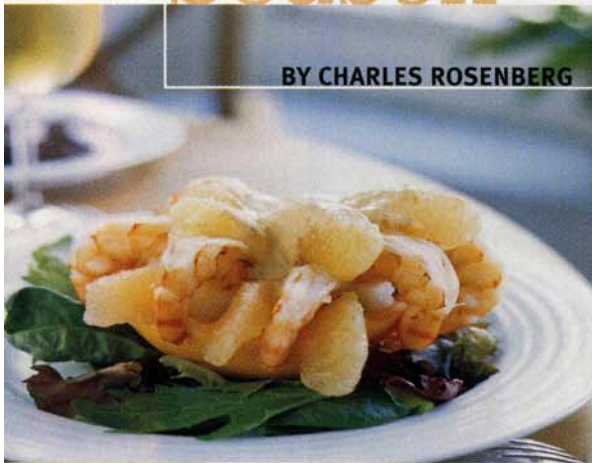


Nutrition Notes for the Harvest Season

BY CHARLES ROSENBERG



Chef Pacheco and (at left) her shrimp and grapefruit with creamy chipotle sauce

One Hot Tamale

WHEN CATERER GINA PACHECO begins a luncheon with shrimp cocktail, red cocktail sauce is nowhere to be seen. Instead, the crustaceans float along the edge of a pink grapefruit half-filled with chipotle chile cream. It's a perfect example of the synthesis of tradition and innovation that characterizes this young chef's style. Pacheco brings the sophisticated cuisine she created at the Mexico City restaurant Escape, where she was once executive chef, into L.A.'s finest homes. Clients of her Beverly Hills catering firm, Coperto Pazzo ([310] 659-3809), choose from the exotic (squid filled with pine nuts and *huitlacoche*, the Mexican corn fungus) to the merely fabulous (grilled salmon in a raisin *pipian* with pumpkin seeds and tomatillos). Pacheco inherits traditional Yucatecan family recipes from her aunt, who metes them out one at a time, but the former industrial engineering student adds science to develop her own dishes. I found this out when inquiring about her cheesecake with strawberry sauce, the lightest I'd ever eaten. Something about the rising action of egg whites in a 500-degree oven went in one ear and out the other while more cheesecake went down my throat.



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