single diet worked, you wouldn't have 1,000 diet books at Barnes & Noble!

What do people seem to be most ineffectively messing with the most lately?

Currently everyone is into juicing—it's made an immense comeback. People are trying to navigate and negotiate juicing, making lines inside places like Organic Avenue and Liquiteria. It's crazy!

What should one do, besides aim for organic?

Someone who's well-educated about food will often style their way of eating as "Mediterranean," rich in vegetables and whole grains, a lot of seafood and poultry, and low amounts of saturated fat.

How horrible are carbs, really?

I'm not really big on gluten so I encourage people to reduce the amount of breads, pastas, cookies, crackers, pizza, and cakes. Typically, people feel a lot

great, too.

Does a rigid diet impede on fun out East?

When people are out there, they're mainly interested in having fun. If you're going to do a lot of recreational eating, you need to overcompensate with exercise—no one is going to be following really strict eating rules while they're out there.

On the home front: You're a frequent guest and sometimes-renter—ever considered buying out East?

I always tell myself that this is the year I'm going to buy...and I keep kicking that can down the road.

Which 'hood would you probably buy in?

East Hampton—that's where I first rented, and it's where I've spent the most time over the past 30 or so years.

What's a top Hamptons memory or two?

The first time I came out to the Hamptons in 1980 and rented a small apartment in a house by the beach; I was completely blown away by the beauty. Also, Russell Simmons' charity Art For Life honored me last year. It was one of the highlights of my life, never mind just the Hamptons!

What would a collab between the two of you look like?

It would involve a message of better eating, meditation, yoga, and a peaceful world.

When it comes to celeb clients, who would you love to add to the impressive roster?

Ron Perelman! Why not?

What's one of the most overlooked tenets of wellness?

It's very important to learn how to de-stress without too much alcohol.

Do you ever indulge?

I pair everything with wine! I'll go to Smith & Wollensky with a friend and power down on a steak. There is a pleasure associated with sitting down in front of a great piece of meat, a glass of red wine, and roasted vegetables. It's unparalleled!

What's your favorite Long Island wine?

Duck Walk Vineyards. I think Long Island wines are tremendous. I will probably get a case from them after this interview!

Do you err on the side of a red or a white?

It depends on what's being served, but my preference tends to be towards white wine. A nice Chardonnay? You can't beat that.

Health-wise, should we drink red or white?

Red wine has a nutrient called resveratrol, which may reduce the risk of heart attack and different cancers, so red may actually increase your lifespan! There are definitely benefits of a good Merlot. You might not get that from a white, but there's still pleasure involved in drinking it.

What's your best hangover remedy?

Most of the natural cures don't work well, so I recommend mixing a scoop or two of carbonated magnesium with Alka-Seltzer before going out.

The next morning, I'll go on a six-mile run then sit in the sauna. At my Equinox, there's also an ice cold plunge; going back and forth between that and the sauna works wonders. Out in the Hamptons, there's nothing like getting sweaty and then jumping in the ocean!



better after doing so. As you get older, especially, you really need to regulate—it's much harder to control your weight, hormones, and metabolism. I just turned 61 and I manage by body and my health by what I put in it. There are people half my age who look completely blown-out—drinking tons of coffee and eating whatever they can grab. Starbucks came out with a Big Gulp-sized coffee, and it's like the size of your stomach!

How else can one eat healthfully, beyond batty diets or restrictive regimens?

Be knowledgeable about how food works and what it can do to you. You should enjoy the culture of eating, but you want to make sure it's qualitatively significant. About 70 percent of Americans are overweight. People eat too much and don't know how to manage themselves, and just eat inexpensively...you can literally eat yourself to death in America doing that! Even Walmart is carrying organic food now.

How do you stay fit out in the Hamptons?

I go running every day. Tracy Anderson's studio is