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Celebrity Chefs and The Amazing Kreskin at Chocolate Expo on Jan 29

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Categories : [Food & Drink](#), [Restaurants & Bars](#), [Maritime Aquarium](#)

Tagged as : [The Chocolate Expo 2017](#)

Date : January 14, 2017

The Chocolate Expo returns to The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk on Sunday, Jan. 29, not only with gourmet chocolates, baked goods and specialty foods but also with free celebrity appearances and presentations.

Three celebrity chefs will present 30-minute demonstrations in the IMAX Theater:

- Tony Albanese, pastry designer and former assistant to Buddy Valastro of TV's "Cake Boss," at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Barret Beyer of Fox TV's "Hell's Kitchen" at 2 and 4 p.m.
- Larry Rosenberg, recipe-book author, owner of Bacon Bites and soon-to-be-seen on Food Network, at 1 and 5 p.m.

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Plus, at noon in the IMAX Theater, guests will be astounded by the insights and unknowable answers of The Amazing Kreskin.

Seating of 310 for the chef demonstrations and The Amazing Kreskin will be on a first-come, first-seated basis.

This year's Chocolate Expo also celebrates cinematic chocolate history by welcoming Paris Themmen, who played Mike TeeVee — the boy in the cowboy outfit — opposite Gene Wilder in "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory." Themmen will sign autographs and pose for photographs throughout the day.

— *an announcement from the Maritime Aquarium*

Here is more about each special guest:

Tony Albanese — 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Tony Albanese owns the custom dessert business, The Pastryarch, in Hackensack, NJ.

He rose to fame as assistant to Buddy Valastro in the first season of "Cake Boss" on TLC, and since has appeared on such Food Network shows as "Cake Wars" and "Cupcake Wars."

Before studying pastry arts at the Institute of Culinary Education in New York City, he worked as an illustrator, which he says helps in his current work of artfully decorating hand-constructed cakes.

The Amazing Kreskin — 12 noon

For six decades, The Amazing Kreskin has dramatized the unique facets of the human mind with a showman's flair, a comedian's wit and the capacities of a bona fide thought-reading mentalist.

In the process, Kreskin's very name has become an integral part of pop culture with numerous television and radio appearances on iconic shows hosted by Johnny Carson, Regis Philbin, David Letterman, Jimmy Fallon, Neil Cavuto, Howard Stern and others.

In the 1970s, Kreskin headlined his own television series for five and a half seasons called "The Amazing World of Kreskin," which can now be viewed on www.hulu.com.

Movie fans may know that, more recently, Kreskin served as the inspiration for Tom Hanks' 2008 movie, "The Great Buck Howard," in which the Kreskin character is played by the movie's star, John Malkovich.

Kreskin has received worldwide recognition for extraordinary predictions, often dealing with international affairs and sports. On "Late Night with Jimmy Fallon," Kreskin predicted the 2012 U.S. presidential election 18 months before election day. As revealed on Fox television for the 2016 Super Bowl, Kreskin made three predictions: the deciding quarter of the game, the winning team and their final score.

Kreskin's new talk and commentary show on iHeartRadio premiered last February, and, in March of 2016, he released his 20th book, "In Real Time," featuring his major predictions for the next several hundred years.

At 81 years of age, Kreskin shows no signs of slowing down. He continues to perform his legendary live shows in front of packed audiences around the world, playing over 200+ dates yearly.

Larry Rosenberg — 1 and 5 p.m.

Executive Chef Larry Rosenberg began cooking at a very early age. Despite being self-taught, he has garnered national accolades and appeared in major magazines, newspapers and television shows around the country, including "The Dr. Oz Show," Discovery Channel's "United States of Bacon" and "FYI Philly," among others.

Most exciting, he'll make his debut on Food Network later this year.

Rosenberg has taught at the New York Restaurant School and is a published author with titles including "The Original Bacon Cookbook," "Cake Decorating Simplified" (Book of the Month Club), "Muffins & Cupcakes" and "The Berry Book." He also was featured in Martha Stewart's "The Wedding Book."

Most recently, Rosenberg has made a name for himself while riding a wave of bacon's new-found popularity. His 2010 creation of Bacon Bites™, an extensive line of tantalizing chocolate-covered bacon products, combines sweet and salty tastes that consumers truly crave. He travels with his partner, Kane Jeong, who entertains young and old as "Smokey the Pig," at various chocolate, bacon, and beer events throughout the county.

Barret Beyer — 2 and 4 p.m.

Chef Barret Beyer epitomizes new beginnings and change, inspiring millions with his cooking and actions.

While working in New York City's financial industry and boom era during the aughts, Beyer was arrested 10 times for charges that ranged from selling drugs to conspiracy to forgery, even overdosing and waking up on life support after two days in 2006.

For 10 years, from 1998 until 2008, he was in and out of jails. However, coinciding with the birth of his daughter in 2008, the reality TV star finally got sober. Beyer said, "I couldn't do it anymore. I wanted to be a father she could look up to."

Leaving the worlds of finance and crime behind, the love of cooking become the inspiration for his life's next course. Always a home cook, Beyer attended culinary school in his native Long Island. Before even graduating, the ambitious New Yorker already had a job as a sous chef.

Beyer then made it onto "Hell's Kitchen" with the legendary kitchen screamer Gordon Ramsey; his favorite television experience. Although he didn't win on the show, Beyer realized that working in the kitchen is the work he loves.

It's that drive to succeed and healthy ambition that drove him to participate in "Cutthroat Kitchen," another on-camera cooking competition. "I was the first one cut. It was for not putting the chicken on a chicken caesar salad," the chef says while chuckling at his folly.

From his experience on reality TV, Beyer has become a consultant, opening a multitude of East Coast restaurants, receiving many accolades along the way. Food & Beverage Magazine and Chef Works have both named him "Chef of The Month."

With his new found celebrity status, Beyer volunteers or works non-profits events around the country.

Paris Themmen (the original "Mike TeeVee") — all day

Paris Themmen appeared as a child actor in three Broadway shows, two dozen commercials and various television shows, including "Star Trek Voyager," but he will always be best known as "Mike TeeVee," one of the five lucky Golden Ticket winners in the (1971) cult-classic film "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory" starring the late Gene Wilder.

As an adult, Paris has had a variety of careers in the travel, real estate, finance, imagineering and film-production industries.

An avid traveler, Paris has backpacked through 59 countries on six continents. He lives with his wife, Nikki Grillos, in Los Angeles.

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The Eternal Frontier (Steampunk music) – all day

The Eternal Frontier – featuring Professor Adam Smasher and Baron Von Zipple — is a versatile Steampunk musical duo. Their sound is fun, melodic and steeped in Steampunk sensibilities. They will be performing Steampunk-themed songs, both original and cover, for the amusement of one and all.

(But what is Steampunk? Wikipedia describes Steampunk as “a subgenre of science fiction or science fantasy that incorporates technology and aesthetic designs inspired by 19th-century industrial steam-powered machinery. ... Steampunk perhaps most recognizably features anachronistic technologies or retro-futuristic inventions as people in the 19th century might have envisioned them.”)

For more information about The Chocolate Expo, go to [The Chocolate Expo website](#) or [The Maritime Aquarium website](#).