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New Orleans Chef Michael Ruoâss of Maine Shares Recipe for Hushpuppies

Harvest on the Harbor in Portland, Maine, is loaded with culinary talent. None more so than nationally acclaimed chef Michael Ruoâss who will be cooking a Cajun seafood stew at its Ultimate Seafood Splash and will be a featured chef at the Saturday Marketplace. He is based in New Orleans and is Executive Chef of New Orleans' Catch.



Anative of Old Orchard Beach, Michael earned a degree from Maine Technical College's culinary program (now SMCC) in South Portland. He worked locally at the *Seaman's Club* and *Snow Squall*, before relocating to New Orleans on a whim figuring "worst-case scenario, I would move back home." Ruoâss fell in love with New Orleans and swiftly ascended in the elite culinary empire of Emeril Lagasse for 11 years.

Starting as a line cook at *NOLA*, Ruoss was quickly promoted to Sous Chef at Lagasse's flagship restaurant in the Arts District. Two years later, Ruoss returned to *NOLA* as executive Sous Chef, and was promoted again as Chef de Cuisine, a position he held for five years.

In 2010, Ruoâss opened *Catch* as corporate chef for The 3 of a Kind group, which runs ten restaurants in Louisiana and Georgia. Ruoâss is in the process of opening a fourth *Camilla Grill* in the

French Quarter around the corner from *NOLA*. While he is committed to his adoptive state, braving Hurricane Katrina and the recent disaster in the Gulf, Ruoâss is forever a Maine native. Profiled in Portland Magazine's Summerguide 2010, Ruoâss related his passion for Maine clams, lobster, and Moxie.

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Maralyn: What is your favorite recipe and why?

Michael: I love my hushpuppy recipe because it is so simple and tastes so good. It also shouldn't work because there is no dairy in it—you would think the hushpuppies would be very dense without eggs to leaven them, but they are moist and delicious.

Michael Ruoâss Hushpuppies

Ingredients:

2 cups of flour

2 cups cornmeal

2 tablespoons salt

2 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons baking powder

1/2 finely chopped green onions

3/4 cup white onion pureed with about 1/2 cup water

Method:

Combine all ingredients, spoon into fryer and cook until light, fluffy and golden brown.

You might have to adjust the water in the recipe to get a thick, cornbread batter-like consistency.

Maralyn: What is your favorite spice to work with when cooking and why?

Michael: I like pepper. There are many different varieties with different flavors and different amounts of heat. They add a lot of depth to your cooking.

Maralyn: What is your favorite cooking utensil and why?

Michael: I like wooden spoons and cast iron pans—they remind me of my Grandmother.

Maralyn: Do you have any tips for those desiring to become a chef?

Michael: Train under a chef who you respect—you can't beat experience of an actual restaurant.

Maralyn: Which do you prefer, the hot line, pastry, appetizers, etc.?

Michael: Hot line—it's got a great rhythm. You feel like you are right in the thick of things when you are working the hot line.

For more information on Michael:

Michael Ruoss

Catch



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For me, it is always interesting to compare the answers of the various chefs to some basic questions. Each shows their passion and thoughts in such different descriptions.

Harvest on the Harbor, October 21-23, 2010 is going to have such a wonderful variety of talent. Norm and I are quite excited to be taking part in all of these events.

If you want to check out more details for **Harvest on the Harbor** go to <http://www.harvestontheharbor.com/>. Norm and I hope to meet you there.



[Maralyn D. Hill, President International Food Wine & Travel Writers Association](#)
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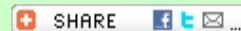
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2 Responses to “New Orleans Chef Michael Ruoâss of Maine Shares Recipe for Hushpuppies”



1. [Brenda Hill](#) says:

[August 24, 2010 at 12:21 pm](#)

I enjoy a moist and crunchy hushpuppy and always wondered how to make them. Thanks for this informative interview with a chef from two of my favorite places, New Orleans and Maine. (I spent summers at Old Orchard Beach) I found your interview with Chef Michael and news about the Portland harvest on the Harbor most interesting.

[Reply](#)



2. [Maralyn](#) says:

[August 24, 2010 at 1:53 pm](#)

Thanks for commenting Brenda. I'm delighted to feature these chefs and to be attending Harvest on the Harbor in October. Portland, ME is such a vibrant city now. I love all of the activity there.

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