

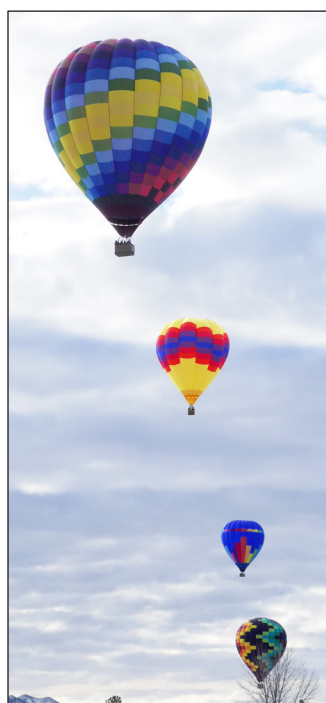


Above: Photo by Marcy Stamper
Awaiting lift-off from the Winthrop Balloon Roundup launch site.
Above Left: Photo by Steve Mitchell
The Balloon Glow event illuminated downtown Winthrop.
Below: Photo by Steve Mitchell
The winter landscape provided a perfect backdrop for balloons.



Above: Photo by Marcy Stamper
Inflating the balloons started early each morning of the roundup.
Right: Photo by Marcy Stamper
As information, balloons drifted over the valley after lifting off.

Above it all



Linwood owners expand repertoire with catering business

BY ASHLEY LODATO

A scant two years after opening a new restaurant in Twisp, Linwood owner and chef Adam Custis has launched another cooking venture: Methow Catering LLC.

A three-way partnership among Custis, Colby Frederick and Custis' partner Ashley St. Leger, Methow Catering is available to cater weddings, private parties and "any other shindig you don't feel like cooking for," Custis said.

Custis and Frederick have cooked together for years, most notably at Winthrop's Copper Glance, frequently roasting meats for South American-style asado dinners. Because Linwood receives so many cold calls about catering weddings, St. Leger and Custis had recently been discussing opening a catering business.

Last fall, Frederick approached Custis to suggest a catering partnership. "And a week later Stew Dietz called me to say that she was selling her catering equipment," Custis said. "It all worked out so well, it just all came together at the same time."

Dietz sold the catering trio all of her equipment, Custis said: grills, travel burners, pots and pans, flatware and dishes, including a large collection of vintage glassware and plates,

which will complement St. Leger's existing collection of antique plates. "Stew also gave us all her Excel files and other organizational paperwork," Custis said. "All those files are going to make our planning work a lot easier."

Diverse flavors

Custis' culinary style is characterized by diversity. He's well-versed in hearty comfort foods like meatloaf and mac-n-cheese and he's celebrated in Methow Valley restaurant circles for his expertise in cooking animal proteins: whole roast pig, porterhouse steak, rotisserie chicken. But his Southeast Asian-inspired menu at Linwood delivers lighter fare consisting of bright and inventive offerings that complement meat without it dominating the dish.

This diverse aesthetic will be carried on through Methow Catering. "We're offering a wide variety of foods," Custis said. "We will do traditional wedding entrees like salmon and chicken, of course, but if you want something more unconventional we'll work with you on that. We can certainly do anything that's already on the Linwood menu, but we can also explore other ideas you have."

Custis and his partners hope that the weddings, family reunions, graduation parties and

other private events they are called upon to cater will allow them to showcase some of their specialties, such as pig roasts and wood-fired pizzas from the mobile oven Frederick is currently building.

The catering business is ramping up, starting with a handful of private dinners for helicopter skiing groups. Soon, Custis expects wedding dinner calls to start coming in. Custis and his partners will evaluate each booking on an individual basis, to determine how to allocate resources when catering gigs are scheduled on Linwood's busiest nights. Custis said that Methow Catering will be hiring additional servers and other staff to support offsite catering.

"If it's a giant wedding we may need to close Linwood occasionally on a Saturday night," Custis said, "but with all the prep work done at the restaurant and Colby being such a competent cook — and I know a thing or two about cooking too — we feel pretty confident we can handle both Linwood and a private event. We're looking forward to being able to provide people with some interesting food options at different locations throughout the valley."

For more information about Methow Catering, visit www.linwoodtwisp.com/catering.



Photo by Ashley Lodato
From left, Ashley St Leger, Adam Custis and Colby Frederick are partners in Methow Catering LLC.

Kindergarten Round Up



Wednesday, March 30
1:30 - 3:30 p.m. at
Methow Valley Elementary

Register your child and learn more about the Kindergarten program!

Registration packets are available online, deadline is April 29

For more info visit our website at methow.org or call 996-2186

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