

## DISH

continued from page 14

Instead, Holliday was a chemist and engineer for many years until she adopted a plant-based lifestyle. “I decided what I really wanted to do was promote veganism, a plant-based diet, and it would be easier for me to do that as a restaurateur than as an engineer.”

Holliday’s favorite fresh herb is basil, which works well in everything from beverages to Italian and Thai dishes. Basil can enhance almost anything, she says, “and when it is fresh, it is orders of magnitude better.”

Jason McCarty, a managing partner at Eclectic Cafe, would make his wife the beneficiary of his Mother’s Day scenario. “The entree would be roasted rack of lamb because it’s my wife’s favorite. I would serve it with sautéed asparagus with slivered almonds and herb rice,” he says, and he’d finish the meal with chocolate mousse, which pairs well with lamb and red wine.

McCarty’s mother worked two jobs when he was growing up, so he had plenty of time to experiment in the kitchen. “I was able to figure out what went well together and what didn’t. I quickly discovered that nothing is better for me than contrasting flavors like sweet and salty.”

For McCarty, “Spring is all about fresh fruits and vegetables. Everything is in bloom! I really enjoy putting together a fresh salad with raw vegetables, a little fresh fruit, cheese, nuts and mixed greens. The greens this time of year are delicious!”

Mama’s Famous Pizza & Heroes co-owner Joe Spina, Jr., says “Spring is especially exciting because of the availability of fresh, locally grown vegetables — almost any veggie works great on pizza! But what initially comes to my mind is fresh arugula, spinach, eggplant, basil, and other wonderful ingredients that [my brother] Vinnie grows fresh in his garden right here on the north side of Tucson.”

Pasta would be on Spina’s imaginary Mother’s Day menu. “Pasta is delicious, especially when we use mama’s authentic Sicilian marinara sauce recipe,” he says. “Prep time for most pasta dishes is minimal, and that would afford me the maximum amount of time to chat with mom (if she wasn’t so busy in heaven) and give her the love she so deserves.”

Mama’s was, of course, inspired by his mother. “Mama was born in 1914 to two Sicilian immigrants. She was one of 13 children! As one of the older girls, she was taken out of school in the seventh grade, so that she could learn to cook and help her mother care for her younger broth-

ers and sisters,” he explains. “Mama went on to marry our dad and (in our eyes) was the best Italian cook ever! When my brother Vinnie, our sister Kathryn and I were old enough to fend for ourselves, mama went to work as a waitress in Hempstead, N.Y., to help our dad with the household bills. It was Vinnie’s idea to go into the restaurant business as a way of honoring our mom.”

George Ferranti, co-owner of El Cisne Restaurante, gets excited when he talks about serving red snapper — or huachinango, as he calls it — on Mother’s Day. “It’s going to be fresh, fresh, fresh,” he says, explaining that the dense fish that can be served as medallions or as a fried whole fish. But for his mother, his choice might be “a fun dish called chile en nogada,” a poblano chile stuffed with ground sirloin, raisins, walnuts and Mexican spices, covered with an almond nougat sauce topped with pomegranate seeds.

“I claim to have five mothers,” says Ferranti, and the one he credits with having the most influence on El Cisne is “my madrina, Nancy Carnero — she’s my godmother, she’s the general manager” who has been with the restaurant for 22 years. “She is highly experienced in the front end but also in the back end — she’s a Peruvian chef,” and Peru, he says, “is pretty much the epicenter of culinary

fusion in the world today. She definitely influences a lot of our decisions through our cooking techniques and through our flavor profiles.”

Scott Sinclair, co-owner of Pionic Pizza, claims that his grandma is “the best cook on earth,” waxing rhapsodic about her matzah ball soup, her chicken schnitzel, and especially her noodle kugel.

For his mother, a vegetarian who likes to keep things healthful, he’d serve a simple, fresh salad for Mother’s Day, with roasted red peppers, artichoke hearts, cherry tomatoes and balsamic dressing. While cooking is not her forte, his mother shines on the restaurant’s business end. “I really love working with her,” he says. “She taught me a lot about the numbers, about management” and about having high standards for the day-to-day operations of the restaurant.

Many of Pionic’s ingredients are especially tasty in springtime, such as the arugula and fresh basil the restaurant offers as “after bakes,” but Sinclair is looking forward to a new pizza that has yet to be designed. He explains that as a fundraiser, the Humane Society of Southern Arizona will be auctioning the right to design a pizza with Pionic. The Humane Society will also get a portion of the proceeds from the pizza’s sales. Once it’s been designed, Sinclair will get to name the new creation.

MAKE YOUR  
*Mother's Day*  
A **Mama's Day!**



Join us on this Mother's Day and Mom will receive a flower, dessert and an entry into our raffle for **FREE Mama's Pizza** for a year!

Check out special offers on that day at [www.mamasfamous.com](http://www.mamasfamous.com)

|                            |                             |                         |                                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Oracle & Magee<br>297-3993 | Speedway & Swan<br>319-8856 | 22nd & Kolb<br>750-1919 | Broadway & Houghton<br>751-4600 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|



ORDER ONLINE  
.....  
[www.PionicPizza.com](http://www.PionicPizza.com)

ORDER BY PHONE  
.....  
520.327.4992



**FREE PIZZA**  
with purchase of any unlimited  
topping entree & 2 drinks

Limit one free pizza per order. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Must mention coupon when ordering and present it to the cashier or the delivery driver



*We Deliver!*

2643 N. Campbell Ave. #105 Tucson, AZ 85719