



Quick Bites: Robert Irvine of Restaurant Impossible at Sunset, plus a bartender legend.

Posted: Wednesday, January 8, 2014 4:30 pm

By Mark C. Anderson |

Promoters for the oncoming **SunsetCenter** appearance of **Robert Irvine**, the hulking and inventive engine behind popular reality show *Restaurant: Impossible*, don't quite know how to describe his style of cooking demo.

So, for the show happening 8pm Saturday, Jan. 18 (\$49, 620-2040), they opted to describe what it *isn't*.

To wit, they offer these three hints, among the other hype.

1. It's not a cooking demo.

"Is there cooking? Yes, but don't expect to sit back and watch Robert cook dishes for two hours. This is a theatrical event. We are taking cooking places it's never gone before, with physical challenges, culinary challenges and more." Cooking is merely the vehicle for a crazy and entertaining ride."

2. It's not scripted.

"Just like when Robert walks into a restaurant on *Restaurant: Impossible*, Robert has no idea the challenges he will face when he steps on stage."

3. It's not a sit and spectate kinda deal.


"Don't expect to come to this show and just sit and watch. This is an opportunity to let loose and have a good time! Expect to stand, yell, dance (yes, dance!) and become part of the action on stage."

...



Robert Irvine impresses viewers and gathers a widening audience on *Restaurant: Impossible* with classic hospitality and cheffing knowhow plus surprisingly unconventional fixes. Picasa

There's more sizzle where that came from:

- Storied **Chicago White Sox/Oakland A's** slugger **Frank Thomas**, who's made repeat appearances here [to build his beer brand with Sand City's Jeff Moses](#), is a first ballot Major League Baseball Hall of Famer as of today.
- The nominees for the annual **John "Spud" Spadaro Hospitality Award** were **Carmen Banka** (retired), **Mike Kolpaczyk** (Sardine Factory), **Horace Mercurio** (Coffee Mia) and **Michael Reta** (Golden Tee), but only one can win, and "Big Mike" Kolpacyk it is. Ask him about the proper way to shoot an oyster some time. Presentation party at the Monterey Elks Club 5pm Tuesday, Jan. 14.
- **East Village Coffee Lounge** (373-5601) pours joe and provides wireless from its slick coffee bus for the next few weeks while earthquake retrofitting happens. 
- **Carmel Valley Ranch** (626-2599) does a tasty culinary exchange with Granada, Spain, Jan. 16-18, hosting Chef Jorge Matas of Carmen San Miguel, including a gala reception-dinner (\$175) and a garden walk-demo-lunch (\$120).
- **Big Sur Foragers Festival** arrives next week with a **Firestone-Walker** beer dinner/**Big Sur Health Center** benefit Friday, Jan. 17, at Big Sur Roadhouse (\$50) and the Fungus Face-off, wild shroom walks and gala dinner Saturday, Jan. 18, at **Ventana**. www.bigsurforagersfestival.org.
- [Must-see-and-eat \(and new\) Patria](#) (424-5555) is now open for lunch 11:30am-2pm Tuesday-Sunday in Oldtown Salinas. Try the pizzas. And the pastas. And the salmon. And...
- Under-the-radar **Jacks Lounge** (649-2698) now does a "Wine Down" 4-6pm daily with 50 percent off all wines by the glass (normally \$8-\$16) and the cheese platter (\$7 after discount). Live music Friday and Saturday 5:30-8:30pm too.
- **Diego Claudio Anea** is in as director of food and beverage at Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa and its Schooners Coastal Kitchen & Bar (372-2628) after time at Trump Hotel Collection in Florida.
- **Culinary Round-up** (\$150) to benefit **Rancho Cielo** and **Drummond Culinary Academy** 5-8pm Sunday, Jan. 19, at **Monterey Plaza Hotel**. It's a good 'un, www.ranchocieloyc.org.