

Chef David Schy Joins Menu Engineer Gregg Rapp to Make Restaurants Profitable

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The former corporate chef for Lettuce Entertain You will bring his research and development skills to Rapp's full-service menu engineering and food-costing company

Menu engineer Gregg Rapp is pleased to welcome David Schy as a consulting chef. With the addition of Schy, Rapp now offers three distinct features that work together to create a full-service solution to restaurateurs: the original menu engineering that Rapp has offered for 25 years, a complete food-and-bar costing audit conducted with Cost Genie, a software company that Rapp invested in last October, and menu research and development by Schy. The ultimate goal is to present real solutions by guiding restaurants on how to increase their profits and keep costs down.

Schy brings with him 30 years of restaurant and R&D experience. After graduating from the Culinary Institute of America in 1981, he worked as a chef in California for six years. Along with other chefs in Los Angeles, Schy helped define "California cuisine." His skills caught the eye of Rich Melman, founder and president of Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, Inc., where Schy served as corporate chef for seven years. When asked about Schy's abilities, Melman has often said, "Chef David can make shoelaces taste good." Schy opened his own restaurant, the Hubbard Street Grill in Chicago, nine years ago. He now lives in the Palm Springs area.

Schy's involvement with menu engineering could not have come at a better time for restaurants, Rapp believes. "In the good old days, restaurant owners and managers could run their facilities by the seat of their pants," he says. "But now these owners and managers are realizing that their restaurants aren't making any money. Food costs are skyrocketing. Flour alone has tripled in price. With David on our side, we can now develop new menu items based on our costing reports and reviews of a menu's popularity and profitability."

Schy's first project with Rapp will be the Bonita Golf Club in Bonita, Calif. U.S. Foodservice hired Rapp and his team to reconstruct menus for Bonita's golf club and banquet facilities. Rapp, with the help of Schy and Cost Genie's Kenny Arone, will present his findings to the golf club's management team and chef at Rapp's test kitchen in Palm Springs. The Bonita group will walk away with redesigned menus, a thorough food-and-beverage cost audit that also includes nutritional information and suggestions for new recipes.

As part of the process Rapp, Arone and Schy will offer helpful cost-saving solutions to restaurateurs, such as using the back fin of crab rather than more expensive lump crab meat. "Food costs are a function of demand as well as price," Rapp notes. "We help restaurants not only find profitable items but develop new menu items that have lower food costs."

In addition, Rapp and his associates are working with restaurants in Austin, Milwaukee, Honduras and Upstate New York. This full-service approach will also be offered at Rapp's popular Menu Boot Camp. The next two workshops will take place April 14 and May 20 in Palm Springs.

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