

locations, Lajaunie explains, can benefit from the requisite population density and the lack of competing food stores. —IRENE SAX

Chicken's new accent Winston-Salem, North Carolina—Why did the chicken cross the ocean? To get to here and become a Poulet Rouge Fermier du Piedmont, as in North Carolina Piedmont.

Rest assured that this is not just any old chicken, either. It's a red-feathered French import called Redbro Cou Nu (Naked Neck) that Ron Joyce, president of Joyce Foods, a producer of specialty poultry and game birds based in Winston-Salem, is about to set loose in American restaurants. To Joyce, no matter what the vast majority say about their chickens—all-natural, free-range, organic, antibiotic-free, humanely raised, feather-dusted—they're still rais-

Contests for food artists

Avocados From Mexico invites chefs to enter its annual "Fiesta Time" recipe contest, using Hass avocados from Mexico. First prize is \$2,000; second is \$1,500; third is \$1,000; and two runners-up each receive \$250. For info: (212) 420-8808; www.lewis-neale.com/avocados. Deadline: August 1.

To celebrate its 15th anniversary, **Sutter Home Winery** teamed up with the **National Cattlemen's Beef Association** and the **California Avocado Commission** to sponsor its 15th annual "Build a Better Burger" recipe contest and cook-off. Ten finalists will be flown to Napa Valley to compete in a burger grilling cook-off for a \$50,000 grand prize on October 1. For info: www.buildabetterburger.com. Deadline: August 26.

Phillips Foods is seeking the best original recipe using a Phillips frozen seafood product as a main ingredient in its **Seafood Recipe Contest**. The grand prize winner will receive \$1,000. For info: (888) 234-CRAB; www.phillipsfoods.com. Deadline: September 26. ♦



Bob Sloan, with bird in hand, is one of the North Carolina farmers raising Redbro Cou Nu chickens according to Label Rouge protocols for Ron Joyce (left) and Denis Dorne (right) of Joyce Foods.

ing the white-feathered, fast-growing, commercial bird that can pop out of its egg and into the oven in 42 days max. The Cou Nu, on the other hand, is being raised according to the strict requirements of the French government-certified and industry-supported Label Rouge program (pronounced "la-bel" and not to be confused with Belle Rouge, as certain New York State-raised chickens are dubbed). Label Rouge was started more than 40 years ago in the southwestern Landes region by farmers who wanted to protect and promote their traditionally raised poultry. As can be imagined, Label Rouge standards govern everything from genetics to the size of chicken housing, the density of birds per square foot, access to the outdoors, feed (75 percent nonmedicated cereal), age at slaughtering (81 days), dress weight, distance to the slaughterhouse (92 hours or 64 miles), processing (air chilled), and shelf life (nine days).

"Our birds will have more space inside the houses, as is required by Label Rouge, and we're allowing them the same access to the outside as their program [9 a.m. to dusk after six weeks of age; a minimum of 42 days outdoors]," says Joyce, who's being assisted by Denis Dorne, a former New York City chef, in developing and marketing his Poulet Rouge. "The finished weight will be three pounds, and the bird will have thin, translucent skin, an elongated breast with few feather follicles, a high keel bone, and long legs."

For info: (800) 755-6923; www.joycefoods.com. —JIM PORIS

de cuisine. **Tim Butler**, recently of **Bernardus Lodge** (Carmel Valley) handles the sweet side of the menu.

• Speaking of **Water Grill**, look for new leadership in the kitchen. Top toque **David LeFevre**, who hails from

Charlie Trotter's, and pastry chef **Koa Duncun** emigrated over from **Bastide**. • In June, brothers **Nick** and **Dipu**

Haque opened **Bridge** (755 N. La Cienega Blvd.), directly across the street from their trendy hot spot **Kol**,

which spawned a NYC offshoot last spring. Expect contemporary Mediterranean fare in a stylish setting befitting their A-list clientele. • **Sunset Beach** is slated to

open in September at 8240 Sunset Blvd. Restaurant industry newbie **James Castro** is the owner. **Joseph**

Gillard, whose résumé includes stints at **Mirabelle** and

Pearl, heads up the kitchen. • New York City-based hotelier **Jeff Klein** reopened **The Tower Bar** in **The**

Argyle Hotel, with a refreshed interior and a new chef,

Collin Crannel (formerly of **Water Grill**), in May. The menu is classic French bistro: i.e., *côte de boeuf*, *canard à l'orange*, and the like.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA—**Robert Curry**, who left his exec chef position at **The Culinary Institute of**

America's Wine Spectator Greystone Restaurant in March, has been replaced by **James Corwell**. Curry now

works his chef magic at Rutherford's legendary wine and food destination **Auberge du Soleil**. • In related

news, in June **Bob Harmon**, together with his son **Tim Harmon** and **Claude Rouas** of **Auberge Resorts**, cut the

red ribbon at **El Dorado Kitchen** (replacing **Platt**) in Sonoma's recently revamped **El Dorado Hotel**.

Helming the kitchen is **Ryan Fancher**, an alum of **The French Laundry**, **Per Se**, and **Auberge du Soleil**. • San

Francisco-based **PlumpJack Group** (**Jack Falstaff**, **Balboa Cafe**, and others) took over management of

Napa's **Carneros Inn** in January and broke ground in June for an expansion that will include a 100 seat

restaurant and a reception area. **Kimball Jones** was seduced from his exec chef position at **Wente**

Vineyards to oversee the kitchens.

Got Dish? Send it to julietglass@mn.r.com. No attachments, please, if possible.