



# IRON CHEF GAINESVILLE

• AT TASTE OF HOME

**Embers**  
PRIME STEAK &  
WOOD GRILL  
Britton Dumont  
Executive Chef

AT TASTE OF HOME



# THREE CHEFS. ONE SECRET INGREDIENT. LET THE COUNTDOWN BEGIN

By Karly Kehres | Photos by John Sloan

**T**hree chefs. Champion No. 2. One secret ingredient. Let the countdown begin for the moment the pans are greased and the stovetops are lit, as the Taste of HOME's second annual Iron Chef Gainesville competition ensues.

Executive chefs from Embers Wood Grill, Gilchrist Club and Vellos will leave their kitchens on opposite ends of town June 3 to face off in a Quality DesignWorks kitchen specially made for the Iron Chef Gainesville event at the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center.

Each Chef will have one hour to incorporate a secret ingredient into three courses for a panel of three celebrity judges and a winning bidder. The bidder will taste the creation by placing the highest bid on a chef's plate, as well as a dinner for 10 at the restaurant the chef represents. The judges will evaluate their plates by taste, presentation and originality. The chef with the highest number of points will win the revered title of Iron Chef Gainesville 2012.

This year, it's not the oven, but the heat of the competition that has temperatures rising.

Vellos Chef Charles Hahn is excited for the publicity that will attract new customers to the restaurant that recently celebrated its one-year anniversary, but winning, he said, is what he is most looking forward to.

At 15-years old, Hahn began working under Peter Dejong, a world-renown pastry chef from Amsterdam, and to this day, dessert is his favorite meal to cook. But at Vellos, he adds his personal flare to every course, preparing upscale, fine-dining presentations while keeping generous portion sizes and reasonable prices.

"I get to express myself in the way that I cook," Hahn said. "I have free reign."

At Gilchrist Club, Chef Matt Boring holds the same power and uses it to introduce people to foods they have never eaten — or are afraid to try.

Boring and his sous chef make a variety of personalized menus every day depending on what ingredients he can buy fresh at the market, what ingredients he can grow and what mood he is in. He plans

to approach the competition in the same flexible manner.

"To get better at something, you have to challenge yourself at it," Boring said. "I do it for fun. It's a challenge, so I can see what I'm capable of and so other people can see what I can do as well."

Among many places, Boring has lived and cooked in Little Rock, Ark., Chicago — where he went to Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts — and Houston Texas, cooking everything from Italian food to '50s American diner food.

Cooking at an exclusive hunting and fishing lodge like Gilchrist Club allows Boring to personally get to know his customers and their likes and dislikes when it comes to food. In May, however, he will begin serving his French-American-influenced food Friday evenings to non-club members as well, expanding his matchless style and creativity to the community.

Community connections are equally important to defending 2011 Iron Chef Gainesville and Embers Wood Grill Co-Owner and Executive Chef Briton Dumas, who participated in 42 charity events last year because he said customers notice the support, and support the restaurant in return.

To prepare for the 2012 Iron Chef competition, Dumas is participating in the Battle of the Last Chef Standing, another cooking competition in which \$5,000 is at stake. But the money is just a bonus.

"I've always enjoyed the competition stuff, and for me it's an opportunity to go out in the industry and learn from other people around me," Dumas said. "I know what people expect. I know what good food looks like; I know what good food tastes like; I know proper cooking techniques, and those are all the things I'm going to use to my advantage in this competition."

