

IN THE NEWS

YOUTH REJECT PANTYHOSE

Women ages 25 to 54 wear pantyhose an average of 1.8 times a week, down from 3.5 times a week a decade ago. The snag, industry experts say, is the generation gap between women who remember a time when stockings and pumps were required workplace attire and slacks were a no-no.



NAUGHTY NURSES RILE

The Heart Attack Grill — a theme restaurant whose specialties include the Quadruple Bypass Burger and Flatliner Fries — is making some healthcare professionals' blood pressure rise. The waitresses' naughty-nurse uniforms feature skimpy, cleavage-baring outfits, high heels and thigh-high stockings, which some nursing organizations say is an insult to the profession.

WARREN BUFFETT

It took less than 45 minutes for the billionaire investor and avid bridge player to go broke in a charity Texas Hold 'em tournament. "It's different than bridge," said the chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway Inc. (BRKA) "I thought the low score won." Buffett, 76, was among 50 amateur, celebrity and professional players who competed in the benefit for the Nebraska Make-a-Wish program.



Buffett

THE WEEK AHEAD Street looks to data for year-end signs

Wall Street will wade through a slew of fresh economic data in the coming week as it strives to determine how well the economy is holding up and whether the surge in stocks of the past few months can be sustained through the final weeks of the year.

One area of nearly universal focus will be Tuesday's meeting of the Federal Reserve's interest-rate setting Open Market Committee. While Wall Street generally expects the FOMC to leave short-term interest rates at 5.25 percent, investors will pore over the statement that follows the meeting to glean a sense of when the central bank might lower rates.

— Tim Paradis, Associated Press

COMING TODAY

» Treasury bill auction

IPOs THIS WEEK

» **Affymax Inc. (AFFY)**, Palo Alto, drugs, 3.5 million shares, \$22 to \$24, Morgan Stanley.

» **Altra Holdings Inc. (AIMC)**, Quincy, Mass., power controls, 10 million shares, \$14 to \$16, by Merrill Lynch.

» **Artes Medical Inc. (ARTE)**, San Diego, medical products, 4.6 million shares, \$12 to \$14, Cowen & Co. and Lazard.

» **Cal Dive International Inc. (DVR)**, Houston, diving services, 22.2 million shares, \$14 to \$16, Bank of America and J.P. Morgan.

» **Carrols Restaurant Group Inc. (TAST)**, Syracuse, N.Y., restaurants, 15 million shares, \$14 to \$16, Wachovia and Bank of America.

» **DCT industrial Trust Inc. (DCT)**, Denver, real estate developer, 15 million shares, \$11.50 to \$12.50, Merrill Lynch and Wachovia Securities.

» **Double-Take Software (DBTK)**, Southborough, Mass., 7.5 million shares, \$9 to \$11, Cowen & Co. and Thomas Weisel.

The changing face of Filipino cuisine

Entrepreneurs seek ways to turn ethnic favorites into mainstream fare

By Kate Williamson
Staff Writer

Bay Area diners cheerfully go from a lunchtime pupusa to happy-hour sushi and a soul food dinner. With the help of a box of Alka-Selzer and an adventurous palate, one can happily eat one's way around the world in the space of a month without leaving the region.

So why isn't the food of one of the area's larger minority groups — Filipinos — more of a mainstream night out?

It's a question that's on the mind of a lot of enterprising restaurateurs these days, whether they own an old-school institution whose crowds have been dwindling or a new place hoping to draw crowds of second-generation Filipinos — or are part of a nascent movement to introduce the cuisine to the masses.

"Filipino cuisine is on par with all the other ethnic cuisines out there," said Michael Acabado, president of the San Francisco Filipino American Chamber of Commerce. "It's just a matter of having the right formula to attract mainstream clientele, whether they're from San Francisco or if they're tourists."

He and others pointed to a missing "Slanted Door effect" in making Filipino cuisine a high-profile eating phenomenon. The effect is simple — have a celebrated chef, like Charles Phan, and watch the cuisine overall flourish, as Vietnamese food has at the Slanted Door in the Ferry Building.

Several Bay Area chefs are hoping that introducing that modern takes on Filipino foods will introduce new eaters to the cuisine.

There's a difference, though.



— Jason Steinberg /Special to The Examiner

Many of these sleek-spot chefs and owners — such as Poleng Lounge's Timothy Luym, Pres a Vi's Kelly Degala and Zebulon's Rex Tabora — are introducing Filipino fare as part of a larger pan-Asian small-plates menu.

The move's a natural, given that the Philippines are a multiethnic society with Chinese, European and other influences, Acabado said. But if you're not familiar with the food, you might not know that Luym's "beef tenderloin salpicao with marrow" is a take on a classic street food.

"Here, we do [salpicao] with a modern twist... The way we make it stays pretty true to the culture, but the presentation is different," Luym said. "I guess we took it for granted that people would understand it's from the Philippines."

Not advertising its origin wasn't intentional, he said. He also serves

fried lumpia, adobo chicken wings and a special Filipino hand-harvested sea salt.

Meanwhile, business has been a mixed bag for more traditional Filipino restaurants on the Peninsula. While some old favorites and newcomers are generating a lot of buzz, others report that business has been lagging of late. And several say they are watching their business transform from a certain clientele — immigrants from the Philippines, their children, non-Filipino spouses and immigrants from other Asian countries — to a slightly broader audience.

"For the past year, it was kind of slow compared to previous years," said Criselda Santos, assistant manager of Max's Restaurant of the Philippines in South San Francisco.

Santos wondered if traditional-style restaurants, like Max's, haven't

reached the masses because they're focused on "reaching all Filipinos, not only those with deep pockets. It's like a comfort place."

Tess Diaz, whose family owns Filipinas restaurant in San Francisco, also described her hearty pork-rib-and-vegetable sinigang stew, sweet casaba cake and other traditional foods comforting, family-style fare.

Diaz said business never really improved after Sept. 11, 2001. She doesn't know if it's a perception that the food is fatty, a changing local demographic or a lack of money to invest in the business that's causing the problem. But she has strong ideas about cooking.

"You need to do it by yourself, not out of the can," Diaz said. "If you cook the [chicken] skin, it's tasty. But if you remove it, it's dry. I cook like home-style."

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