



Private Mega-Yacht Executive Chef Ernesto Palij

Sail the corners of the world
with fine wine and exquisite dining.

BY C. JETER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEANDRO VILLASMIL



challenge but somehow, I make it work. The pressure the owner and guest put on the chef is quite intense but that drives me and challenges me to grow as an individual as well as a chef.

For example I had an owner give me a three hour heads up to cater a dinner for 150 people. As a private chef it's only me. I am a one man band sort of speak so all the provisioning, cooking, cleaning and management of the galley (kitchen on a yacht) is my sole responsibility. Sometimes the requests are ridiculous. I deal with it by focusing on my job and taking everything as a challenge and an opportunity to continuously raise the bar for myself and rise above these impossible requests. When I accomplish and overcome these challenges, the reward is priceless. It is something I will never forget."

CEO, Ean Sims of *Hidden Treasure Magazine* dish was a Filet Mignon served with a Red Wine reduction sauce, sautéed asparagus and seasoned herbed potatoes served with a lobster tail dressed with a Spanish tomato salsa. The Filet Mignon was kept simple as the quality of the product speaks for itself. I seasoned it with salt and pepper, seared it and finished it in the oven. I prepared a red wine reduction sauce which I married with some Portobello mushrooms. The lobster tails were baked out of their shells and drizzled with a light diced tomato, capers and spring onion salsa which I drizzled with some extra virgin olive oil and salt and pepper. I sautéed some asparagus and prepared a portion of seasoned herbed potatoes to complete the dish. The quality of the products shined and the cooking times of all products were done to perfection. I'm glad he enjoyed his meal, as it represents *Hidden Treasure Magazine* and himself!

"I WORKED AS A BUSINESS ANALYST for 13 years for all the wrong reasons and was not happy at all with my life at the time. I always loved to cook so I decided to change my life and do something I was passionate about and cooking was my true passion. I returned to Buenos Aires to get my professional training at the Argentinean Institute of Gastronomy and a post graduate degree from Mausi Sebess which I'm completing at the present time and I have never looked back!

A friend that was doing some carpentry work in yachts out of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida heard that I was studying culinary arts and asked me to consider private chaffing on Yachts. For me, this was something I had never considered before. I got on a plane and spent two weeks in Ft. Lauderdale checking out the Yachting Industry and saw myself fitting in perfectly. It was just what I needed at the time, as I was use to travelling most of my life and this way I could exercise both my passion for food and travel. As a private chef I am responsible for the nutrition and well being of the owner and guest at all times when it comes to their daily meals.

When I first started it was a dream come true but everything in life has a price. To make a long story short, the price I paid is to be away for most of the year from my eternal love. My favorite thing is to be able to travel the world and explore the vast culinary diversity within. I enjoy constantly learning about local produce and proteins as well as recipes from each city I have visited and when allowed, implement those to my repertoire of dishes for my owner and guests. All the time, that is the difference between being a private chef and a chef in a restaurant. I have no set menu and I need to be ready for any request possible. It's my biggest