

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Fork and the Road at ICCA 2022

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Report Highlights:

The Fork and the Road program is designed to introduce and educate consumers in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman (known as the GCC 4) about the variety and diversity of regional American foods and food culture. FAS/Dubai partnered with the International Centre for Culinary Arts (ICCA) Dubai, the Culinary Diplomacy Project, California Milk Advisory Board, and the Nebraska State Department of Agriculture to host leading American chefs and an educator on Nebraska beef.

In 2021, OAA/Dubai launched the Fork and the Road initiative, designed to teach, and introduce GCC-4 consumers, chefs, importers, and other food industry contacts about the quality, variety, and diversity of American agriculture, its cuisine, chefs, growers, and ranchers. The initiative serves as a type of road trip across America, highlighting how one cooking style or one food ingredient can have such varied culinary histories and traditions from region to region (e.g., corn in New Mexico is incorporated into a corn tortilla, in New England it is the base for a chowder and, in Texas it can be served roasted or in corn bread). In February 2022, OAA/Dubai partnered with the International Centre for Culinary Arts (ICCA) Dubai to host a series of workshops and webinars targeting ICCA's multi-national student body and the Centre's live streaming channel that reaches an average of 2,000 professional chefs and home cooks. OAA/Dubai coordinated the participation of a variety of different groups to offer an eclectic curriculum. As a result, the following chefs and SMEs shared their insight, guidance, and expertise to the program participants: 1. The Culinary Diplomacy Project sponsored American celebrity chefs Lorena Garcia, and Art Smith. 2. Dr. Chris Calkins, a former professor from the University of Nebraska was sponsored by the Nebraska's Secretary of State Office. 3. Mark Todd, also known as the "Cheese Dude," represented the California Milk Advisory Board.

Celebrity chefs Lorena Garcia and Art Smith took on the role of food ambassadors, conducting cooking demonstrations and sharing their expertise, highlighting a variety of cuisines, using high quality American agricultural goods. Similarly, Dr. Calkin gave a presentation on matching the right cut of beef with the right cooking technique. While Mark Todd explored and cooked with ICCA students, various artisan cheese varieties. In each of these demonstrations, workshops, and webinars, the Fork and the Road participants helped educate and strengthen community and cultural connections through food.

OAA/Dubai capitalized on this opportunity to reach culinary students, professional chefs and home cooks by launching the newly operational social media accounts focused on promoting U.S. food and agriculture (@aqilahalakeelah Instagram feed).

To further expand information sharing about American agriculture and food, OAA/Dubai initiated a collaborative project with cooperators and ICCA to create a curriculum to continue this type of programming.

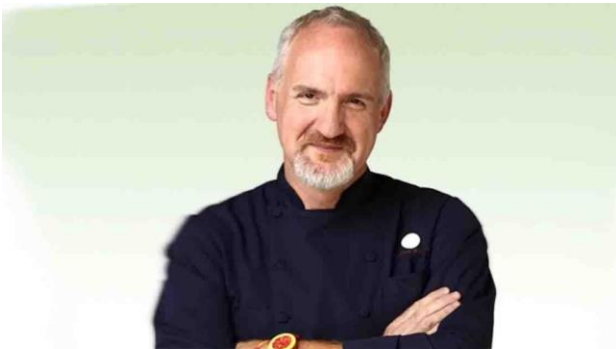
Chef Lorena Garcia is highly acclaimed for her global, modern, and flavorful take on Latin cuisine. In a cooking demonstration for the Fork and the Road initiative at ICCA, she made Buñuelos and took students on a journey of Latin American cuisine. She is a renowned celebrity chef, entrepreneur, best-selling cookbook author, cookware designer, and restaurateur.



Chef Lorena with ICCA students



The executive chef and co-owner of successful restaurants across the U.S., Chef Art Smith, was also part of this initiative. The recipient of the culinary profession's highest awards, he has cooked for some of the world's most renowned celebrities, including Oprah Winfrey. Known for his expertise in Southern cuisine, Art Smith is also the author of three award-winning cookbooks.



Dr. Chris Culkin, University of Nebraska, teaches ICCA culinary students the merits and qualities of Nebraska beef and how it's important to match the cut of beef to the right cooking method.



Chef Mark Todd explored and cooked with the ICCA students various artisan cheese varieties. Chef Todd consults for the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, the U.S. Dairy Export Council, the California Milk Advisory Board, and a selection of enterprises. He is also the Official Instructor / Brand Ambassador for The USA Cheese Specialist™ Certification Program.



Attachments:

No Attachments.