

VEGAS

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FREE | December 26, 2013–January 1, 2014

THIS WEEK IN YOUR CITY

New Year's Eve **PARTY GUIDE**

The venues, the DJs, the pyrotechnics, the bubbly—
it's all here as we pop the cork on 2014

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PLUS ... *How Las Vegas changed in 2013, in the words of the people who changed it* (PAGE 16)



Tender's Wild Game Tasting

Are You Game?

It's time to explore how the wild things taste

By AL MANCINI

• THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT the holiday season that always gets the craving for game—meats such as venison, elk, pheasant, bear and even alligator that were traditionally hunted rather than ranched. (A fun part of it is the treated kick I get out of telling my friends I ate boudin for Christmas. Yes, I know venison isn't traditional, but it's close enough for the job.) But game meats have long been associated with cold-weather months since that's when hunting seasons usually occur. And even in an age when game is farm-raised year-round, many chefs prefer to serve it this time of year to incorporate the seasonal ingredients traditionally associated with each meat. † If you're new to game meat, you need to realize it's more than just an exotic novelty. Animals that live free in the wild (even farm-raised game animals usually live free-range lives) are leaner and healthier than those that are factory farmed. And as Tender Steak & Seafood executive chef R.C. Katz explains, they offer unique flavors that can vary subtly based on where they come from. † "You're experiencing nature through the animal," Paul says. "They're eating wild berries. They're eating wild grasses. Depending on which animal it is, like food they eat is going to influence their flavors." † Plenty of game meat is available right now in Las Vegas. Here are seven places to try it.

Tender Steak & Seafood

Paul has various game meats seasonally in his house made charcuterie and sausage. But the best way to experience it here is in his wild game tasting (\$46), available year-round. It features antelope main course, metal horns of venison and a wild boar loin served with porcig chutney and a reduction of venison and seasonal berries. The delicious antelope is one of the most interesting game presentations in town, and well worth a visit on its own. (Open, 202-7822.)

Alto

Chef Andre Brochet is offering pheasant on his seven-course Fall Winter Tasting Menu (\$95). It's one of the available choices for the fourth course, and consists of a loin served with knishche and sausage stuffing, root vegetables, chestnut milk and pos. If you've never had pheasant, don't let people tell you it tastes like chicken. In actuality, it tastes

Restaurant Guy Savoy

For the next few weeks, Guy Savoy and his staff are offering three game dishes. Manoir of pheasant, squab and duck (\$120) features the three birds cooked with leeks and cabbage in a traditional French country dish known as a *saucisse*. The venison tenderloin (\$115) is prepared with porc and cranberry jus. And pan-seared quail (\$80) comes with sprig potatoes and roasted vegetables. In Cascais Palace, 731-7000.

The Barrymore

For a taste of wild food in an old Vegas neighborhood, head to the Barrymore, which offers a year-round tri-Bology sauce, served over coppiced posid then topped with succulent chicken and bread crumbs (\$16). 55 Comstock Center Dr., 407-3000.

Fix Restaurant & Bar

One of the best items on Fix's new menu is also one of the most creative duck dishes in town. Duck & Waffles

One of the best items on Fix's new menu is also one of the most creative duck dishes in town. Duck & Waffles (\$36) is a spin on an American classic that forsakes fried chicken in favor of duck confit, fried egg and maple bourbon syrup. *In Bella-gio*, 693-8300.