

WHAT'S IN SEASON //

# Orange Sunshine

The Florida spring harvest brings sweet Valencias to juices, salads, and cocktails.



**I**t's early March, and we're slogging through winter's final ravages, buoyed by the promise of that fiery orb. No, not the one rising from the East, but the one from the South... multitudes of them, actually: Valencia oranges, dawning daily this month from Florida.

Super-sweet, extra juicy, and mostly seedless, they're the world's most popular oranges, an enduring gift, like Banderas and Blahnik, from Spain.

Harvested only through spring, Valencias have a smooth, thin peel and a tsunami of nectar. Florida producers like Cross Creek Groves ([crosscreekgroves.com](http://crosscreekgroves.com)) and Al's Family Farms ([alsfamilyfarms.com](http://alsfamilyfarms.com)) can easily supply them. Ideal for slicing and squeezing, Valencias will make salads sing (pairing with fennel makes perfect harmony) and sauces rock. For a real party, though, bring on the cocktails.

That's what co-owner Jason Adolphus does daily at **La Bella Havana** (35 Main St, Yonkers 914-920-9777; [labellahavana.com](http://labellahavana.com)). And in the spotlight's gleam these barren days is his Sunny Havana, a tropical swoon of mashed Valencias, citrus-y St-Germain liqueur, vodka, and soda. "We tried it with a regular navel orange," he says, "but it was more bland. The Valencia was sweeter and tangier; it brought out the flavor of the other ingredients much better." His bartenders agreed, Adolphus says, so who are we to doubt them? Head on down, order one for yourself, sway to some mambo, and soon you'll swear that car motor revving outside sounds just like the Caribbean surf.

**Sunny Havana**

Courtesy of Jason Adolphus, La Bella Havana  
(Makes one 10-oz cocktail)

- 1 Valencia orange, halved
- 3 oz Stolli Ohranj
- 1 oz St-Germain liqueur
- 3 oz club soda
- 3 oz Sprite or 7UP

Place orange halves in a glass and mash. Add remaining ingredients and stir. Garnish with an orange slice.

// Diane Weintraub Pohl

COFFEE WITH THE CHEF //

## Chris Hettinger

Cellar 49  
Tarrytown House Estate & Conference Center  
49 E Sunnyside Ln, Tarrytown  
(800-553-8118; <http://www.tarrytownhouseestate.com>)



**Dish I Do the Best...**Braised short ribs. Making them is truly a labor of love.

**Drink of Choice...**I have two, actually—peach Snapple and bourbon. Not together, but maybe I am on to something here?

**Favorite Guilty Pleasure Food...**Bacon! Anything with bacon. Is there a better food product in the world than quality bacon? I don't believe there is.

**If Not a Chef, I'd Be a...**sports talk radio host. Next to cooking, sports is what I know best.

**I Never Eat...**bleu cheese. Whose idea was it to put mold in cheese and eat it? Maybe I just don't understand the concept.

**I Never Cook with...**anything that says 'low fat' on the label. Why bother?

**What Servers Should Never Do...**Forget to wash their hands after using the restroom while working. I have seen it done while dining out and it is real disturbing. Needless to say, I have never been back to that restaurant.

**Favorite Form of Exercise...**Does channel surfing count?

**Once I Start Eating This, I Can't Stop...**Pizza. Thin crust, no toppings, just a good Bronx-style pizza with quality ingredients.

**My Favorite Website...**zingermans.com. It's a deli in Michigan, but it's way more than the average deli. They import all kinds of products from all over the country and other regions in the world, from charcuterie to olives. I love it. They also have a bacon of the month club, of which I was a member.

**My Favorite Music Group Is...**Slipknot. Yes, I still listen to Heavy Metal. Metal is not dead.

// John Bruno Turiano

## The Hoppiest Day

It's said Westchester is wine country; beer, not so much. But for at least one day—surprise, surprise, Saint Patrick's Day—beer is the swig of choice. BTW: No drinking and driving!



Restaurant/Pub	Beers Sold Typical Day	Expected Beers Sold St. Patrick's Day	Percentage Increase
The Ginger Man Greenwich, Connecticut (203) 861-6400; <a href="http://gingermangreenwich.com">gingermangreenwich.com</a>	120	750	525 percent
Emma's Ale House White Plains (914) 683-3662; <a href="http://emmasalehouse.com">emmasalehouse.com</a>	500	3,000	500 percent
Valhalla Crossing Valhalla (914) 682-4076; <a href="http://valhallacrossing.com">valhallacrossing.com</a>	150	300	100 percent
The Tap House Tuckahoe (914) 337-6941; <a href="http://thetaphouseny.com">thetaphouseny.com</a>	150	200	33 percent

// Alyssa Zack with John Bruno Turiano

CHEF KONTIS PHOTO BY TYKISCHA JACOBS