



A Boulder Flavor

Although Hosea Rosenberg may be best known for winning the season five title of “Top Chef,” he was a part of the Colorado cuisine scene long before he appeared on the popular Bravo reality show. INTERVIEW BY LAUREN WISE

His original path wasn’t intended toward the kitchen, and culinary school never graced the pages of his resume. But while studying engineering and physics at the University of Colorado, Rosenberg worked in local kitchens to pay his way through classes. Upon graduating, he realized he was much more passionate about the culinary arts rather than the art of math.

Rosenberg worked his way up from dishwasher to prep cook to line cook, and landed his first chef position in 2001 at Boulder’s Dandelion Restaurant. He joined the ranks of Big Red F Restaurant Group as sous chef at Zolo Southwestern Grill before moving on to Jax Fish House Boulder in 2004, and has since won such awards as Best Chef at the Denver International Wine Festival, and was named winner of the Flatiron Chef Competition—seven times. Now, he channels his energy into traveling, running Bacon, Inc., and working closely with many local farmers and ranchers in Colorado.

In what ventures are you currently involved besides working as a guest chef at Jax Fish House?

I am operating my catering company in Boulder, Bacon, Inc., and I do quite a bit of consulting through HZR Culinary Consulting, LLC. I have been traveling across the country and the globe cooking for private events,

charitable organizations and culinary festivals. I’m also co-producing a television show with Warren Miller Productions, farming naturally raised pigs, lamb, and chickens, and looking for a space to open a new restaurant in the Boulder/Denver area in 2012.

What are some of your favorite Boulder/Denver area restaurants?

There are too many to list! But I’d have to say in Denver I like Fruition, Linger, Colt & Gray, Steubens, Rioja, Mizuna, Osteria Marco and LoLa. And in Boulder I’m into 1010, Kitchen, Frasca, Black Cat, Basta and Zolo ... and Jax in both cities.

What is one of the best meals you’ve eaten in Boulder?

A tequila dinner at Zolo, crafted by my boy Smitty [executive chef Brett Smith]. Sitting on the patio on a perfect day, eating amazing food and sipping some of the world’s best tequila is my idea of a perfect meal.

What is the one must-see attraction for visitors to Colorado?

Get up to Rocky Mountain National Park, and don’t just drive—get out and hike. Then, catch a summer concert at Red Rocks (after a dinner at one of the above named spots, of course).

What is something about Boulder that visitors may not know of?

We have the atomic clock at NIST [National Institute of Standards and Technology]—yeah, the clock that tells the world what time it is.

You are very active in charity. What is a local organization that has a place close to your heart?

I’m doing a lot of work with cancer organizations, as my father passed away after a long battle with lung cancer.

What are some of your favorite flavor profiles that best represent Colorado?

Peaches, lamb, corn, beef, Rocky Ford melons, and my little baby Berkshire piggies that are going to grow up to be amazing prosciutto!

What’s your favorite ingredient to cook with?

Only one?! I guess that it all starts and ends with bacon.

Colorado is known for some great breweries and wineries. Do you have a favorite?

Avery Brewing Company. Not only do I love their beer, but I love them too.

What is your favorite culinary event in Colorado?

I’d have to say the F&W [Food and Wine] Classic in Aspen. I know it’s everyone’s “favorite,” but it’s the only time of the year when so many things are happening at the same time—all with the best in the industry.

Among the awards and competitions you’ve won, along with winning “Top Chef,” what accomplishment are you most proud of?

I started my career as a dishwasher. I’ve held every position there is in a restaurant. I’m just so proud that I’ve made it this far, without a culinary degree. Just being where I am today, at this moment, is my proudest achievement.