



Connect. Showcase. Sell.

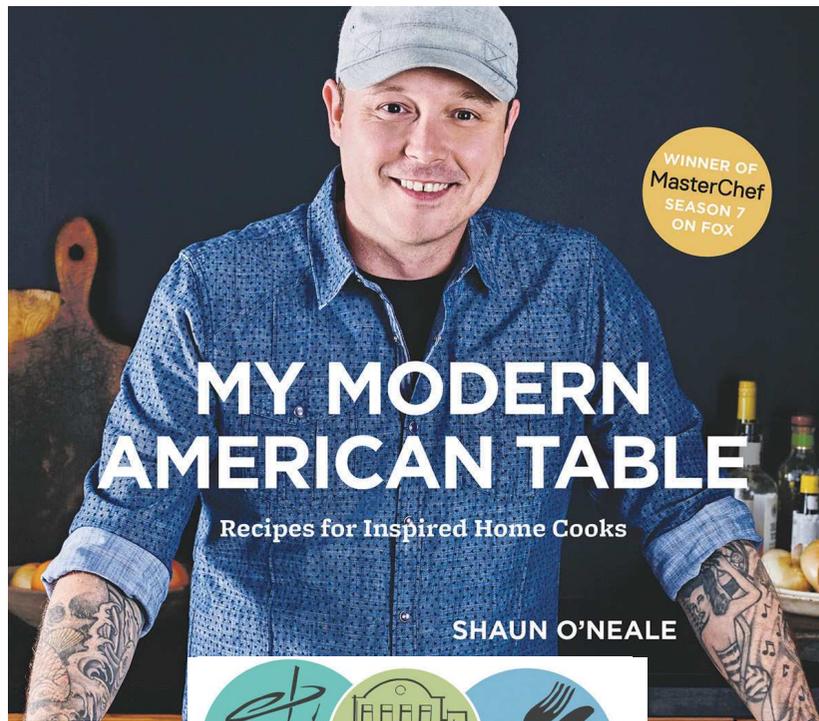
The industry will soon be gathering at the 44th Annual Hotel & Restaurant Spring Trade Expo in Ocean City, Maryland. Originally developed so the local market didn't have to travel far and to generate business for the new Ocean City Convention Center, the Expo has grown to be the industry's premiere time for connecting. Over 400 booths will feature the latest products and services for hospitality-related businesses. "We are rapidly filling up our booth space, but it's not too late for vendors to reserve a spot," stated event manager, Liz Walk. So, if you'd like to be in front of 5,000 attendees, contact the event producer, the Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association today at 410-289-6733.

Mixing It Up

Master Chef Season 7 Winner, Shaun O'Neale, will be the featured chef on the Culinary Stage during the Expo. Following his cooking demo, you'll have a chance to meet and greet Shaun and purchase his *My Modern American Table* cookbook. While mixing up ingredients is Shaun's current forte, his original passion was mixing up music. New this year, the Expo will feature an opportunity for an industry mixer. Immediately following Sunday's Expo, the industry is invited to gather at Seacrets Morley Hall to mix and mingle with Shaun, who will be turning up the tunes.

Developing Future Chefs

Recently, the Delmarva Chefs



Above: Shaun O'Neale will be a featured chef at the Expo
Below: The Delmarva Chefs and Cooks Association gathered at OC's Seacrets Distillery

and Cooks Association invited its members and me to tour Seacrets Distillery during its holiday meeting. Located on 49th Street in Ocean City, this impressive facility delivers so many details that you feel as if you've stepped back to 1933. During the tour, current chefs, and those aspiring to be, learned all about the grains, evaporation, and maceration which go into producing the award-winning Seacrets spirits. Lucky for us, we knew the secret passcode which allowed our entry into the speakeasy, where we tasted the spirits. Three students of the Wor-Wic Community College Culinary program were given memberships in the American Culinary Federation, capping off a great night!

Restaurant Roundtable

As lawyers are actively pursuing clients via Facebook and wage issues are hitting the news, we deemed it imperative to bring the Ocean City restaurant industry together to discuss the wage and hour, overtime, and tipped wage laws. A Restaurant Roundtable is being planned for January 26. The session will allow the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation and restaurants to have an open and frank discussion of the laws and their interpretation. Additionally, the Roundtable will also serve as a general discussion time for members to share their thoughts on any topic of importance.

SUSAN JONES is the executive director of the Ocean City Hotel Motel Restaurant Association.