

# FOOD & DINING

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PHOTOS BY C. TODD SHERMAN

**Corporate Chef Dan Pettis** pours a marinade over strips of cooked flank steak prepared by Chef Tim Creehan for a cooking demonstration at Park Heights restaurant in Tupelo.

## A taste of NEW ORLEANS



**Chef Tim Creehan** explains his method for getting a whole flank steak to cook just right for his Marinated Blue Cheese Steak dish during a cooking demonstration in Tupelo.

■ Skip the restaurants and dine on first-class cuisine prepared by renowned chef at this year's annual charity ball.

BY GINNA PARSONS  
Daily Journal

TUPELO — When you munch on Marinated Blue Cheese Steak, Cajun Grilled Pork Loin, and Chicken and Sausage Creole Jambalaya at the Junior Auxiliary's 43rd Annual Charity Ball, you'll be enjoying real Louisiana cuisine.

That's because the food at this year's event will be prepared by renowned Chef Tim Creehan, who



**Herb and Garlic Shrimp Scampi Pasta**

spent his formative years in Baton Rouge.

"Louisiana cooking is part of my history," said Creehan, who owns Beach Walk, an upscale restaurant

### How to go

- **What:** "Mardi Gras Ball," the Junior Auxiliary's 43rd annual charity ball
- **When:** Friday, Feb. 10, from 7 p.m. to midnight
- **Where:** BancorpSouth Center in downtown Tupelo
- **Entertainment:** Living Ads and Outstanding Citizen Award at 7 p.m.; The Paul Rainey Band will play from 8 p.m. to midnight.
- **Cost:** \$35 per ticket, available at Village Frame Shoppe, Reed's and Staggs or by calling 844-2654 or 255-9678
- **Miscellaneous:** Complimentary dinner, cash bar. Must be 21 to attend.

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# Chef

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in Destin, Fla.

Creehan was invited to devise a menu for this year's charity ball by longtime friend Stephanie Maxcy of Tupelo, who is the charity ball chairman this year.

"Steph picked up the phone and asked for help with the menu and I said, 'Why don't I just come up there and help?' The timing just fit together. I like giving back to communities," he said.

Creehan crafted the menu as a tribute to the French Quarter, after Hurricane Katrina decimated much of New Orleans this past fall. The menu includes Mardi Gras Slaw, Herb and Garlic Shrimp Scampi Pasta, Marinated Blue Cheese Steak, Cajun Grilled Pork Loin, Chicken and Sausage Creole Jambalaya, Baby Green Beans with Toasted Almonds, Assorted Breads with Honey Butter, Creole Bread Pudding with Brandy Sauce, Chocolate Covered Nuts and Pralines.

"Basically when you have to serve 800 to 1,000 people, you need items that are easy to prepare – simple dishes in large volume," he said.

Creehan wowed a crowd at Park Heights Restaurant this past week when he presented a cooking demonstration showcasing some of the foods he'll prepare at the ball. He'll be back for an encore performance Feb. 9 at 1 p.m. Call



C. TODD SHERMAN

"Simple Cuisine" is one of two cookbooks Chef Tim Creehan will be selling at the charity ball. Proceeds will go to the Junior Auxiliary.

## Charity Ball menu

- ★ Mardi Gras Slaw
- ★ Herb and Garlic Shrimp Scampi Pasta
- ★ Marinated Blue Cheese Steak
- ★ Cajun Grilled Pork Loin
- ★ Chicken and Sausage Creole Jambalaya
- ★ Baby Green Beans with Toasted Almonds



- ★ Assorted Breads with Honey Butter
- ★ Creole Bread Pudding with Brandy Sauce
- ★ Chocolate Covered Nuts
- ★ Pralines

Park Heights at 842-5665 for reservations. Space is limited.

If you can't make the cooking demonstration but still want some tips from Creehan, he'll have signed copies of his two cookbooks – "Flavors of the Gulf Coast" and "Simple Cuisine" – for sale at the charity ball for \$38. He'll also have a five-pack box of his Chef's

Grill Plus instant marinade for \$20. All proceeds from these items will go to the Junior Auxiliary.

Creehan's recent trip to Tupelo was his first and it certainly made an impression on him.

"I didn't know what to expect," he said. "I loved it. The people were so nice. What a great community."

# CHARITY BALL RECIPES

## Marinated

### Blue Cheese Steak

- 2 cups soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 1 whole flank steak
- 1 cup crumbled blue cheese

Combine soy sauce, vinegar, garlic and pepper in a shallow dish; mix well. Add the steak. Marinate overnight; drain.

Preheat grill surface. Grill steak over high heat to desired doneness. Remove to a cutting board; let stand 5 minutes. Slice steak diagonally across the grain. Serve topped with blue cheese.

Serves 6.

## Mardi Gras Slaw

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup ketchup
- ¼ cup white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup sugar
- Salt to taste

Cayenne pepper to taste

1 cup shaved carrots

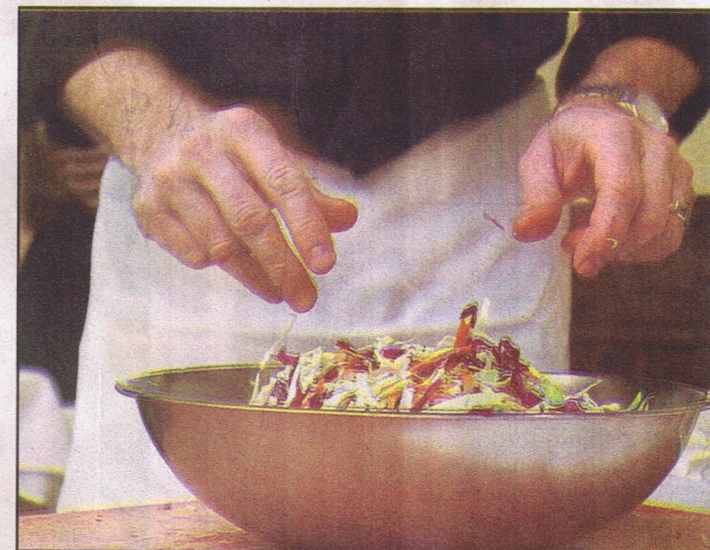
6 cups shredded green cabbage

Combine first 8 ingredients in a bowl and mix well. In a separate bowl, mix carrots and cabbage. Drizzle with dressing mixture; toss to coat well. Refrigerate until serving time.

Serves 6.

## Herb and Garlic Shrimp Scampi Pasta

- ¾ pound uncooked pasta
- ¾ cup Herbs and Garlic Chef's Grill Plus
- ½ pound (26- to 30-count) peeled shrimp



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Chef Tim Creehan prepares Mardi Gras Slaw during a cooking demonstration at Park Heights restaurant in Tupelo last week.

- ¾ cup white wine (or water)
- ½ cup chopped tomato
- 1 cup spinach
- Grated Romano cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

Heat Chef's Grill Plus in a large sauté pan and add shrimp. Sauté until shrimp are curled and pink. Add wine and tomato; cook 2 minutes.

Add pasta and spinach; cook until heated through. Serve topped with cheese.

Serves 2.

**Note:** Herbs and Garlic Chef's Grill Plus will be for sale at the Charity Ball.

## Creole Bread Pudding

- 1 (3-foot) loaf stale French bread
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar, divided
- ¾ cup sugar

- 3 eggs
- 2 cups half and half
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup raisins
- 2 peeled, chopped bananas
- 1 stick butter, chopped

Preheat broiler. Slice bread and arrange on baking sheet. Broil just until toasted. Arrange in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Reduce oven to 450 degrees.

Combine ½ cup brown sugar, sugar, eggs, half and half, cream and vanilla extract. Mix well. Pour over toasted bread. Sprinkle with raisins and bananas; press gently.

Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Dot with butter and sprinkle with remaining ½ cup brown sugar. Bake uncovered for 5 minutes longer.

Serves 12.

**Note:** At the Charity Ball, this will be served with a brandy sauce.