

Caribbean Cuisine Week kicks off in Philadelphia and South Jersey



Pan seared Chilean sea bass over mashed sweet potatoes, served with spinach with an hibiscus broth available at SweetWater Bar and Grill. (Photo provided)



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Several restaurants in Philadelphia and [South Jersey](#) will be serving tropical tasting treats for this year's Caribbean Cuisine Week April 9 to 11.

Organized by the Young Friends of Team Jamaica in Philadelphia, Caribbean Cuisine Week isn't just about delicious delicacies, the event also supports a great cause.

Caribbean Cuisine Week engages Philadelphia's finest restaurants in a fun-filled week

of food, music and raising funds to assist more than 700 high school athletes from Trinidad, Jamaica, St. Vincent and Grenada to attend the 2014 Penn Relays — the largest track and field meet in the country — which draws approximately 110,000 people to Philadelphia each spring.

One participating eatery, SweetWater Bar and Grill in **Cinnaminson**, will be serving light Caribbean fare for the event.

“When people think of Caribbean food, they usually think of Jerk Chicken or spicy things,” said SweetWater Executive Chef and co-owner George Kyrtatas. “I’ve been fortunate enough to travel to the Caribbean and, yes, there is some of that kind of food, but what I got out of it is the fresh seafood, fresh fruits and lighter, healthier foods.”

So, Kyrtatas said he is going to focus on that lighter, healthier side of Caribbean cuisine and bring out the flavors with fruit and sweet dipping sauces.

“For the appetizer dish, I’m making fried plantains,” he said. “I’ll take the whole plant, remove it from the skin, slice it down and fry it quickly to make nice, light Plantain chips.”



Mahi dish, served with a tropical salsa, available at SweetWater Bar and Grill in Cinnaminson.

Photo provided

Kyrtatas said the chips will be served with a spicy, yellow pepper dipping sauce.

“The entree I chose is grilled swordfish with basmati rice and black beans, served with a mango, sweet corn and pepper salsa,” he said.

And don’t forget about dessert.

“I always do a seasonal bread pudding, so I’m doing a coconut, orange and cranberry bread pudding with a fresh caramel drizzle and vanilla ice cream,” Kyrtatas said.

Julio Cesar Ugarte, general manager at Mixto — a Philadelphia restaurant participating

in Caribbean Cuisine Week — said he is proud to support such a great cause.

“For the entree, we’re serving a drunken chicken, baked with shrimp, red and green peppers, ancho chili sauce and beer,” Ugarte said.

The appetizer is a South American dish of Yukon Gold potatoes, shrimp salad and avocado layered similar to a cake.

“We do have a few Caribbean dishes on our menu, but we are mostly South American, Central American and Latin,” Ugarte said.



SweetWater Bar and Grill Executive Chef George Kyrtatas.

Photo provided

He hopes his clientele enjoys the new choices.

“I hope they are going to love it,” he said. “This will be a test because I’m going to put it on the menu this summer.”

Each restaurant that participates in Caribbean Cuisine Week will donate 4-percent of all food proceeds for those three days to help the students attend the Penn Relays.

Other participating restaurants

include:

Reef, Sabrina’s Cafe, Chef Jose Garces’ Rosa Blanca, Jamaican Jerk Hut and Ron’s Caribbean Cuisine.

For more information, visit www.caribbeancuisineweek.com.