

## **Chef Ryan Pollnow Triumphs in the First-Ever Napa vs. Sonoma American Lamb Throwdown!**

*Winning Recipe Features American Lamb Grilled Over Pinot Noir Barrel Chips*

Top emerging chefs from Napa and Sonoma battled one another on May 30<sup>th</sup> in the debut of the Napa vs. Sonoma Lamb Throwdown!, showcasing the best of the regions food and wine at the annual Carneros Heritage Fest. The head-to-head contest featured American lamb along with local wine pairings with a cash prize on the line. The competition was judged by a panel of food experts including Monty and Sarah Preiser, Founders of *Preiser Key Travel Guides*; Stephen Exel, Food Writer for *Traditional Home* and *Better Homes & Gardens*; Pierce Carson, Food Writer for the *Napa Register*, and Joanne Weir, James-Beard Award-winning cookbook author.

Chef Ryan Pollnow, from La Crema Winery, took home top honors with his dish, *Leg of Lamb Grilled Over Pinot Noir Barrel Chips with Green Garlic*. Chef Pollnow paired the smoked American lamb with springtime Argentinean Chimichurri and complex, yet smooth, local wine, La Crema 2007 Los Carneros Pinot Noir ([http://www.lacrema.com/wines/appellation/car\\_2007pinot.html](http://www.lacrema.com/wines/appellation/car_2007pinot.html)).

“With so much great young talent here today, it’s no surprise that the chefs found countless ways to incorporate American lamb into their dishes,” said Megan Wortman, Executive Director of the American Lamb Board. “Thank you to each chef for participating in the event and letting their passion for homegrown American lamb shine through.”

Chefs from Shiso, Zazu Restaurant + Farm, Starks and Mondo represented Sonoma while Napa was represented by chefs from Fatted Calf, Hog Island, Oxbow Wine Merchant, Zuzu and The Border. The festival partnered the Carneros Wine Alliance with the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission and was hosted by the Donum Estate and Buena Vista Carneros. All proceeds went to the Carneros Land Stewardship dedicated to the conservation and preservation of habitat and wetlands in the San Pablo Bay adjacent to the Carneros region.

### **About the Carneros Heritage Fest**

In its 4<sup>th</sup> year, Carneros Heritage Fest is becoming one of the nation's leading premium food and wine festivals. The two day event showcases the regions best wines and food on the Donum Estate just south of central Sonoma.

Participants at the Carneros Heritage Fest have a chance to enjoy premium wine poured by local vintners, witness the 1<sup>st</sup> ever Napa vs. Sonoma Throwdown!, relax to live music, mingle with top artisan producers, and learn about environmental and sustainable agriculture. Proceeds from the Carneros Heritage Fest go to the Carneros Land Stewardship Foundation.

For more information on the Carneros Heritage Fest please visit [http://www.carneros.com/heritage\\_fest\\_2009.html](http://www.carneros.com/heritage_fest_2009.html).

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## **Leg of Lamb Grilled Over Pinot Noir Barrel Chips with Green Garlic Chimichurri**

Chef Ryan Pollnow, La Crema Winery

Recipe Serves 8-10 people

### **For the Chimichurri:**

4 stalks	Green garlic (a.k.a spring garlic)
3 each	Shallots
2 each	Lemons
2 bunches	Parsley
1 bunch	Chives
1 ½ cup	Extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp.	Smoked sweet paprika
1 tbsp.	Cumin (ground)
1/3 cup	Red wine vinegar
¼ cup	Red verjus
1 tbsp.	Sugar
¼ cup	dried oregano
To taste	Kosher salt

Slice the garlic stalks into ¼" rounds. Blanch in salted boiling water for 1 minute and shock in ice water. Meantime, mince shallots and set aside. Zest and juice the lemons into a blender along with the cooked garlic and all other ingredients, except oregano and shallots. Pulse until well combined. Pour into a bowl. Stir in shallots and dried oregano by hand and season with salt. Reserve at room temperature to serve, or refrigerate for up to one week.

### **On the Grill:**

2 cups	Pinot Noir barrel chips (or other hard wood), soaked in water for 30 min.
1 each	American lamb leg (de-boned and tied)
1 recipe	Green Garlic Chimichurri

Marinate the lamb leg in 1 cup of the Chimichurri over night in the refrigerator.

Preheat grill for indirect cooking at a medium temperature. Loosely wrap the soaked wood chips in aluminum foil and poke several holes in the foil. Place the packed directly onto the heat source on your grill. The wood chips should start to smoke within a couple of minutes. Position the lamb leg on the grill for indirect cooking (away from the hottest part of the grill). Turn every 20 minutes and baste with the remaining chimichurri. Be aware and control the temperature of your grill (between 280 and 300° F is ideal). Cook to your desired doneness (chef recommends medium, with an internal temperature around 140° F). Loosely cover with foil and allow 15 minutes resting time before slicing and serving. Pair with La Crema 2007 Los Carneros Pinot Noir.