

SUNDAY ROUTINE

For a chef, a cigar, a cocktail, some wings and the game.

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SUNDAY ROUTINE | DREW NIEPONENT



CLASSIC MIX For the restaurateur Drew Nieponent, Sundays tend to include a bloody mary and buffalo wings.

OSZIER MICHAMAS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Break From Work, but Not From Food

Just because Drew Nieponent, the Manhattan restaurateur whose mini empire includes Nobu and Tribeca Grill, has a Sunday off doesn't mean he takes a break from his passion for food. Mr. Nieponent, 54, who started working in restaurants when he was 16, says his Sundays revolve around eating and football, watching at his home in Ridgewood, N.J. He sees his wife, Ann; his son, Andrew, 22; and his daughter, Gabrielle, 18, at meal times.

CHRISTINE HAUGHNEY

BAGEL AND SAUNA I'll be up at 9. I've got to wake up in the morning and have a bagel. I tend to like cinnamon raisin bagels with a schmear. I turn my sauna on. Sunday is really the only time I can take a sauna. I typically do it pre-bagel or post-bagel.

EYE-OPENER If there's no Jets or Giants game at the Meadow-

lands, I'll be at home post-sauna. I have to make myself a classic bloody mary. It's very simple: You've got to have the right tomato juice; you've got to have an excellent vodka that comes from the freezer. Then you just, you put in Worcestershire, you put in Tabasco, you squeeze a wedge of lemon and you shake and that's it.

WALK DOGS, SMOKE CIGAR

I have two beautiful cocker spaniels named Chloe and Jackson. They like to walk. I light up a cigar because I'm a pretty avid cigar smoker. The size of the cigar is called a Churchill, which is named after Winston Churchill. It's an hour smoke. I walk the dogs for about an hour. They're very friendly and adorable, those long ears, just a very sweet disposition. It's like a 12-to-1 walk with the cigar and then watch the game at home.

GAME FOOD Then of course you have to have the buffalo chicken wing experience. I do them a little differently, the sauce being made with butter and Frank's hot sauce. I bake the wings. I don't deep fry or bread them. It's a little bit lighter on the calorie count.

The cooking is usually pretty quick. You have to limit the wings to a dozen. Anything over a dozen is gluttonous.

GRILLING AT HOME . . .

During the game, I'm always thinking about dinner. Sunday dinner is one of two things for me. If the weather is nice, I cook out on the grill — lamb chops, steaks. I always make a great Caesar salad. I'm a huge tomato person, so tomatoes always. When it's in season, corn is huge. I always try to steam some broccoli rabe.

. . . OR DINNER OUT If I can't grill outside, if I'm not cooking,

there's a local Italian restaurant in Midland Park called Arturo's, or we have a Chinese restaurant called Dim Sum Dynasty. Sunday has got to be Chinese or Italian.

TV TIME We've got to get home for "60 Minutes." After we've had dinner together, then pretty much everyone does their own thing. It's a big night of television. "Mad Men," I'm addicted to that show. I love "Desperate Housewives." I'm watching on one set and taping on two others. It drives my family crazy.

LOGGING ON

Then I have to hit the computer after 11 and I catch up on the gossip. There's food blogs, political blogs, there's my e-mails, I would say for another hour. I'll try to look ahead at what the day is going to bring me on Monday in terms of the restaurants. I try to get to bed about 12:30.