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From Cupcakes to Cocktails -- Foods to Be Inaugurated By



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Want to know what's cooking with the incoming Obama administration?

The nation's chefs, bakers and restaurateurs aren't waiting to find out. Whether it's for profits or patriotism, chefs are crafting food creations--from cupcakes to cocktails--to honor the incoming 44th president's historic January 20th inauguration.

For inspiration, many food professionals are looking to Obama's Hawaiian roots. Others are taking their cue from the new administration's expected policy initiatives, including those designed to enhance the environment and boost the withering economy. Echoing these concerns, some food producers are also directing proceeds from Obama-themed products to contribute to local charities.

So, if you want to celebrate the new president's swearing in by digging in or drinking up, here are a few possibilities:

Cupcakes. From Little Cupcake Bakeshop, a carbon-neutral bakery in Brooklyn, N.Y. come "green jobs" cupcakes to celebrate Obama's environmental agenda. The \$2.00 treats are topped with green, or red, white and blue icing and are emblazoned with slogans like "clean energy" and "hope has arrived." The goodies will be sold from Jan. 11 to 20 and proceeds will go to the youth group, SustainUS, says Massimo LoBuglio, one of the bakery's owners.

Brownies. President Bush may hail from Texas, but an Austin-based baker is displaying Democratic colors by paying homage to the incoming chief of state with a red, white and blue brownie, studded with cranberries, white chocolate and blueberries. Says Mary Louise Butters, president of Mary Louise Butters Brownies, "We came up with the flavor because we wanted to do something patriotic." Sold throughout the month, the brownies are priced at \$3.25 each. A portion of the profits will be donated to anti-hunger charity, Feeding America, says Butters.

PC Provisions. Also, in New York, Klee's Brasserie will be featuring a special inauguration menu from Jan. 13 to 20. For \$50 per person, diners can dig into a three-course politically correct meal of Chicago Brats, Bluenose Bass and "Green" Apple Strudel.

Libations. For those with a hankering to raise a glass to the new president, mixologists will be fashioning a host of presidentially-inspired drink options. Oronoco Rum has crafted the Hawaii 4-4, a mix of rum, pineapple juice, and Curacao and pineapple liqueurs. Obama Rising, a cocktail consisting of Ciroc Vodka and Red Bull and a dollop of champagne, is being concocted by Darryl Robinson, a mixologist at the Hudson Bar in New York.
<http://www.drmixologist.com/>

DC Dishes. If you're traveling to DC for the inaugural events, be prepared for a blizzard of Obama-esque gastronomic offerings. Take the Ritz Carlton in Pentagon City, where executive chef, John Zaner--he's being brought in from The Ritz-Carlton Kapalua--is fashioning a menu (\$38 prix fixe or ala carte) that gives a nod to the new president's Aloha State heritage with dishes like Kalua Pork Potsticker and Lychee Ice Cream.

Explains Zaner: "I wanted to create a menu that reflects modern-day Hawaii and the fusion of ethnic cuisines."

In D.C. proper, at the Westend Bistro, helmed by Le Bernardin's Eric Ripert, there's also a Hawaiian theme on tap for a three-course \$85 lunch and dinner menu that includes hamachi tartare, sauteed mahi-mahi, and a mango cheesecake parfait for dessert.

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