



TASTEMAKERS

THOMAS KELLER'S FAVORITE THINGS

The revered chef on the ingredients that flavor his life

BY CHRISTOPHER CAMERON

THOMAS Keller, the pioneering, Michelin-starred chef behind haute-cuisine meccas like The French Laundry in California and Per Se and TAK Room in New York, is returning to his Florida roots. Keller — who spent much of his childhood in Palm Beach and got his start washing dishes there — launched his first Miami hot spot, Surf Club Restaurant, in the historic Four Seasons Surfside resort last year. Now he's expanding that society destination (which originally opened in 1930 and became a magnet for boldfacers like Winston Churchill, Tennessee Williams and Elizabeth Taylor) with a new enclosed terrace, opening just in time for Super Bowl crowds. The 64-year-old chef impressively holds seven Michelin stars across his restaurant empire and is the author of five books. Here, he shares with Alexa the treats and inspirations behind his culinary creations.

"TAK Room is our newest restaurant in New York City. It has a fun vibe with a continental cuisine menu for lunch and dinner — comfort food I could eat every day. The American wagyu cheeseburger and fries is a favorite." **"American" wagyu cheeseburger, \$24 at [TAKRoomNYC.com](#)**



"[Garde] co-founder Scotti Sitz has such a great global collection of organic and modern design finds, including ceramic earthenware vessels great for kitchen counter tops by Belgian architect Vincent Van Duysen." **Vincent Van Duysen ceramic pot with walnut, \$225 at [GardeShop.com](#)**



"Chef Erika Kushi is carrying on her family's legacy with Sushi Erika. It's a great local spot. I order the sweet shrimp sushi with fried shrimp heads, any of Erika's hand rolls or the 'Osaka style' boxed marinated mackerel sushi." **Sweet shrimp sushi with fried shrimp heads, market price at [Sushi Erika, 1700 John F Kennedy Causeway, North Bay Village, Fla.](#)**



"You have to order the 'Campari Shakerato' from bartender Valentino Longo at the historic Champagne Bar at Le Sirenuse." **"Campari Shakerato" cocktail, \$20 at [Le Sirenuse, 9011 Collins Ave.](#)**

"If you love art, be sure to visit the Margulies Collection at the Warehouse in the Wynwood Arts District. This year is his 20th anniversary exhibition." **"Martin Z. Margulies Collection: Volume 1" book by Margulies, Michael Danoff and Katherine Hinds, from \$48 on [Amazon.com](#)**



"Brian Bolke's The Conservatory New York City [in Hudson Yards] carries essential menswear and unique tabletop and home goods. I love the T-shirts and sweaters by Salle Privée." **Salle Privée "Lothar" T-shirt, \$110 at [TheConservatoryNYC.com](#)**



"Regiis Ova means 'royal egg' in Latin. This Russian Ossetra caviar is on the menu of many of our restaurants. We go right to the farms and select the best." **Russian Ossetra caviar, \$145 (for 30 grams) at [RegiisOva.com](#)**



"Our new bean-to-bar chocolate uses extra-virgin olive oil in place of cocoa butter. It's handcrafted in our Napa Valley factory, and the milk-chocolate bar features lush notes of coffee, caramel with a hint of sea salt and a roasted-coffee-bean crunch." **"Milk Coffee + Sea Salt" chocolate bar, \$15 at [KellerManniChocolate.com](#)**



"Enjoying a cigar on the terrace at the Surf Club — under its historic Banyan tree — is the perfect way to end a meal." **"Millennium Blend" petit corona cigar, \$71 for pack of five at [DavidoffGeneva.com](#)**



"For me, the Forty Five Ten in Yountville, Calif., is the most perfectly curated gift stop. I love the Plissé Venetian line of glassware." **MUN Venetian plissé glassware, \$210 (set of six) at [Forty Five Ten, 707-346-4510](#)**



"The sixth hole at Pebble Beach is a great risk-reward par-5. You can reach the great shot, but to do so you have to play a bold drive, knowing that a miss to the right could put you in the Pacific. The sense of uncertainty and the thrill of discovery help make this one of the favorite par-5s in the world. Before heading to the course, I use a Tour Striker smart ball — which I got as a gift from Phil Mickelson's coach — to practice my swing." **"Smart Ball," \$43 at [TourStriker.com](#)**



PHOTOS BY WILLIAM HEREFORD, DAVID ESCALANTE, VALENTINO LONGO, FUJIFILMGIRL, TAIJGH BARRON, ALAMY, COURTESY OF THE DESIGNERS.

5 QUESTIONS

WITH DEVELOPER MICHAEL STERN



One of the latest projects from JDS Development's Michael Stern (above) is **Monad Terrace** (right), a luxury residence on Miami's Biscayne Bay designed by architect Jean Nouvel.



You now split your time between NYC and South Florida. What drew you to Miami? Miami is relaxed and serious at the same time. I really gravitate toward Biscayne Bay, where you have the view during the day and the spectacular city skyline at night. **To that end, you're completing the luxury residence Monad Terrace on the bay side of South Beach — why there?** It's one of the best neighborhoods in all of Miami. It's a place where real people live. Plus, you get the most spectacular sunsets on the bay. **SHoP Architects designed your Manhattan supertower 111 W. 57th St. and architect Jean Nouvel designed Monad Terrace.** In NYC or Miami, it's all about design integrity. Nouvel is one of the greatest living architects of our time, and this will be his first building of note in Miami. It's anchored by a glittering man-made lagoon and climbing gardens. **You also co-developed Echo Aventura and Echo Brickell.** Brickell has become the Park Avenue of South America. It's also more walkable than it's ever been. You don't need a car. World-class cities have infrastructure and public transportation, and Miami is investing in that. **What's your idea of a fun night in Miami?** Between building and spending time with my two kids, there's not much time for "fun." Spending time with my kids is my idea of fun. —C.C.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JDS DEVELOPMENT.