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CHRIS SIVERSEN
ON LIFE AS A CHEF & DAD

+

CELEB CHEF DAVID BURKE
ON HIS NJ ROOTS



**THE
FOOD
ISSUE**

ICONIC GARDEN STATE FOODS, DINNER GIVEAWAYS & MORE!

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Executive chef Chris Siversen chats about his restaurants and parenting two teens.



HARTSHORN PORTRAITURE (COVER INSET) MARITIME PARC



(Above) Chris Siversen's Barnegat Sea Scallops is one of the most popular seafood offerings at The Feathered Fox in Livingston. (Inset) The famous David Burke Dry-Aged Cheeseburger is served at many of his restaurants throughout NJ.

New Jersey Eats

One of the perks of being a foodie in New Jersey has always been how easy it is to get into New York City or Philly. But with much love and respect for our iconic neighboring cities, we're here to remind you there's never been a better time to eat in NJ. From locally grown produce and fresh seafood to iconic staples like Taylor ham to high-end restaurants that rival top-tier establishments all over the world, there are endless reasons to love dining out in the Garden State.

NJ's own celeb Chef David Burke has restaurants from NYC to Saudi Arabia and is proudly investing here. In this issue, we ask him about his NJ restaurants (there are eight of them plus a bakery) and the signature dishes that make them so special. We're excited to have Chris Siversen, executive chef and co-owner of Maritime Parc in Jersey City and The Feathered Fox in Livingston, on our cover. In this issue, he talks about juggling life as a chef with parenting two busy teenagers.

On pages 19 and 29, we share some of NJ's most iconic foods and foodie towns. Because we want you to try some of our favorite restaurants, we're giving away five dinners to readers every day for a week starting on April 24. Follow us on Instagram @newjerseyfamily and enter daily for a chance to win a delicious night out!

We're also excited to share our 7th annual list of Best New Jersey Lawyers for Families. Compiling this list of exceptional attorneys is no small feat—it's made up of lawyers nominated by our readers for providing exceptional counsel during stressful situations and big life changes.

Beyond family law, our list highlights attorneys who've been praised for their work with special needs advocacy, estate planning and more. Head to page 33 to see the list or go to njfamily.com/thelist to share it online. Don't see an attorney you've loved working with? Go to njfamily.com/lawyers to nominate them!



xO,

Dina



HE'S THE CHEF

Executive chef and father Chris Siverson talks food, entrepreneurship and parenting in NJ

By Dina El Nabli

He's cooked for three presidents and Martha Stewart. He's executive chef and co-owner of Maritime Parc, a restaurant and private event space on the Jersey City waterfront with iconic views of the Manhattan skyline, making it a hot spot for weddings with events booked into 2025. Chris Siverson's other restaurant, The Feathered Fox in Livingston, is a modern take on a steakhouse with the addition of sushi, blocks of garlic bread and decadent potato rings. Both restaurants have attracted everyone from the former band One Direction to members of the New York Giants.

Siverson has been everything from a busboy and waiter to a short order cook. His stint as a cook at a catering hall for politicians in Albany inspired him to go to culinary school in the early '90s and he never looked back.

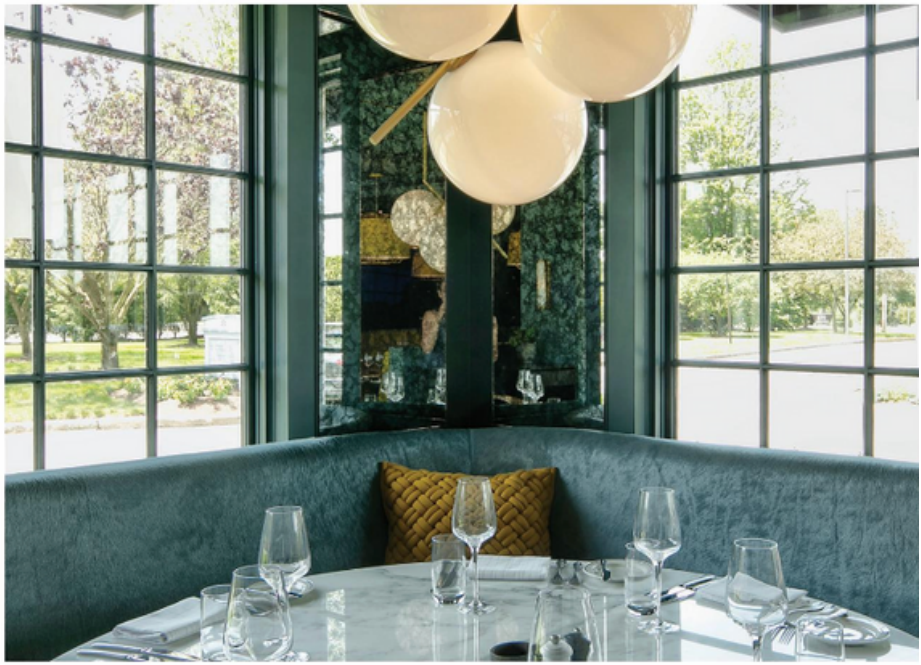
What's keeping Siverson especially busy these days are his kids' schedules. His daughter Devyn, a junior at Ridgewood High School who plays lacrosse, guitar and hopes to study engineering in college, is visiting campuses with her dad as she decides where to commit as a college athlete. His son Ryan is a freshman who is a member of the

Ridgewood High School band, plays tennis and loves to cook and play video games.

Siverson co-parents his teens with his ex-wife, who lives in Ridgewood. The kids split their time between Ridgewood and Upper Saddle River, where Siverson lives with his partner Jette Starniri and her daughter Silje. Starniri is vice president of operations for Maritime Parc, The Feathered Fox and Royal Hunt Catering, which caters the events at The Westminster Hotel. Her side hustle, Dirt Pretty, handles event design and floral arrangements. The couple's love of design helped inspire the look of The Feathered Fox, rich with custom fixtures and furniture paired with modern jeweled tones. We sat down with Siverson and his kids to talk food, restaurants, the parenting juggle and what they like to do for fun in NJ.

NJF: Growing up, was food a big deal in your family?

Chris Siverson: My roots are Scandinavian and European. My Italian side was the biggest influence. My Italian grandmother would come over every weekend and start the gravy in the morning, browning



OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: DEVYN, SILJE AND RYAN; CHRIS AND JETTE IN ITALY; THE VIEW AT MARITIME PARC; ROASTED CHICKEN WITH BROCCOLI AND MUSHROOM SPOON BREAD AT MARITIME PARC; THE FEATHERED FOX; SIVERSEN'S SIGNATURE MASHED POTATO RINGS SERVED AT BOTH RESTAURANTS.

the meatballs and sausage and that's what you woke up to. Then, it was such an incredible day because you couldn't wait for dinner to be ready. We would have our salad course and antipasto. You'd go into your pasta course with meatballs and really great gravy with Italian bread. Then we would all sit around at the table and crack nuts and have some fruit and dessert. The experience of cooking and coming together was ingrained in me, that you really do appreciate food and what food brings to the table.

NJF: You were a chef in NYC for a while before you bought Maritime Parc. How did that come about?

CS: I had been working for 10 years for a big restaurant company that had multiple restaurants and some big prominent catering halls. I learned every facet of what the business is about. I was approaching 40 and thought I need to do this for myself. I started talking to people, letting them know I was interested in branching out on my own. My business partner, Marc Haskell, who's still my business partner here, said he was interested in leaving the same company. Six months after we started talking, we had a signed lease and Maritime Parc opened in 2010.

NJF: Weddings and special events are a big part of what you do at Maritime. How is that different from owning a restaurant?

CS: Everything was born at once. The philosophy has always been the marketability of a really great restaurant that's attached to the catering space so people understand that we're not just doing traditional banquet food, that we're really doing elevated catering. We host over 400 events a year at Maritime Parc and Royal Hunt Catering at The Westminster Hotel.

NJF: How is the menu at The Feathered Fox different?

CS: Maritime Parc is more seafood driven, primarily because we're on the water. We have a traditional dish that was on the menu from day one which is my take on surf and turf. It's sea scallops with braised short ribs and has a traditional sauce gribiche. The Feathered Fox space used to be a steakhouse and was very successful. I really felt we should try to keep the familiarity of it for locals so they know it's a steakhouse, but shake it up into something more modern and that's where we added the sushi component.

NJF: What's it like to balance being an executive chef and restaurant owner with parenting teenagers?

CS: It's busy. Being in the restaurant business, you're working nights and weekends. With children, kids are home nights and weekends. My ex-wife and I split the time where they're with me half the week and with their mom half the week. The weekend is really spent with their mom because I'm not around. I take Sundays off and it's tough because you're tired and then there's kids' sports and wanting to do something together. I think it's easier now because the kids are older and have become more independent.

NJF: Are you guys foodies?

Ryan: I've taken inspiration from my dad with cooking. I enjoy cooking. I've learned to cook steak and homemade pastas.

Devyn: At my mom's, Ryan would be like, 'I want to make this.'

He'll take the initiative to go to the store with my mom, get all the ingredients, and then take her through a meal and cook one together.

CS: Ryan's got all the breakfast things down. He can make waffles, pancakes and eggs all different ways. He learned to make crêpes, too.

NJF: How did your recent trip to Italy impact your view of food?

Devyn: Because I could legally drink there, I was learning about which wine goes with which food. That made me appreciate it more and gave me a better understanding of what goes with what.

NJF: Where do you love to eat with your kids?

CS: One of my favorite restaurants is Houston's in Riverside Square in Hackensack. The service is some of the best you can get. Their wine list is good and you can't go there and not order the spinach dip. We also love Shumi in Ridgewood. It's hands down the best sushi nearby. Of course I am partial to the sushi at The Feathered Fox.

NJF: What do you guys like to do in New Jersey?

CS: Escape rooms are really high up on the list. We had one that we went to in Englewood where you have to break into a jewelry store. They repurposed a jewelry store that was empty and for sale and they turned it into an escape room. I also recently took Ryan skeet shooting at Thunder Mountain Trap & Skeet in Ringwood.

NJF: What do you think is special about food in NJ?

CS: The freshness of product. You have some of the best sea scallops and seafood coming from off the shore. All of the farmers in the state have really elevated what they're doing and that brings more awareness about quality of product. I love the iconic food down the shore with funnel cake and hot dogs at the boardwalk.

NJF: You've had some pro athletes dine in your restaurants.

CS: We've had a lot of New York Giants come in. Tiki Barber and his wife, Traci Lynn Johnson, Plaxico Burress and others. We have also hosted other athletes like Mariano Rivera.

Devyn: Also, haven't you had One Direction here?

CS: Yes, at Maritime Parc. The fans were told by radio stations they were coming to see the band One Direction perform in NY. What they didn't know was that there was a special surprise private concert, interview and photo session with the band. All members were hiding in one of our rooms and all of a sudden the band gets brought through and performs for 100 of their biggest fans worldwide.

Devyn: You've also cooked for a few presidents.

CS: I cooked for both G.W. and H.W. Bush and for President Clinton. The dinner for President Clinton was a private dinner for only 40 people on the Upper East Side. In 2004, at the Republican National Convention at Madison Square Garden, the company I was with was chosen to cook for the Bush family and the Cheney family in their private suite for all four days. The only people allowed in were me and a waiter. President George Bush Sr. came over to me and said, 'Why are you in the kitchen? There's such important stuff going on. Come sit with us.' There I was sitting on the couch with George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush. It was the most incredible experience.



Maritime Parc

FINE DINING, WEDDINGS, EVENTS

Within Liberty State Park is a quintessential modern event venue & restaurant with one of the most stunning views in the state. Executive Chef Chris Siverson's seasonally inspired menus spin local, organic and sustainable ingredients into crowd pleasing dishes & drinks, making it heaven on the Hudson. Per *Inside Jersey*, Siverson 'doesn't rely on spectacular views to provide dining excitement & a culinary adventure.'

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MARITIMEPARC.COM



The Feathered Fox

STEAKHOUSE, SUSHI, LOUNGE

Nestled within Livingston's Westminster Hotel resides The Feathered Fox and top NJ chef Chris Siverson. Built around an exceptional selection of perfectly charred steak cuts & chops, Siverson marries tradition with innovation through imaginative sides, an exceptional raw bar & superb interpretations of familiar sushi rolls. Named as one of NJ's best steakhouses, The Feathered Fox also boasts the largest sake list statewide.

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