

A Lucky New Year's Day Lunch

MALIBU FARM, A RESTAURANT PERCHED AT THE END OF MALIBU PIER, HAS BECOME ONE OF L.A.'S BEST HANGOUTS. CHEF HELENE HENDERSON HOSTS A NEW YEAR'S DAY LUNCH WITH A MENU OF AUSPICIOUS DISHES.

BY JENNIFER SOMMER PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUIS GARCIA

WHEN HELENE HENDERSON'S husband suggested she move her acclaimed farm dinners to Malibu, California's 780-foot-long pier, she said: "That's stupid. They're farm dinners." She agreed to try

them as a pop-up, though, and took over a vacant café at the tip of the pier. She ripped out the red vinyl booths, tossed the deep fryer and opened Malibu Farm. Today, the pop-up has turned permanent; she serves her California-farm-sourced version of beach food to surfers, celebrities and surfer-celebrities, like Laird Hamilton and his star-athlete wife, Gabrielle Reece.

Raised in a desolate town in northern Sweden, Henderson was lured to Los Angeles by a friend promising three things: a car, a job and a boyfriend (who turned out to be John Stockwell, the director of the surf film *Blue Crush*; he became her husband). Once in L.A., the onetime model was hired as a last-minute replacement chef for a dinner party. Her food was such a hit, she became a full-time caterer and hobbyist farmer.

"Your air-conditioning is gorgeous, Helene," Hamilton jokes when the breeze kicks up on the restaurant's rooftop deck during Henderson's New Year's Day lunch (watch him on YouTube "shooting the pier" last summer in hurricane-induced swells). Henderson is serving a hearty orecchiette with lucky-for-the-New-Year black-eyed peas (p. 56). She sources ingredients from her farm—she grows persimmons and pairs them with burrata for a creamy and crisp salad (p. 58)—and a chunk of her harvest ends up on Hamilton's plate: "Cooks always love me because I eat so much," he says.

For New Year's Day, she also tops her meringue roulade (p. 58) with almonds, an ode to the traditional Swedish holiday belief that the nuts are lucky. She swears she made the dessert for Hollywood studio executive Ron Meyer before awards season one year—and it worked: His film *Les Misérables* ended up winning a handful of Golden Globes. ➤

MALIBU FARM
IS ON A PIER
780 FEET FROM
THE COAST.

Orecchiette with Bacon, Black-Eyed Peas and Spinach

🕒 Total 45 min; Serves 8

½ lb. bacon, frozen for 15 minutes and very thinly sliced crosswise

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 large garlic clove, thinly sliced

½ tsp. crushed red pepper

1 lb. cherry tomatoes, halved

2 cups drained canned or thawed frozen black-eyed peas

2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
Salt and black pepper

1½ lbs. dried orecchiette pasta

5 oz. baby spinach

Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, for serving

1. In a medium skillet, cook the bacon over moderate heat, stirring, until browned and crisp, about 7 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to paper towels to drain. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of fat from the skillet and heat the olive oil in it. Add the garlic and crushed red pepper and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Scrape the garlic oil into a serving bowl. Add the tomatoes, black-eyed peas, vinegar and a generous pinch each of salt and black pepper to the bowl and toss well.

2. In a large saucepan of salted boiling water, cook the orecchiette until al dente. Drain well. Add the pasta and the spinach to the tomato mixture and toss until the spinach is just wilted. Season the pasta generously with salt and black pepper and toss again. Sprinkle the bacon on top and serve, passing cheese at the table.

WINE Earthy, berried Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir: 2012 Brewer-Clifton Sta. Rita Hills.



Helene Henderson, LEFT, adds black-eyed peas to pasta, BELOW, for good luck. BOTTOM: Surfer Laird Hamilton and his wife, former volleyballer Gabrielle Reece, are Henderson devotees.



FOOD STYLIST: VIVIAN LUI; PROP STYLIST: AMY CHIN



Pineapple-Sake Sangria with Jalapeño

Active 15 min; Total 1 hr 40 min
Serves 8

Henderson's sake-based punch is refreshing and spicy thanks to an easy-to-make jalapeño syrup.

- ¾ cup water
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 jalapeño, thinly sliced crosswise
- 4½ cups pineapple juice
- One 750-ml bottle dry filtered sake
- Ice
- Pineapple slices and mint sprigs, for garnish

1. In a small saucepan, bring the water to a boil with the sugar and jalapeño, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Let cool completely, then strain the syrup; discard the jalapeño.
 2. In a large pitcher, combine the jalapeño syrup, pineapple juice and sake and stir well. Refrigerate until well chilled, about 1 hour. Serve the sangria over ice in tumblers, garnished with pineapple and mint.
- MAKE AHEAD** The sangria can be refrigerated overnight.

Aioli-Glazed Charred Broccoli

Active 30 min; Serves 8

Henderson came up with this incredibly smart recipe while working as a caterer. The aioli-coated florets get bubbly and browned under the broiler or on a grill, almost like instant broccoli casserole. Be sure to serve piping hot.

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 small garlic clove, finely grated
- Salt and pepper
- 2¾ lbs. broccoli (3 medium heads), cut into florets, stems reserved for another use

1. Preheat the broiler and position a rack 8 inches from the heat. In a large bowl, whisk the mayonnaise with the olive oil, lemon juice and garlic and season generously with salt and pepper. Add the broccoli florets and toss to coat.
2. Spread half of the broccoli on a large rimmed baking sheet and broil for about 7 minutes, until lightly charred and the edges are crisp. Transfer the charred broccoli to a platter and repeat with the remaining broccoli. Serve right away.

Persimmon-and-Burrata Salad with Sesame Candy

Active 35 min; Serves 8

The Fuyu persimmon that Henderson uses in this salad is light orange and shaped like a tomato; don't confuse it with the Hachiya variety, which is heart-shaped.

- ½ cup sugar
- ⅔ cup toasted sesame seeds
- Salt
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 Tbsp. pure maple syrup
- 2 Tbsp. minced shallot
- Pepper
- 5 oz. baby arugula
- ½ lb. burrata cheese (2 small balls), drained and cut into ¾-inch pieces
- 2 firm Fuyu persimmons, cut into ¾-inch wedges
- ½ cup pomegranate seeds

1. In a medium saucepan, cook the sugar over moderate heat, undisturbed, until melted and light golden, about 3 minutes. Stir in the sesame seeds and a pinch of salt and immediately scrape onto a parchment paper-lined plate. Let cool completely, then break the candy into small pieces.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the olive oil with the vinegar, maple syrup and shallot; season with salt and pepper. Mound the arugula on a platter and scatter the burrata, persimmons, sesame candy and pomegranate seeds on top. Drizzle some of the dressing over the salad and serve, passing the remaining dressing at the table.

MAKE AHEAD The sesame candy can be stored in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

WINE Tropical-fruit-inflected California Sauvignon Blanc; 2013 Star Lane Vineyard.

Cranberry and Almond Meringue Roulade

Active 45 min; Total 2 hr 30 min
Serves 8 to 10

- 2 cups fresh or thawed frozen cranberries
- 1 cup water
- 1¾ cups sugar
- Vegetable oil, for brushing
- 4 large egg whites
- 1 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 Tbsp. crème fraîche

1. Preheat the oven to 375°. In a saucepan, bring the cranberries, water and 1 cup of the sugar to a boil. Simmer over moderate heat, stirring, until the cranberries start to burst, 5 to 7 minutes. Let cool.
2. Brush a foil-lined rimmed baking sheet with oil. In a stand mixer, whisk the egg whites at medium-high speed to soft peaks. Beat in the remaining ¾ cup of sugar at high speed until the whites are stiff, 3 minutes. Spread the meringue onto the baking sheet in a ½-inch-thick rectangle. Top with the almonds and bake in the center of the oven for 15 minutes, until springy. Slide the meringue and foil onto a rack; cool completely.
3. Beat the heavy cream and crème fraîche at medium speed until soft peaks form.
4. Cover the meringue with a sheet of foil and top with a baking sheet. Invert the meringue onto a work surface and remove the rack and top layer of foil. With a long side facing you, spread the cream over the meringue, leaving a 2-inch border. Using a slotted spoon, scatter the cranberries on top; reserve the syrup. Starting at the long side nearest you, carefully roll up the meringue. Transfer to a platter and refrigerate until chilled, at least 1 hour or up to 5 hours. Using a serrated knife, cut the roulade into slices and serve, passing the reserved syrup at the table.