



FAMILY TIES

LINEAGE TRACES CHEF SHELDON SIMEON'S ROOTS

BY SIMPLICIO PARAGAS

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WHEN IT COMES TO THE KITCHEN, chef Sheldon Simeon's culinary philosophy is simple: Cook your food. His no-fuss approach has been his badge of honor, even when he competed in two different seasons of "Top Chef." Shying away from the celebrity chef status, the Maui resident eschews pretty garnishes, preferring instead the non-Instagram, non-composed look of a dish.

With the recent opening of Lineage Restaurant, Simeon once again delves into his roots, unearthing flavors that are reminiscent of his childhood days growing up in a close-knit Filipino family. This new restaurant, in essence, has become an extension of his house, where everyone is treated like 'ohana and all are welcomed to "eat, drink and talk story," according to Simeon.

"How many stories have you heard that start with 'I wish I got the recipe from my grandmother?'" Simeon asks rhetorically. "What I want

to capture in the restaurant is my heritage. I'm inspired by the past, by comfort food."

There's a sense of whimsy—and history—in Lineage's menu. The "Flying Saucer," for example, consists of a round, grill-pressed sandwich filled with cheese and beef goulash. Simeon's interpretation of this one-time Maui Fair staple contains enough nostalgia but with an updated flavor profile.

"I'm not reinventing the wheel," Simeon asserts. "I want to serve dishes that people know, maybe not by their Filipino name, but it's still the same Filipino dish."

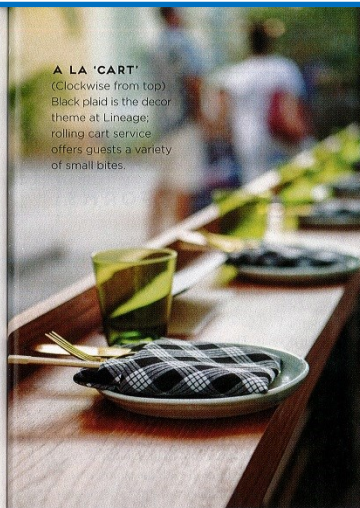
A case in point is the pork and peas, which is pork gisantes in Tagalog. "But not many people will know that," Simeon points out. "People will understand crispy pork rinds but they may not necessarily get chicharon."

His "Bottom of the Plate Lunch," as described by Simeon himself, is exactly what it sounds like: the leftover bed of shredded cabbage that has absorbed the juice from, in this case, kal-bi ribs. "It's literally the bottom of the plate lunch," he says. "I shredded the cabbage, added smoked beef drippings and pureed mac salad for the dressing." Indeed, the elements are familiar, as are the flavors.

If you're expecting an amuse bouche, don't. But you can count on an "Amuse Bump," the background story to which is best left told by the chef.

"Food is best when someone connects to it," Simeon says. "We're just cooking and we're cooking from our hearts."

LINEAGE RESTAURANT
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A LA 'CART'
(Clockwise from top) Black plaid is the decor theme at Lineage; rolling cart service offers guests a variety of small bites.

