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CULINARY CURRENTS®

Cure for the common breakfast: Chefs use house-made meats to perk up morning menus

BY PAMELA PARSEGHIAN

RITA CRANE

"I'm a fanatic," says chef Alan Kantor in describing his quest for quality ingredients. Kantor admits that one of his cooks once dreamt that when the chef could not procure

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those found naturally in the fruit juice. He soaks boneless pork loin for four to five days before hot smoking on the stovetop for about an hour or until just medium rare. Then the meat is finished to order on a griddle and

as a morning hangover remedy.

The sausage in the gravy is prepared on premise with pork spiced with sage, and the gravy includes

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orchard's organic Golden Delicious apples. In the
mer he replaces the apples with seasonal peaches.

Both curing mixtures include a bit of water, carrots, onions, sea salt and no extra sugar, besides

mixture, Lynch smokes the meat for six hours in a "pit" fueled with pecan and apple woods.

Lynch serves his Minnesota back bacon with eggs for $8.50 or offers it in eggs Benedict for $9.25. For the same price, Lynch concocted a "red-eye" Benedict with buttermilk biscuits and sausage gravy. Lynch says he named the gravy, which does not include coffee, "red-eye" after a sauce cowboys often used

In Las Vegas,
made meats at Delmonico Steakhouse, which is
owned by chef Emeril Lagasse. Delmonico's sous
chef Nathan Katz says: "I've probably made over 30
kinds of sausage. It is endless, the flavors we make.

For example he grinds lamb and adds pork fa
back, mustard, white wine reduced with rosemar
shallots, bay leaf and pepper. He grills the lam
sausage and teams it with roasted fennel relis
white bean cassoulet and foie gras for an appet
er that fetches $20.

Katz also prepares three kinds of bacon — po

Right: Alan Kantor, chef of MacCallum

Farther east in Minneapolis, Minnesota back bacon, prepared in the kitchen of FireLake Grill House & Cocktail Bar, "reflects who and where we are," says the restaurant's chef Paul Lynch. "It is a Midwestern restaurant. We are in the breadbasket of America."

He purchases Minnesota-raised Berkshire and Duroc breeds of pig for chops and loins, and calls Canadian bacon "Minnesota back bacon." And besides reminding guests of where they are dining, he claims his back bacon outshines most. "The difference in the eating of the product is night and day compared to rubbery pink meat that most people buy," Lynch says.

After curing loins for four days in standard brine with a touch of extra heat from a Cajun-style spice mixture, Lynch smokes the meat for six hours in a "pit" fueled with pecan and apple woods.

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The sauce in the gravy is prepared on premise with pork spiced with sage, and the gravy includes cream, paprika and a touch of cayenne. "It dances on your tongue, but it is not going to light you up," says Lynch, referring to the level of spice intensity.

Sausage gravy also moistens FireLake's breakfast pork chop and eggs, $9.95. "Pork chops and eggs are a great start of the day," Lynch says.