

Created by: Debra C. Argen

with Chef Michael Anthony - New York Culinary Experience - The International Culinary

With a growing trend towards healthy eating, I enrolled in a class on **Organic Grains and Heirloom Beans** with **Chef Partner Michael Anthony** of **Gramercy Tavern** in **New York**, as part of the **New York Culinary Experience** hosted by **New York magazine** and **The International Culinary Center**. What I learned is that incorporating grains and beans in your diet does not have to mean boring meals. As someone who eats seafood, but does not eat poultry or meat, I am always looking for alternative ways to add more protein to add my diet. While I do like to eat healthy, I am also a dedicated foodie who does not like to eat bland meals in the guise of healthful cuisine.

On April 29, 2012, I had the pleasure of cooking with Chef Michael Anthony of Gramercy Tavern in New York, as part of the two-day culinary extravaganza called the New York Culinary Experience held at the prestigious culinary school, The International Culinary Center located in the SoHo neighborhood of New York. Over the course of two days, students had the opportunity to take two classes per day with some of New York's top toques.



Debra Argen and Chef Michael Anthony

I enrolled in a class with Chef Michael Anthony where for 2 hours and 30 minutes his goal was to get the class excited about cooking with grains like flaxseed, spelt, which is actually an ancient grain, toasted green wheat, pearl barley, and unpolished barley, as well as cooking with interesting heirloom beans. Some students took the class because they are vegetarians, while others were looking for healthy protein alternatives.

When it comes to American cooking and eating habits, he feels that grains and beans should be the backbone of our diet, and with an emphasis on healthy eating, we should be adding more protein in the form of beans and grains.

With suggested portions of meat, poultry, and seafood approximately the size of your palm or a deck of cards, he feels that we should fill our plates first with vegetables, and then put the meat, chicken, or seafood on the plate, as opposed to how most people eat.

He likes using interesting beans like the red merlot bean, the white soybean, and the organic yellow-eyed

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bean. He especially likes the yellow-eyed bean, a member of the kidney bean family, which is ivory in color with a distinct yellow marking, because they plump up when cooked.



Yellow-Eyed Beans

Uncooked, the yellow-eyed beans were visually appealing with their mustard yellow "eye" and cooked, they were large, plump, and delicious with an appealing, chewy texture, that provided a tasty base for his recipe of Ruby Red Shrimp, Yellow-Eyed Beans, and Salsa Verde made with kale leaves, pine nuts, olive oil, cilantro, parsley, and chives. The recipe used Ruby Red Shrimp, which are found in the gulf coast, and develop prominent red lines when cooked.



Shrimp and Yellow-Eyed Beans

He also introduced us to toasted green wheat, sometimes called freekeh or farik, used in Middle Eastern cuisine, which has a high protein level, four times as much fiber, which is mostly insoluble fiber, and has a low glycemic index, something important for diabetics. He paired the toasted green wheat with warm beets, a selection of herbs, pistachios, and garlic puree.

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Toasted Green Wheat and Warm Beets

I love barley, which is a delicious and nutritional grain, yet I never really considered using it much beyond in soup recipes. Grains like unpolished barley must soak for 1 - 2 hours before cooking, and although they also require a longer cooking time, with a bit of planning, the extra effort is well worth the taste and health benefits.



Carrots and Barley Risotto

Chef Michael Anthony demonstrated that barley does not have to take a secondary role, and used it as a substitute for Arborio rice. His flavorful and colorful Carrots and Barley Risotto, incorporated onions, leeks, garlic, barley, vegetable stock, ginger, carrots, coriander seed, olive oil, which he finished with shiitake mushrooms, parmesan cheese, chopped herbs, and fiddleheads, which are the sprouts of ferns and are available during the spring. This healthy and attractive recipe featured a great color combination, a variety of textures, and contrasting flavors of earthiness of the shiitake mushrooms, slightly bitter taste of the fiddleheads, and sweetness from the carrots.

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International Culinary Center Student - Christine Han

There were approximately 24 students cooking with Chef Michael Anthony, a few of The International Culinary Center Chefs and their students, as well as a few volunteers to assist the class, and to enjoy the fruits of our labor, because meals shared are really the best kind.



International Culinary Center Student - Sonia Kap

I left the class with a few new recipe ideas from Chef Michael Anthony and learned that cooking healthy meals does not have to mean eating boring, bland, and unexciting.

Read the [Chefs' Recipes](#) section where **Chef Michael Anthony** graciously shares his recipes for Carrots and Barley Risotto; Ruby Red Shrimp, Yellow-Eyed Beans, and Salsa Verde; and Toasted Green Wheat and Warm Beets.

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Debra Argen Sharing Shrimp and Yellow-Eyed Beans

with Donna Ng

Read about other classes in the [Gastronomy](#) section and interviews and recipes from the other classes in the [Chefs' Recipes](#) section.

Visit **Luxury Experience's Facebook** page to listen to interviews with the chefs and see more photos from the event. www.Facebook.com/LuxuryExperience

To attend the **New YorkCulinary Experience 2013**, please visit the **New Yorkmagazine** website: www.NYmag.com/nyce.

Regarding taking classes throughout the year with the excellent chef instructors at **The International Culinary Center** at their New York, California, or Italian Campuses, please visit the website: www.InternationalCulinaryCenter.com.

NEW YORK

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