

A rabbi observes Certified Master Chef Shawn Loving and Executive Sous Chef Matt Seasock plating a course for a recent kosher dinner held in the Detroit Athletic Club's Table 1915. Server Mason, at right, is ready to deliver the dishes.

Kosher-Friendly

Detroit Athletic Club among only a handful of private clubs to feature a kosher kitchen.

JN STAFF

Have you heard yet? Kosher dining is now available for members and their guests at the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC) in Downtown Detroit.

That's "kosher dining," as in kosher cuisine made on premises in a kosher kitchen under the supervision of the Vaad, or Union of Orthodox Rabbis in Southfield.



Ben Manges

That makes DAC one of only a handful of secular clubs that feature kosher kitchens in the U.S., joining clubs in Illinois and New York.

The DAC today has approximately 5,200 member accounts, many with multiple affiliated members, but it doesn't "have a breakdown of members by race or religion," said Ben Manges, the club's director of communications.

"In the spirit of genuine hospitality, we really do try to accommodate every member and guest that comes into our clubhouse," he said.

A kosher kitchen is a "reflection of the DAC's commitment to honoring the diversity of our membership and their guests," Manges said. "It also demonstrates an increased sensitivity to dietary needs and a shared respect for the choices that individuals make about what they consume."



David Provost

DAC President David Provost, retired executive chairman of TCF Bank, said that there was enough demand among members to justify the kosher kitchen.

"It's very nice to be able to have first-class dinners with my friends who keep kosher at the DAC," he said.

DAC'S KOSHER KITCHEN

McIntosh Poris Architects (MPA) designed a new main kitchen for the historic Detroit Athletic Club (DAC), built in 1915 by Albert Kahn, FAIA. The 6,000-square-foot main kitchen had not been renovated for 50 years, necessitating a full re-imagining that included accommodations for kosher practices as well as a private chef's table dining room with a view to the kitchen beyond.

Situated on the second floor of the seven-story structure, the kitchen serves the main ballroom, as well as two function rooms.

The goal for the main kitchen was to achieve a modern and efficient workspace with a classic look. White subway tile with black grout replaced dated and dingy yellow tile, capturing the desired aesthetic that will stay fresh throughout the years. A black steel



Bread Pudding

DAC



Cream of Mushroom Soup

A Detroit Athletic Club guideline states that for non-members to dine at the private club, they must be a guest of a member. Non-members wanting to hold private events must be “sponsored” by a DAC member. Information on the different levels of DAC membership is available by contacting the membership team at membership@thedac.com. The DAC also can be reached at thedac.com or (313) 963-9200.

storefront system augments the graphic quality, framing glass walls and doors to discrete areas of the pantry, chef’s table, kosher kitchen and chef’s office.

The designers identified underutilized space adjacent to the main kitchen, thereby accommodating kosher practices without reducing the main kitchen’s capacity. In addition to separate cooking, prep and clean-up areas, additional storage (including two refrigerators — one for meat and one for dairy) was created.

THE CHEF’S TABLE

During the research phase of the project, MPA uncovered original construction documents from a 1940s renovation, which indicated there once was a dining table in the kitchen. The architects brought this ele-

ment back to the establishment as an opportunity for DAC’s culinary team to showcase its talents to the members and guests of the club.

The chef’s table — dubbed Table 1915 for the year when the building debuted — is situated in the corner of the kitchen near the main guest entrance and seats 10 diners. With a more historic feeling, the walls are clad with quarter-sawn white oak, and a porcelain slab-inset dining table is ringed with comfortable red-leather chairs. Cookbooks line the shelves, and a new mural of legendary DAC chefs graces the full-height backsplash at the millwork counter. Visibility is key, so diners have full view of the central plating table where all the action happens. The long side of the storefront has two sliding doors that open toward

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The Kosher Menu

Certified Master Chef Shawn Loving created a gourmet kosher menu, and Chef Matt Seasock did the cooking for a scrumptious kosher dinner recently attended by *JN* Food Writer Esther Allweiss Ingber.

The evening started with a welcome cocktail called The Last Word, Esther said. “The green drink typically made with Chartreuse needed a quality, kosher substitute. For that, DAC Beverage Director Daniel Hochrein showed me the label for Luxardo Del Santo, an Italian herbal liqueur. We also were offered wine with the various courses.”

An amuse bouche is a small pre-dinner treat devised by the chef; it’s not listed on a printed menu. Esther enjoyed Whitefish Caviar in a tofu-based cream sauce, served over leek and onion on a grilled flatbread. Next, came vegan cream of mushroom bisque. It “had a full-mouth feel with the addition of silk tofu. The lovely Beet Carpaccio and Garden Greens salad featured a broad slice of roasted red pepper with shaved fennel in a mustard-basil vinaigrette,” Esther said.

The centerpiece of the meal were slices of Grilled Prime Ribeye, which shared the plate with a sweet pea puree, blistered cherry tomatoes, patterned whipped potatoes, spiced charred cauliflower and sautéed green beans.

Dessert, garnished with crisp apple chips, was Cinnamon & Apple Bread Pudding, including vanilla bean ice cream and a cranberry mint compote.

“The entire meal was superb,” Esther said.

The same menu, one that only DAC members and guests may enjoy, is “available on our standard kosher catering menu,” Chef Seasock said. **JN**





ABOVE: Table 1915 **LEFT:** Detroit Athletic Club Executive Chef Shawn Loving in his chef's toque stands between principals in the completed kitchen renovation project at the private club. They are Michael Poris, left, and John Skok, partners at McIntosh Poris Architects in Birmingham.

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the plating table and the area referred to as the pantry.

MEET THE CHEFS

Leading the club's culinary department for the last four years is the DAC's first Black executive chef, the much-honored Certified Master Chef Shawn Loving. Former owner of the Loving Spoonful restaurant in Farmington Hills, Loving is among the veteran chefs featured in Keith Famie's 2024 nostalgic film, *Detroit: The City of Chefs, Part I*.

Loving said "brainstorming" with board members and executive leadership was part of a long-running discussion of eight-to-10 years on "what amenities would add above and beyond service" to DAC members and their guests. With the large kitchen renovation finally at hand, a decision was made to offer the new option of kosher dining at the club. Before having its kosher kitchen, the DAC could serve only outside boxed kosher meals.

"McIntosh-Poris produced the first layout on Sept. 1, 2021," Manges said, "and their main work with this build ended in September 2024 with the opening of the new kitchen."

Loving assigned Executive Sous Chef Matt Seasock to lead the kosher

unauthorized food or utensils enter the kosher kitchen," Rabbi Wainkrantz said. "The mashgiach oversees the transfer of food to the dining location, as well as the return of the kosher dishes to the kitchen. The mashgiach opens the kitchen at opening and

he said. "It operates a retail outlet within the Grove, or Superior can ship us the larger orders we need. We get our fish shipped from Fortune Fish in Chicago."

Seasock said ingredients are laid on a table in the DAC's main kitchen for the rabbi's inspection. If he is satisfied that they meet the guidelines for kashrut, everything can be taken for use in the kosher kitchen.

Since the operation's soft opening in October, Seasock has cooked kosher food, occasionally with an assistant, for as many as 50 guests.

"Between the rabbi and me, I've done a lot of these by now," he said. "I have a solid understanding of the food, the right supplier, proper preparation and service."

The time is near, he said, when the kosher kitchen at the DAC will be able to comfortably cater meals for Jewish weddings and bar/bat mitzvah celebrations. **JN**

Esther Allweiss Ingber contributed to this report.

“It's very nice to be able to have first-class dinners with my friends who keep kosher at the DAC.”

— DAVID PROVOST

kitchen, although "I knew nothing about kosher practices before starting this program," Chef Matt said. Early on, he was introduced to Rabbi Moshe Wainkrantz, the DAC's main mashgiach, or kosher supervisor.

"Due to the proximity to the general kitchen, the mashgiach must pay close attention to make sure that no

locks it upon closing."

Before heading to work, Seasock said he typically stops to pick up salad greens at the Grove, a kosher supermarket in Southfield. He pulls produce and oils (unopened only) from the main kitchen's supplies.

"I buy our kosher chicken and beef from Superior Meats of Southfield,"



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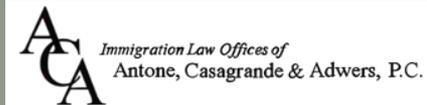
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PUZZLE ANSWERS FROM 7/3

1. Red paint bottle in the middle of the table
2. Woman's sweater is green, from blue.
3. Necklace on woman bottom right.
4. Blue push cart (?) at the top
5. Wooden cut-out in front of man on the left



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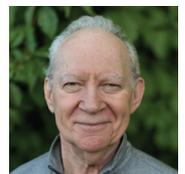
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