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CHILL-Wine and Culinary Event

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By Stephanie Callahan, Sunday at 6:35 pm

Recently I had the chance to attend one of Chicago's greatest culinary and wine events, Luxehome's CHILL at the Merchandise Mart in association with *Wine Spectator* magazine. Chef's from The Purple Pig, L20, Kinzie Chophouse, Socca, RL and 45 other top chef's from Chicago came together to offer samples of some of their most tasty dishes. This is the fifth year the event is taking place. I have to say thank you so much to the folks that invited me free of charge to experience this wonderful evening.

I kind of felt like Adam on the TV show, "Man v Food", as I had to eat my way through the whole first floor of the Merchandise Mart and every Luxehome showroom in two and a half hours. On top of all the food that was represented this evening, 150 premium wines were also available to sample. The proceeds from CHILL will benefit the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago, Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras and the Lynn Sage Foundation.

One of my favorite things about the evening was meeting and socializing with some of the chef's I've never met in person but have spoken with in the past for previous blog posts. It made me feel super important that some of the top chef's in Chicago knew who I was and introduced me to the rest of their staff in attendance at the event.

Something else that was super nice about this culinary event was the live music. Throughout most of the show rooms, musicians provided the perfect background music, I felt very classy and mature, despite the fact that most attendees were 20 years my senior.

Some of my other favorite dishes were very fall oriented like The Signature Room's warm salad of black lentils + roasted fall squash, maple and whipped foi gras; Terzo Piano's Duck confit and cornmeal fritter with grapefruit-mustard sauce; The Purple Pig's salt roasted beets with whipped goat cheese; and Prosecco's jumbo lump crab, roasted red pepper, scallion, brioche, truffle, citronette

Overall the evening was quite tasty, check out the gallery for a few bites I've profiled!



Cite- Oxtail Marmalade with Potato Mousseline This was one of our first stops and I was

pretty excited to try it since I've never had oxtail before. I wasn't exactly sure what to expect but the meat fell apart in your mouth, much like a slow cooked pulled pork.



David Burke's Primehouse- Beef Sliders with Jalapeno Ketchup It's not very often you get to try a homemade ketchup, and the jalapeno ketchup that topped these burgers was super tasty. You could really taste the jalapeno, yet the ketchup was as smooth as a normal Heinz ketchup would be. The sliders were also cooked perfectly! In my opinion, it's quite a feat to cook sliders well as they are so easy to overcook as well as undercook.



L20- Blue Crab With Fennel Crème The folks from Lettuce Entertain You have a special place in my heart as I've had nothing but great experiences at all of their restaurants. I also may be a little biased as throughout college I worked at Wildfire as a hostess and still keep in touch with many of the friends I made when I worked there. I've been to a lot of their restaurants, but never to L20 so I was really excited to sample their dish. I'm a huge fan of seafood of any sort and the blue crab tasted especially fresh in this dish. I loved the combination of flavors the chef was able to create and I can't wait to go in and try more of their food.



One Sixty Blue- Laughing Bird Shrimp Cocktail with Pickled Jalapeno, Chili Oil and a Mango Cocktail Sauce Throughout the evening I was really impressed with the speed and precision that the chefs and staff had plating all of the samples. One Sixty Blue's shrimp cocktail really hit home for me as I'm a huge fan of pairing mango with seafood. All of

my favorite sushi rolls always include mango!



Michael Jordan- 45 Day Dry Aged Delmonico I loved the little paper dish that this steak strip was served on! Usually I'm not a big fan of rare meat, but with the simple marinade and herbs wrapped inside, this may have changed my views. I have not yet been to the newly opened Michael Jordan restaurant in the InterContinental Hotel and after this preview I can't wait to try it!