


## Lifestyle

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Tuesday, January 27, 2009

# Restaurant chef Matt Prentice embarks on a quest to reinvent hospital food

Kate Lawson / The Detroit News

Chef Matt Prentice has had numerous successful ventures since he first began in the restaurant business 30 years ago. From his esteemed restaurants including Coach Insignia in Detroit, Northern Lakes Seafood in Bloomfield Hills, and No.VI Chop House in Novi -- to his Oakland County delis, Plaza Deli and Deli Unique - - Prentice is also Michigan's largest privately held caterer.

But according to the 50-year-old chef, nothing is as important as the project he's been working on for the past two years in conjunction with the new Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital.

"I'm going to revolutionize hospital food," says Prentice, the new hospital's culinary director. "I'm using food to heal."

Fine dining, let alone healthy dining, is not what comes to mind at the mention of hospital food, but Prentice is determined to create the healthiest, highest quality and tastiest food in health care for not only the patients, but also for the public in the new cafeteria, Henry's.

It's all part of Henry Ford CEO Gerard van Grinsven's goal to change the health-care experience. "We've created a center for well being that is in the lap of innovation," he says. When the doors of the new \$360-million state-of-the art facility open in mid-March, this newest member of the Henry Ford Hospital family will be a stunning combination of a northern Michigan resort meets wellness center with lots of brick and wood and soothing views of nature. The building was designed by Albert Kahn Associates of Detroit to appeal to all the senses for a complete wellness experience.

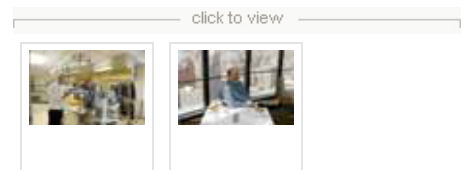
And, unlike any other hospital in the country, it will offer a variety of amenities, including healthy cooking classes in a state-of-the-art demo kitchen for patients and the community; a wellness center where services such as acupuncture, yoga, massage and water therapy will be provided; specialty shops offering a variety of health-related products; and gourmet, healthy food offerings for staff, visitors and patients, who will be able to order specially prepared meals via room service.

Henry Ford is not the first local hospital to offer in-room service dining. Oakwood Hospital in Dearborn has been offering its patients in-room service meals since 2001 from their regular menu, but Prentice is going beyond standard hospital fare.

To create the new menu for the hospital's cafeteria, set to open in February, Prentice gathered his corporate chefs, pastry chefs and artisan bakers from his Matt Prentice Restaurant group. The menu will feature soups and salads;



Matt Prentice, president of Matt Prentice Restaurant Corp., right, and corporate chef Frank Turner are "revolutionizing" hospital food at the new Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital with dishes that are organic and healthier than the current standard. (Velvet S. McNeil / The Detroit News)



## More information

### Henry Ford West Bloomfield

The new hospital at 6773 W. Maple Road in West Bloomfield Township is connected to the existing medical center (built in 1975) and occupies space on the north 80 acres of the 160-acre site. Among the services it will offer when it opens in mid-March are:

Vita Wellness Center, featuring massage therapy, water therapy, work-out rooms, weight counseling and smoking cessation, cooking classes, acupuncture and alternative medicine that you can coordinate along with your Henry Ford doctor. In-room meals from a healthy and organic menu that changes every two weeks. Public eating areas will have the same healthy offerings. A full service inpatient facility with 300 beds and

made-to-order deli sandwiches; Asian, including rice and noodle bowls, sushi and stir fries; Italian, including pastas and pizzas; international (Greek, Middle Eastern, Spanish, African); American; and bread and desserts based on his healthy, healing program.

"There will be seven stations, featuring all the dishes my staff has created," says Prentice. "It's the best work my team has ever done. We will offer kosher, halal, organic, whole grains, vegetarian, gluten-free, and there will be nothing fried; there won't be a fryer in our kitchen. We'll have juices and teas, and even the snacks available in the hospital will be designed around an organic lifestyle."

Another innovation that Prentice can boast of is an ever-evolving menu for patients.

"Every hospital has the same menu year-round," says Prentice. "But ours will be changing every two weeks. That's unheard of in the hospital industry."

## Hotelier changes health care

Van Grinsven says he knew what he wanted in developing this latest innovation in health care -- and he wanted Prentice.

"In the old days, medicine was food," says van Grinsven, who before joining the hospital in 2006, served as vice president of the Ritz-Carlton chain.

"Today food is killing us," he says. "Our goal is to take health and healing beyond the boundaries of imagination."

"Henry Ford West Bloomfield will be a place for everybody, not just those who are ill but those who want to learn to start living a better life."

Van Grinsven also is proud of the hospital's partnership with Schoolcraft College in Livonia to create the first hospital culinary learning institute in the world. "This will bring additional revenue to the area as students from across the country will come to spend a week learning about this new industry of healthy hospital food," he says.

"Nobody has done this before," adds Sven Gierlinger, hospitality services director. "We are working with several of the community schools and their apprentice programs." Chefs from Schoolcraft College, including Certified Master Chef Jeff Gabriel, will be conducting cooking demos, as will chef Kelli Lewton-Secondino.

"You can feel the healing energy of the place," says Lewton-Secondino, chef/owner of Pure Food 2 U in Royal Oak, which focuses on organics. "We're going to be teaching people how to take food back. Hopefully we will be raising a whole generation of kids who'll have the opportunity to eat real food."

## Big undertaking

Prentice's corporate chef, Frank Turner, who's been with restaurant group for 15 years, will serve as executive chef of Henry Ford West Bloomfield, and Turner says he's excited about the prospect of creating 800-1,000 lunches and 500-600 dinners daily.

"It's our chance to do something good, and Henry Ford has the ability to change the world of health-care food," says Turner.

Prentice is quick to point out that the food service at the new hospital will not be any more costly than at any other hospital.

Operating on the same budget, Prentice says he's using his business experience and "culinary ingenuity" to keep costs down while bringing organic fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods to the Henry Ford community. Local farms that practice sustainable agriculture will supply much of the produce, and greenhouses on the West Bloomfield Township property will provide additional food for the hospital kitchens.

"We'll save money because we will eliminate waste," says Prentice, who often worked into the wee hours on kitchen blueprints and menus. Because it had never been done before, he literally wrote the book on how to revolutionize hospital feeding, creating recipes and even working with an herbalist to design healing meals.

"Chefs aren't taught how to cook to heal, they cook to please," says Prentice. "I knew I could do both."

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A full-service inpatient facility with 300 beds and all-private rooms. Studies have shown that private rooms reduce the infection rate by 50 percent. Patient rooms with a bed in every room for a family member to stay overnight -- with no visiting hour restrictions. Rooms will have Internet service and flat-screen TVs.

Computerized patient information systems located by each bedside, at each staff station outside patient rooms and at the nurses' station, allowing caregivers to spend more time with patients.

## What's on the menu

A typical day's offerings planned for the new Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital:

### Soup

Carrot bisque

### Lunch

Eggplant lasagna with portabella bolognese, reggiano and steamed broccoli

Omega 3 salmon salad sandwich

Fresh fruit plate with fruit yogurt and carrot bread

Energy turkey sandwich

### Dinner

Chicken salad with wild rice and toasted almonds stuffed in an organic and sustainably grown tomato with crudité, olives

Wild mushroom risotto with roasted beets

Grilled chicken with Michigan McIntosh apple and Traverse cherry chutney, steamed brown rice and roasted beets

Seared salmon with edamame, sweet corn

succotash and miso broth

Red bean burger on 100-percent whole wheat and flax roll

### Dessert

Strawberry spoon sorbet

Roasted pear with granola and sorbet

Sugar-free carrot cake

Chocolate flourless cake with ganache