

## Launch Team Notes #3

August 3, 2017

Dear Friend,

We did it! Last week I spent a few days with Chef Charles and his family at their lake home on the outskirts of Houston, shooting footage for a series of videos that will be coming soon to a theater near you.

Okay, maybe not an actual theater. Perhaps, to your desktop. Or cell phone. Or iPad.

The original idea was to create a few simple video demos of Charles cooking a handful of key recipes from the book, that we would cobble together into a little set we could offer as bonuses for people who preorder the book. Simple. Homemade. Handheld cameras, maybe iPhones.

As these things tend to do, it sort of took off from there. Before we knew it, we had a professional video crew on its way to Charles's house (the amazing TKG Productions out of Houston, led by the intrepid Tony Garcia) and I was on a plane to Houston.

### Let me set the stage...

First, the most important elements: great knives, the perfect peach roses, and of course, a copy of the hardcover. All sitting on the counter of the very same kitchen we used as our model for Chef Kellaway's kitchen in the book: the one where he teaches Owen all about ratios, cooking with all your senses, the importance of good stock, and more.

(Remember "the oversize double-door brushed steel fridge" Owen sees in chapter 10, the first time he enters the Chef's home kitchen? That's it, off behind the roses.)



## Mise en place...

Early Sunday morning, July 23, we got to have a whole new experience of *mise en place*.

It started with a solid planning session, working out exactly how we wanted to spend the next two days.

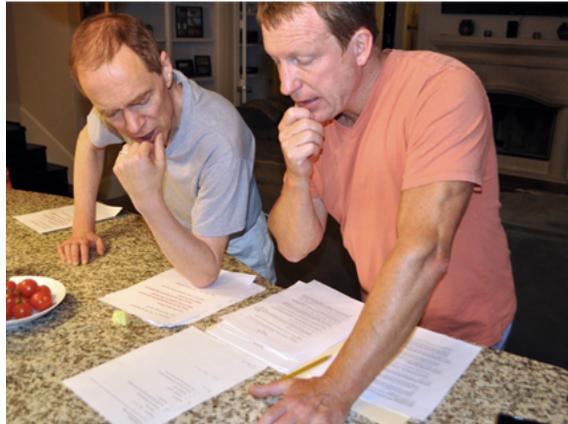
Next, it was time to set up the kitchen. When the Chef and Will set up the ingredients for their banquet, it involved:

*... cases of potatoes and parsnips, broccolini and cipollini, summer squash and butternut squash, oyster mushrooms and black trumpet mushrooms, apples and pears and pecans ... flats of garlic and shallots and chives, rosemary, thyme, and chervil ... olive oil and truffle oil, champagne vinegar and white balsamic vinegar ... cases of whole chickens, cases of beef tenderloin, cases of bacon—and of course, bags and bags of onions, carrots, and celery....*

For our event, things were a little simpler than that. Still, the setup did fill up Charles's car, trunk and all, and that oversize double-door fridge was stuffed to bursting by the time we put out our first set of ingredients.

As we were arranging items on the counter and getting ready to cook, Tony and his crew arrived — and we got yet *another* a whole new sense of the term *mise en place*!

Finally, we had the actual *mise en place* for each separate dish. On the right, you see the setup for the New England omelet. (The one Chef Kellaway cooks blindfolded to demonstrate the art of *mise en place* to a dumbstruck Owen.)



## And then, the food!

And then the cooking began, along with, of course, the eating. The cooking was mostly Charles's job. The eating was mostly my job. The talking, we pretty much shared.

We (that is, he) cooked all three Chef Specials, from chapters 3, 4, and 5 — filet with oyster mushrooms, frisée salad with poached egg, truffled crab grilled cheese.

Also the New England omelet from chapter 6 (not pictured here) — and yes ... I made Charles cook it blindfolded. Poor guy. (He did great.)



We made the bruschetta that the Chef cooks for Owen while he's fuming mad outside in Louise's garden planting carrots. We even made a pot of

Owen's favorite spicy hot chocolate. And of course, Owen's father's famous blueberry pancakes.



We also set aside time in Charles's living room for a sit-down interview, talking about his childhood, his experiences in the Olympics, his cooking for U.S. troops in Afghanistan (and how he persuaded five U.S. presidents to make special video greetings for him to bring over with him) and the special people in his

life — the *real* Bernie, the *real* Ruth, the *real* Mad Dog, the *real* Chef Kellaway, and other real-life characters who slipped their way into our little story of loss, love, and the ingredients of greatness.

We all had a blast!



And then it was over.

Our work was done — and I was on a plane again. As I flew home and Charles went back to work at River Oaks Country Club, Tony and his crew headed off to their studio armed with terabytes of raw digital footage.

## “So how do I see the videos?”

It’ll take a little while. Now that principal photography is behind us, it’s time for the magical transformation (the painstaking, tedious, enormously time-consuming magical transformation) called “post-production.” Or, as they simply say in the movie business, “post.” How long? A few weeks, at least. In any case, most likely done before Labor Day.

Once they’re completed, we’ll be offering the finished videos themselves — both the cooking demos and the “Story Behind the Story” interview — as bonuses for those who preorder the book, along with a few other delectably juicy items. (You can see the basic offer by going to [www.TheIngredientsOfGreatness.com](http://www.TheIngredientsOfGreatness.com).)

For now, I hope these photos give you a sumptuous taste of the experience!

Till next time, Launch Teamers —

*John*

P.S. If you have any friends or family who want to join our Launch Team, just have them email me at [john@johndavidmann.com](mailto:john@johndavidmann.com) with the word “Launch!”

