

¿QUE PASA?

Columbia
Since 1905

GEM of
SPANISH RESTAURANTSSM

FALL 2011

Ybor City Sarasota St. Augustine St. Petersburg Clearwater Celebration Columbia Café

Grouper Is Back On the Menu Again at The Columbia Restaurant

The Columbia Restaurant has added grouper to their menu again at their six restaurants in Florida after a four year absence.

“We took grouper off our menu back in May of 2007 due to overfishing, which led to the difficulty in meeting the demand for authentic grouper,” said Richard Gonzmart, 4th generation family member and president of the Columbia Restaurant Group. “According to the National Marine Fisheries Service, red grouper is harvested in the Gulf of Mexico, and the red grouper population is healthy and is harvested at sustainable levels,” Gonzmart said.

Gonzmart worked closely with The Columbia’s vendors in selecting the type of grouper to return to the menu, choosing red grouper for its sustainability. Other species of grouper are still overfished, and Gonzmart will not offer any type of item on the menu that is not sustainable.

Grouper is a prized catch because diners like its mild flavor and white, flaky meat. “We are proud to once again offer our guests classic and unique Columbia preparations of this delicious mild fish with five red grouper entrees on our new dinner menu,” Gonzmart said.

Columbia’s new red grouper dinner entrees, offered at Columbia Ybor City, Sarasota, St. Augustine, St. Petersburg, Sand Key on Clearwater Beach and Celebration:

Grouper “Bilbao”

Traditional Basque preparation of fillet of red grouper, baked in a casserole with sliced tomatoes, potatoes, onions, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, and lemon. Served with fresh vegetables.

Baked Stuffed Grouper

Boneless fillet of red grouper stuffed with fresh lump blue crabmeat and a tropical passion fruit butter sauce. Gently baked. Served with yellow rice and fresh vegetables.

Grouper “A la Rusa”

Columbia’s signature preparation for fillet of fish breaded in Cuban bread crumbs and grilled. Garnished with chopped parsley, hard boiled egg, and a mild lemon butter sauce. Served with yellow rice and fresh vegetables.

Grouper El Greco

I created this recipe after many visits with my college roommate and lifelong friend, Jimmy “The Greek” Philopoulos and his family in Canton, Massachusetts. They are the multi-generational owners of restaurants, including the legendary 57 Restaurant in Boston. Boneless fillet of red grouper, grilled on a flat top with olive oil, smothered with seasoned onions, garlic and oregano. Served with yellow rice. OPA! RG

Grilled Grouper

Simply delicious. Seasoned and grilled. Served with yellow rice and fresh vegetables.

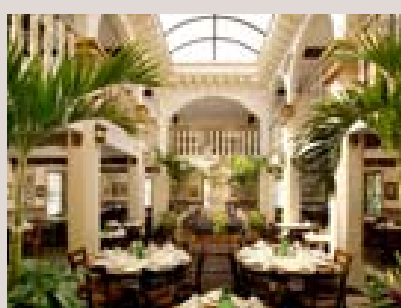
Grouper El Greco and **Grilled Grouper** will also be added to the new lunch menu.



Grouper “Bilbao”



Grilled Grouper



Dining for Life

OCTOBER 1ST – NOVEMBER 6TH

Add one part research, one part education, mix in community support and you've got a recipe to fight cancer!

The Columbia Restaurant and Moffitt Cancer Center are creating the recipe to eliminate Adolescent Young Adult (AYA) osteosarcoma. Please join the Gonzmart family and the Columbia Restaurants in the first "Dining for Life" between October 1st - November 6th to help take osteosarcoma off the menu.

KEY INGREDIENTS:

Osteosarcoma is the #2 cause of cancer in children

Osteosarcoma is most commonly found in adolescents and young adults between the ages of 10 and 30.

Add \$1, \$5 or whatever you feel comfortable donating to your check and the Columbia and the Gonzmart family will match and donate over \$500,000 in the fight against AYA osteosarcoma.

Visit us at Columbia in Tampa's Ybor City, St. Armands Circle in Sarasota, the Historic District in St. Augustine, The Pier in Downtown St. Petersburg, Sand Key on Clearwater Beach, Central Florida's town of Celebration and the Columbia Café on the Riverwalk in Tampa, and join us in the cause to bring an end to cancer.



COLUMBIA COMMUNITY HARVEST



IN SEPTEMBER

Let your appetite do the giving while you support local non-profit groups in Florida by dining at any Columbia location during the month of September for lunch or dinner during the 14th Annual Columbia Restaurant Community Harvest program.

Through this program, Columbia Restaurant donates 5% of all guests' lunch and dinner checks to the charitable organizations chosen by their customers during the entire month of September.

The Columbia Community Harvest will be in effect at the Columbia Restaurants in Tampa's Ybor City, Sarasota, St. Augustine, The Pier in St. Petersburg, Sand Key on Clearwater Beach and in Central Florida's town of Celebration, and the Columbia Café on the Riverwalk in Tampa at the Tampa Bay History Center.





A Message from Richard

Our Columbia Philosophy:

- 1. Do the Right Thing...Integrity has No Need for Rules*
- 2. Help One Another*
- 3. Deliver Legendary Service...The WOW Factor!*
- 4. Produce Quality...Always*
- 5. Exceed Expectations...Just Say YES Attitude!*
- 6. Embrace Change*
- 7. Accept Social Responsibility for Our Actions and Behavior*
- 8. Earn a Reasonable Profit*
- 9. Do What Others are Not Willing to Do*
- 10. Support Our Communities Charities and Those in Need*

My Thoughts on Business & Life

"Integrity is what we do when no one is watching; it's doing the right thing all the time.

It's a behavior, not a vision

"Integrity is what we do, what we say, and what we say we can do."

My Vision for the Columbia Restaurant Group

Grounded and steeped in our history and culture, excelling in our present, while preparing for our future.

"None of us is as strong as all of us!"





COLUMBIA RESTAURANT ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH LOUISIANA SHRIMP PROCESSING & PACKING, L.L.C.

Partnership Began the Day Before the Gulf Oil Spill

Richard Gonzmart, fourth generation family member of Florida's oldest restaurant – The Columbia in Tampa's historic Ybor City – announces a partnership with Louisiana Shrimp Processing & Packing, L.L.C. in Golden Meadow, Louisiana, producers of Poor Pierre's shrimp. The partnership began in April 2010, the day before the Gulf Oil Spill, with a verbal agreement.



L to R: Curt Gaither, COO Columbia Restaurant Group, Gerard Thomassie, Owner of Poor Pierre Shrimp, Richard Gonzmart, 4th Generation and President, Columbia Restaurant Group.

When the Gulf Oil Spill happened, Gonzmart was quick to tell Gerard Thomassie, second generation family member and owner of Louisiana Shrimp Processing & Packing, L.L.C that he would honor the verbal agreement they had made, reassuring Thomassie that he believed in their business, and its ability to source quality shrimp for the Columbia's needs.

"The Columbia supports family-owned American businesses. We believe the finest tasting shrimp in the world are domestic wild-caught shrimp from the sustainable and pristine natural habitat waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The Gonzmart family is proud to announce our partnership with Gerard Thomassie's family-owned Louisiana Shrimp Processing & Packing, L. L. C. by using their Poor Pierre's shrimp in our century-old family recipes," Gonzmart said.

Gonzmart recently visited Louisiana Shrimp Processing & Packing, L.L.C. in Golden Meadow, Louisiana. He inspected the boats, plant and their shrimp with Thomassie. The companies then formalized their partnership with a signed agreement.

"We are very, very loyal people," said Gonzmart. "Like everyone we do business with, we have had our ups and downs. When one of our partners goes through a bad time, we continue to support them, just as we know they will support us," Gonzmart said.

Gerard Thomassie, second generation family member and owner of Louisiana Shrimp Processing & Packing, L. L. C. is proudly continuing in the family tradition his father started nearly 40 years ago. His company has 55 employees, and since the Gulf Oil Spill, he has kept all of their core employees and is increasing staff as production levels increase.

"Everyone at our company, from management to dockhand, are all excited and honored to be a partner in the Columbia's ongoing commitment of providing quality products to their patrons. I look forward to assisting Richard Gonzmart, his family and the Columbia's employees in their quest to continue to provide their patrons with a most memorable experience, signified by an eager return," said Thomassie.

The Thomassie family started in the shrimp business in Louisiana as vessel owners and operators in the early 1970s and in 1985 opened their first dockside unloading and grading facility with ice plant and fuel dock to service the fishing boats. That company was named Thoma-Sea Fisheries, Inc.

In 1990, Louisiana Shrimp & Packing, Inc. opened with the purchase of a previous full service processing facility which had been repossessed in the local area.

In 2011, the name was changed to Louisiana Shrimp Processing & Packing, L.L.C. upon the retirement of his father, Robert Joseph Thomassie, and his mother, Geraldine Dupre Thomassie.



L to R: James Albritton of JKI Purchasing, Curt Gaither, COO Columbia Restaurant Group, Gerard Thomassie, Owner of Poor Pierre Shrimp, Richard Gonzmart 4th Generation and President, Columbia Restaurant Group, Ed Keisel, Seafood Sales Support Team, SYSCO West Coast Florida.

*THE COLUMBIA OFFERS THREE NEW DRINKS MADE FROM OUR PRIVATE LABEL SPIRITS,
DON CASIMIRO CLASSIC SILVER RUM AND CHACHO BOURBON*

El Floridita Daiquiri

This is the original Daiquiri invented in the 1930's by Casimiro Hernandez's friend, Constante Ribalaigua, owner of Old Havana's landmark bar, El Floridita. The Daiquiri was Ernest Hemingway's favorite cocktail. Casimiro brought back this secret recipe after a visit with his friend. Don Casimiro Classic Silver Rum, fresh lime juice, Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur and a splash of grapefruit, shaken and served on the rocks in a sugar-rimmed glass.



Mint Julep

Casimiro Jr. enjoyed horse racing, especially the Kentucky Derby. He also enjoyed Mint Juleps so much that in the back lot of the Columbia in Ybor City, he would grow fresh mint to serve the most refreshing summer cocktail in Tampa. Muddled fresh mint in a pewter Mint Julep cup, filled with cracked ice, Casimiro's secret mint simple syrup and Chacho Bourbon. Garnished with fresh mint.



Chacho Manhattan

Honoring our great great uncle, Evelio "Chacho" Hernandez, youngest son of the founder, Casimiro Hernandez Sr. At the turn of the 20th century, Ybor City was filled with guava orchards. Chacho's love of guavas inspired him to use guava syrup in the Classic Manhattan. He mixed premium small batch Chacho Bourbon, a dash of guava syrup, sweet vermouth and bitters. Stirred and poured over ice, garnished with lemon and orange zest.





Screaming Richard



TEQUILA

1 liter / 40% Alc. by Vol.

Fourth Generation Restaurateur Richard Gonzmart Creates “Screaming Richard Tequila” to Reflect his Passion for Living Life to the Fullest

Richard Gonzmart, fourth generation family member of Florida’s Oldest Restaurant – The Columbia – is a man of many passions.

On any given day, you might find Gonzmart running with the bulls in Pamplona, Spain, running in the streets to train for a marathon, running on a show course with German shepherds, or running Florida’s oldest restaurant -- the 106-year-old Columbia Restaurant, founded by his great-grandfather in 1905 in Tampa’s Historic Ybor City.

Gonzmart is a man who believes in following your passions and living life to the fullest. He has created a tequila to capture his passion for life called “Screaming Richard Tequila.”

SCREAMING RICHARD TEQUILA

I produced this exceptionally smooth and easy drinking Tequila to honor my motto: “Live Life with Passion!” The label is an actual photo of myself that was taken while I was running with the bulls in Pamplona, Spain during the San Fermín Festival. I’m the guy wearing the red shirt with my head turned around to look for more bulls as they join the stampede to the bullring.

I chose to participate in this annual festival for the first time in 2005 to commemorate the University of South Florida “Bulls,” my adopted school’s membership into the Big East Athletic Conference. Screaming Richard helps when it comes time to run with the bulls, and for any occasion to celebrate all that life has to offer.

Here’s to life, live it with passion!

Richard Gonzmart - 4th Generation, Columbia Restaurant

GONZMART HAS ALSO CREATED A NEW DRINK TO SHOWCASE HIS TEQUILA:

Margarita “Sandia”

The most refreshing, tastiest Margarita you will ever enjoy. Fresh watermelon juice, with a splash of fresh lime juice, Screaming Richard Tequila, shaken and served on the rocks in a salt-rimmed glass.

Screaming Richard Tequila will be served in all seven Columbia locations in Florida, and sold in gift shops adjacent to the Columbia in Tampa’s Ybor City, and in Sarasota on St. Armands Circle.

Screaming Richard Tequila is made by Terressentia in Charleston, South Carolina. Richard Gonzmart selected the flavor profile for this private label tequila. Terressentia selects the finest distillates, whether classics like vodka, rum, and whiskey, or something more exotic, from around the world to create outstanding, customized brands with their award-winning Terrepure technology – a patented, revolutionary process using energy driven oxidation and filtration to refine distilled spirits into a smoother, flavor enhanced experience. Terrepure removes harsh-tasting congeners – artifacts introduced by fermentation, distillation, or aging to reveal a smoother, more refined spirit. Terressentia produced products have won over 30 medals in both National and International Spirit Competitions.





Chefs Cruise

In July, the Columbia Chefs and select Corporate Office employees, along with their significant others went on a company cruise to Spain and Italy to reward them for making sales goals. They visited Florence, Pisa, Rome, the Isle of Capri, Naples, Pompeii, Palma de Mallorca and Barcelona. Congratulations to everyone!

GUEST COMPLIMENTS

Dear Columbia Management:

I just had to write about my dining experience yesterday at the Columbia at the Pier.

My husband (now deceased) and I have been dining at the Columbia for at least 30 years. Our usual location is the Pier, but we have been to Ybor many times, and also have been to St. Armand's and St. Augustine.

I can honestly say that I have never been disappointed in a meal. The reason for this is CONSISTENCY. I know that I can always go, expecting my meal to be a certain way, and it is. Very few places can boast this, especially for so many years!

In particular, Sunday, July 3, a girlfriend and I visited the Columbia at the Pier and it was an absolutely perfect experience. Our server, Tannen, was not only very sweet, but an excellent server. From soup through dessert, it was all very good!

Again, thank you, Columbia, for a great dining experience and I wish you many more successful years.

Sincerely,
DIRCY BRYANT
Seminole Florida



To Columbia Restaurant St. Augustine and whomever else this may concern:

I usually do not go out of my way to make comments, and if I do it is typically commenting on my family's server. However this is not the case in this email. The hostess who took us to our seat did above outstanding. Her name was Stephanie, she asked us how we were and actually acted interested the whole way to our seat. Stephanie also pulled out the chair for myself, my husband, my mom, my dad, and even my six year old daughter. (Sophie, my daughter, thought she was a princess and wants to go back and see Stephanie!) I watched her seat others and it seemed as though she was friendly with everyone. As we left she thanked us and asked us to come again. Due to Stephanie's welcoming attitude we will definitely return and recommend your restaurant to all of our friends. GREAT EXPERIENCE! Server was Angela who was also a sweetheart!

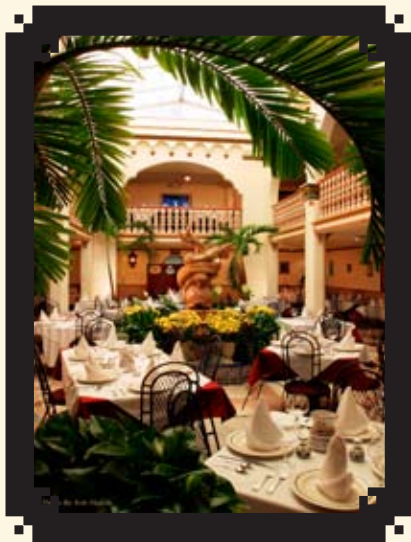
Thank You,
MICHELLE NEWVENPORT



¿QUE PASA?

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EDITOR: Angela Geml



Send story ideas
and comments to

A.Geml@columbiarestaurant.com

If you work for The Columbia
and would like to share

your story about
working with us,
please contact

Angela at

A.Geml@columbiarestaurant.com

"1905 Day" is Coming



On Sunday, September 18th, all six Columbia Restaurants* will roll back their prices for "1905 Day" to celebrate the 106th ANNIVERSARY of the fourth and fifth generation family-owned business. As has been the tradition since their 75th Anniversary, the Columbia has developed a special menu with the prices of yesteryear for this day.

From noon until 7:00 p.m. on "1905 Day", guests will enjoy the Columbia Restaurant's world-famous Spanish cuisine for the prices they might have paid in the "good ole days". Menu items will include:

Chicken & Yellow Rice "Ybor" - \$2.95

Boliche (eye round of beef) - \$2.95

Merluza "A la Rusa" - \$2.95

Columbia's Original "1905 Salad" - \$1.95

Sangria - \$.95 cents

Flan - \$.50 cents

Richly brewed American coffee - \$.05 cents

On this day only, reservations are not accepted, and takeout items are not available.

"1905 Day" takes place at the Columbia Restaurants* in Tampa's Ybor City, Sarasota, St Augustine, The Pier in St. Petersburg, Sand Key on Clearwater Beach and Celebration.

All Columbia Restaurants are open seven days a week for lunch and dinner.

*The Columbia Café on the Riverwalk at the Tampa Bay History Center in Downtown Tampa will not offer the "1905 Day" menu, but will be open and serving from their regular menu.





“Richard’s Run For Life” 5K



Richard’s Run For Life 5K takes place on Friday, November 4th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in Ybor City’s Centennial Park. Runners and Walkers welcome. Sign up now at: www.richardsrunforlife.org

100% of the proceeds will benefit the Adolescent Young Adult (AYA) initiative for sarcoma research at H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute.



Special Dates



Columbia Community Harvest
Entire Month of September

Labor Day
Monday, September 5th

Christmas Eve
Saturday, December 24th

"1905 Day"
Sunday September 18th

Christmas
Sunday, December 25th

Dining for Life
October 1st - November 6th

New Year's Eve
Saturday, December 31st

Thanksgiving
Thursday, November 24th

New Year's Day
Sunday, January 1st





We'll Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly You Get to Eat, Drink & Be Jolly!

The Columbia's seven locations have dining rooms available for holiday parties, banquets, rehearsal dinners, wedding receptions, meetings, or other group events.

For over 100 years the Columbia has been hosting parties, trust us with your celebration today.

Enjoy a waterfront view for your party at our Columbia locations in St. Petersburg, Sand Key, and on the Riverwalk at the Tampa Bay History Center.

Outdoor event areas are available at our Columbia Locations in St. Augustine, Celebration, Sand Key, and on the Riverwalk at the Tampa Bay History Center.

To find a location for your event, please visit this link for more information:

www.columbiarestaurant.com/banquets_catering.asp

We look forward to making your event jolly!



Waterfront event space in downtown St. Petersburg



Waterfront event space on the Riverwalk, Tampa



1 of 15 different dining rooms at Columbia Ybor City

