



LARRY CROWE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In a Hawaiian culture that doesn't celebrate the sandwich, Spam musubi — Spam sandwiched with rice and wrapped with dried seaweed — has become a popular substitute. Hawaiians embraced Spam during World War II when fresh meat was hard to get.

COOK 'EM, DANNO

Poi, pork, and yes, Spam feature prominently in Hawaiian cuisine

SPAM MUSUBI

2 slices Spam
3 ounces cooked white rice, seasoned with furikake and toasted sesame seeds, if desired
1 tablespoon sweet ginger sesame sauce
1 sheet nori, cut in broad strips
In a large skillet, cook Spam until lightly browned and crisp. Place half of rice into a musubi press, or form into a small loaf about the same size and shape as the slice of Spam. Drizzle with sauce; place Spam on top and press down. On work surface, lay nori shiny-side-down; top with Spam and rice and wrap nori around package. Serve immediately.
Makes 2.

Recipe adapted from Homel

By HEIDI KNAPP RINELLA

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

OK, we'll address the porky elephant in the room first: Yes, Hawaiians love their Spam. There's no doubt about that; the state of Hawaii is the primary consumer of the canned seasoned pork product that doesn't get a whole lot of respect in most of the rest of the country, especially in snobby culinary circles.

But if you were to think that Hawaiian cuisine is limited to Spam, Spam and more Spam, you'd be sadly mistaken, because this is a culinary tradition that has borrowed from many others as it evolved over more than 150 years.

Dorinda Burnet (full name Dorinda Puanami Keola Burnet), first vice

president of the Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club, is a native of the islands who left for the mainland in 1986 and has lived in Las Vegas since 1993. Clearly a traditionalist at heart, she's well steeped in the Hawaiian culinary tradition. In the early days, she said, the primary protein sources were limited.

"We eat a lot of pork, because that was actually the only meat source that we had, pork or fish," Burnet said. "We put it in underground imus, or fire pits. It was shredded and salted (the islands have their own salt mine, she said). Nothing was ever fried; it was either cooked in an underground oven or steamed."

Rice, which is a staple of the Hawaiian

▶ SEE HAWAIIAN COOKING PAGE 3E
Spam popularity arose during World War II

Small Plates

DINING OUT

DELLA'S KITCHEN, DELANO, 3940 LAS VEGAS BLVD. SOUTH

Della's Kitchen opened last week along with the Delano, in the tower formerly known as The Hotel at Mandalay Bay. With a mission defined as "historic farmhouse meets urban eatery," it has an interior that blends natural and industrial elements and a menu that focuses on locally sourced ingredients such as herbs from the restaurant's dedicated greenhouse.

Its fresh juice program highlights juices made daily from organic fruits and vegetables. Breakfast and lunch are served daily. Here's a sample of the menu:

Breakfast: Banana-berry oatmeal, \$12; buttermilk biscuits with cheddar and bacon, \$5; blue crab Benedict, \$24; smoked pork Benedict, \$19; Croque Madame, \$17; custard pancakes, \$13; spiced pumpkin pancakes, \$15.

Starters and salads: Fairhaven fish chowder in a sourdough bowl, \$12; smoky wings, \$14; mac and cheese, \$12; Tuscan kale salad, \$16.

Entrees: Bucatini carbonara, \$18; braised Kurobuta pork shank, \$26; blackened bacon-wrapped shrimp, \$26; steak frites, \$38.

Panini and sandwiches: Mushroom panino, \$16; duck panino, \$18; Farmhouse Club, \$18; ahi burger, \$26. Hours are from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. Call 702-632-9444 or visit www.DelanoLasVegas.com.



COURTESY
Bucatini carbonara is served at Della's Kitchen at Delano.

NEW BOOKS FOR COOKS

HAMBURGER WONTONS WITH LYCHEE KETCHUP

12 ounces ground beef sirloin
1/3 cup American or cheddar cheese, shredded or cut into 1/4-inch dice
1/4 cup minced yellow onion
1/4 cup minced dill pickles
1 tablespoon yellow mustard
1 tablespoon bottled steak sauce
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Lychee ketchup:
1/4 cup diced yellow onion
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon seeded and minced jalapeno pepper
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 tablespoon soy sauce
3 tablespoons rice vinegar
2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
1 cup crushed tomatoes, with liquid
1/4 cup pitted, drained and chopped fresh or canned lychee fruit
Salt
40 wonton wrappers
Oil for deep-frying

To make the filling, combine all the ingredients in a bowl and mix until well blended. Refrigerate for at least an hour.

To make the lychee ketchup, combine all the ingredients in a small saucepan. Bring the mixture to a simmer over medium heat.

Whisk until well blended and the sugar has dissolved, about 5 minutes. Simmer for another 10 minutes, then remove from the heat. Pour into a blender or food processor and process until smooth (be careful when blending hot items — start on low speed and always make sure the lid is secure). Add water as needed for texture and season to taste with salt. Allow to cool to room temperature before covering and refrigerating. The ketchup will thicken slightly when cold.

Form each wonton, using 1 tablespoon of filling per wonton and folding the wrapper to seal in the filling, moistening the edges with water to seal (fold the wrapper diagonally, seal and overlap the points, or form like a tortellini). Keep the wontons covered on a lightly floured tray. Wrap and refrigerate or freeze.

Preheat a few inches of oil to 340 degrees in a heavy-bottomed pot. Add the wontons a few pieces at a time to the oil. Gently turn the wontons in the oil, cooking until all sides are golden brown, about 3 to 4 minutes. Drain the wontons on paper towels. Make sure the heat of the oil stays at 340 degrees while frying the wontons, and return the oil to this temperature before adding new ones.

Makes 40.
Recipe from "Dumplings All Day Wong" by Lee Anne Wong (Page Street Publishing; \$19.99)

— Heidi Knapp Rinella



BELLINI BRUNCH
\$17.99
With Silverton Rewards Card



SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS
10AM-3PM

"Seasons buffet is always clean, lines move fast, food is fresh not frozen...and always good. This is the best buffet in Vegas."

-Bobb N. yelp

seasons
A LIVE ACTION BUFFET