

Café Chez Kiva™ ~ *Part II: “The Visit”*

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Breakfast spread for Feasts of Eden, by TS Gordon, circa, 1989

Introducing ~ Campfire Provençale™

After several years of hit-and-miss restaurant jobs in Chicago, it wasn't until the summer after college when I actually learned to cook really delicious one-pot meals over a campfire, in the south of France. The intense herbal fragrances and sublime flavors that define the Provençale region became enthralling to me while tending to a group of gardens overlooking the city of Nice.

My partner, Ellie, and I, relied on selling at least one or two small paintings a day to make ends meet at the time. Since we couldn't speak basic French, I thought the least I could do for her was to learn to braise-or-stir-fry a decent meal, come rain, or shine.

With the advent of holiday season, a flood of tourists from Paris and Lyon made for some fierce upwind competition. Carelessly deglazing a sauté pan with the pungent smell of cheap wine aroused public discussion. It appeared flogging, or banishment would invariably follow. Actually, observing the customary local cooking methods from adjacent campers was far more exhilarating than culinary school, or simply continuing to admire the French for artistry in presentation. Though I've Americanized the name, our cuisine is formally known as "Continental Gypsy-faire."

As I share the details of my original "Southern French" food services model with you, I invite you to visualize the sea of colorful caravans and nomadic people who gather annually in Camargue to pay their respects to Saintes Maries de la Mer. Compare this abundant display of "joie de vivre" with the actual experience so many endure when attempting to migrate through Europe today.

A Place at the Table For Everyone

Restaurants that serve delicious organic fresh local foods now hold a real advantage over the conventional counterparts. Yet, we must ask, why are there so very few places throughout rural America that even acknowledge the needs of vegans and vegetarians, and gluten-intolerant eaters? This market effectively represents pure white space.

For example, in spite of renewed nutritional health awareness, America's truck drivers have very little access to good food along our State's highways. Their needs are, at best, underestimated. Rather than ignore the trucks large profile, Café Chez Kiva discretely accommodates this flow and goes on to address these driver's essential physical, social and dietary needs.

By placing this cafe on one of Arkansas arterial highways we can short-circuit certain assumptions that constrain most restaurants from birth. This facility is loaded with cultural aesthetic and cultural appeal. Its dynamic visual presence and easy accessibility give this location the attributes of an indigenous Arkansas family farm, gone public. As a destination hub, it serves as a positive gathering place for people of significant diversity, making for a sustainable cultural oasis in an area that would otherwise remain a food desert.

Regular visitors can use this as a place to chill out, or walk about for exercise and synchronize one's mindset. This becomes a memorable respite between the places folks have left and the places they are going. It may be seen as a friendly family oriented place, never passive recognizing and supporting an edifying experience for all. Tourists may use this facility as a virtual office or home away from home. Travelers may pause briefly to reflect on their day's journey before pressing on.

Eco-tourists may find the property itself to be of particular interest. Other interstate restaurants don't provide a space for basic exercise, or a natural setting where folks can explore a bit or interact with locals at all. People value these things when traveling, especially when far from home, or abroad.

Festive holidays and catered parties provide an opportunity for our chefs to display their mastery over more than our own simple Provençale dishes. Some excel at various international styles. As a mid-point tourist destination, Café Chez Kiva performs the same essential gustatory function as the restaurants in places such as the *French Culinary Institute* and the *Culinary Institute of America*.

Observing these teams as they seek to attain the best taste combinations possible provides a potential visitor experience that deeply resonates with today's health-conscious diners. Commercial drivers routinely respond, saying: "There isn't anything out there that could possibly compete with the kind of place you describe!"

Our Educational Perspectives

Producing healthy meals and snacks for growing kids is especially important to us. As they experience how delicious simply prepared organic foods can be, most parents understand their children should be eating as much of these foods as they need, as early as possible. Our business provides unique supports regarding this traditional family function.

Our "free" youth training programs are essentially charitable in nature. In focusing our work to support a percentage of young people whose lives are so tenuous that they are essentially condemned to failure, prison or both, requires more than a competent management team who understand kids and can elicit their trust. This will require financial grant support, plus a sufficient number of "big brothers and sisters" to kick off these essential program functions. Our unique mentoring and partnering process will likely reverse at some future point, resulting in more qualified job seekers than available positions

Outreach efforts will be focused on specific after school programs for groups, K-12 through young adults, including currently un-enrolled students. Though we are passionately opposed to “school-to-work” charter school programming, we profess of a critical need for kids to understand the demands of today’s employers in a service-based economy. Participation will be contingent upon an individual’s predisposition to stewardship, scheduling reliability and general trustworthiness.

Experience suggests that the effectiveness of any such open-format teaching system is entirely contingent on the selfless flexibility, availability, strength and courage of the staff members, day in and day out. Project leadership and creative direction will emerge in both groups. Hands-on administrative oversight diminishes as key employees pilot new responsibilities and/or embarking on various personal challenges of their own.

General Financial Projections and Social Benefits

Readers may ask: *“How can this rural breakfast spot and culinary boot-camp, possibly work without expensive professors, healthy class tuition, and a vast array of specialized hardware?”* It sounds untenable, but technically it’s not. We’re only interested in engaging kids in ways that help them build social skills, providing guidance to help them gain self-confidence through experiences that home life cannot.

We are interested in a lean start-up and a slow build out, attaining maximum efficiencies of scale through focal teamwork. Our brand-lab system is designed to accelerate local production and stem rural workforce migration and financial flight by reducing reliance on imports. As community interest in food production grows, locally sourced goods become more plentiful.

In conventional parlance, we promote from within. Unlike conventional employee “ownership sharing” plans, as individuals choose to embrace diverse project roles they can draw corresponding wages, and/or claim a stake in the long-range intellectual property returns. Direct and indirect economic benefits gradually accrue to those who apply themselves at every imaginable level in this operation.

Each component of this team is building future sales volume through a network of wholesale production and distribution partnerships. This approach enables us to provide services that affect more people more profoundly than any business that simply seeks to meet their customer’s gustatory needs.

The café itself operates as a for-profit venture, cooperatively drawing from a large pool of seasoned personnel.

Area party planners may pull specific individuals to work with them on special events. Whether workers are proficient in their starting positions or not, participation within this dedicated team effort can provide young adults with learning experiences of such value it can lead them to attain greater confidence and success throughout life. These are not the kind of features you’ll see at Crown Plaza or the Dixie Café®.

Physically, at our pilot location, we see a need for a fairly wooded agricultural property of anywhere between 6 to 40 acres in size. Parcels of its type are extremely common in the Delta, but for our intended use not just any site will do. The planning criteria and earthwork must proceed in accordance with a “certified permaculture master plan.”



A Very Special Roadside Attraction

Romantic dining nooks and pavilions are strewn about this facility offering a distinctive set of landscape forms and features. This ‘placemaking’ narrative enables us to teach kids to design and build a future to believe in. The resulting “rentable areas” are ideal for hosting business or community functions, private parties, family picnics, weddings, film screenings, concerts and so on. All of this becomes possible because of the simple modular architecture and a relatively ‘temporary’ view toward significant development of the actual site(s.)

We foresee a need for three distinctive buildings to house our independent operating divisions. Each division benefits through wholesale sourced materials and produce. Each distributes healthy products some of which are made in-house. The Brand Lab and Production Division office operates as the clearinghouse. This provides invested partners with long-range revenue streams through private-label branded product lines. Participants are recruited for these well-earned positions as they are deemed to fit in.

Typically, people may be engaged in everything from cooking to customer support, mentoring or clerical work. Beginners may choose part-time assignments, like picking fruit, packaging raw goods, assembling a fish tank, making home deliveries, and so on—right through the distribution of field-tested recipes on store shelves. Each of the project teams are involved in a continual process that generates slow but measurable growth. Leadership, as we define it, invariably involves some form of teaching or cross-training exercise. These jobs are not static, but rotational. And this is what makes our work fun.

Monetization Strategies

A need to achieve scale through replication may drive us to seek to establish a “first-to-market” lead near cities such as Chicago, Denver, Flagstaff or Reno. Knowing these environments, we have no reservations about planning for that event. Demonstrating success across a range of special location challenges tells a story that every franchise must eventually face. With each new location an internal competitive driver is born. Our ‘build-as-you-go’ approach entails far lower capital risks than other franchises. We foresee

significant property appreciation accruing to current landowners wishing to take a direct stake in this business. Issues of scalability by the end of year four or five are unlikely, at best.

Café Chez Kiva™ ~ “For-profit” revenue activities include:

- 1) Daily meal receipts: (includes carry-outs,) soups, sandwiches, pastries and breads
- 2) Retail sales: bulk-food basics to top-shelf comestibles, fresh produce, locally produced preserves and a range of private-label branded goods.
- 3) Catering Services, Concerts and Special Public Events: each may function “in tandem” with the Café, or utilize independent production facilities and staff. Operations gradually fund the expansion of the facility build-out, as paid event attendance reaches into the mid-hundreds and more.

“Not-for-profit” revenue generators include:

- 1) In-kind Services and other Donations: “Celebrity chef” appearances, webinar broadcasts, YouTube videos and social media will be among the key marketing strategies we plan to use, in addition to permanent area billboards.
- 2) Experiential Learning Programs: attract initial and ongoing streams of seed/matching grants, plus private labor donations, and additional community engagement.
- 3) Grants: Agricultural and Technical Workforce Development programs, as annually funded by NEA, FDA, HUD and State Block Grants, plus matching or sustaining foundation grants.
- 4.) “Crowdfunding Project Supervision-Guarantees” for all interested “Circles-Of-Three.”

External Drivers and Supports

The thinking behind the TEAL management system is squarely lodged between the covers of "Free Schools, Free People," and "In Defense of Childhood." These are 1960's and 70's constructs, best understood in the context of an organic learning environment. This is exactly where we find ourselves again today, wondering how we came to propagate the absurd mess the world is currently in.

The vulnerabilities of our “just in time” global food delivery systems have become increasingly evident to the public as well as to our government agencies such as the USDA, and FEMA.

Many believe the solution is to grow foods indoors. We propose a different means of support for public-access community gardens, and member-supported CSA's. Paring the requisite educational supports with Arkansas' underutilized human resources offers a direct means of breaking this cultural and economic stalemate and reinforcing our regional distribution systems. Today, few statements about “food security” relate to the producers as soundly as this:

“Cyber security is the greatest issue that we have today because the next war is not going to be fought primarily with bombs, battleships and airplanes but with someone in China pushing a button and our infrastructure instantly disappears. We won't have

any power, or emergency services. Food production will end and with it food distribution. -It's a monumental problem and it's right on the horizon!" John McAfee

** Our projected financial reports are based on Arkansas construction estimates. This, and additional details on the TEAL management system can be provided to interested and applicable investors.*

Many of the pictures presented in this proposal are by TS Gordon. Additional images were selected to convey the mood of this proposed facility, and will not appear in any other place or form. Picture credits can be added, and/or photos will be promptly removed upon copyright owner's request.

Please see *Part I, The Vision*, and/or visit: <http://chezkiva.com> , or write to: chezkiva@att.net for more info.