

THE UNCHAINED EATERY

Dine like a local

By Reeanna Lynn Hernandez

Being the creation of a seasoned writer—one who was recently awarded as winner of Denver’s A List Food Blog Battle—it’s no wonder readers of the Unchained Eatery are coming back for seconds.

As food blogging continues to be a growing trend in the culinary community, being a successful blogger requires a certain amount of authenticity—an authenticity the Unchained Eatery has been recognized for.

Eric Lenderman is the critic behind the Unchained Eatery, a food blog that documents and shares recommendations for local eateries in the Denver and Boulder area.

Since its introduction, Eric’s blog has been touted as a prime source for finding some of the best eats the area has to offer. It has also made a name for itself with its conversational writing style and entertaining platform, bridging the gap between being a go-to food critic to simply an enjoyable read. Eric sets the tone for the style readers can anticipate on the Unchained Eateries Facebook page.

“As an unapologetic foodie, I patronize locally owned Denver and Boulder restaurants vetted by folks who live in those neighborhoods. You recommend ‘em, I go try ‘em, then I write about ‘em. Then I go jogging.”

In an interview, Eric reveals that his writing style is purely intentional.

“As a writer, I try to be conversational,” he says. “I believe if writing isn’t conversational, it starts to read like a lecture or manual, and that’s not the kind of tone readers are hoping for when they’re hungry or thirsty.”



Eric’s credibility as a self-proclaimed food critic stems from a life-long passion for the culinary.

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“As with most aspects of my life, I can thank my family for my love of food,” he says. “My great grandparents moved to the US from Sicily and Poland, and it seems every meal we had growing up was an enormous calorie-fest. In my teens and twenties, I worked in banquet halls and restaurants to put myself through school. I learned quite a bit about food quality from those experiences.”

With his love for food, and the fact that he’s been a writer, editor and marketing manager for nearly 20 years, becoming a food blogger seemed inevitable.

“I think it’s a natural extension of my journalism background,” he says. “I was struggling to choose a major in my first year at Oakland University in Michigan, and my mom suggested I give journalism a shot because she

always enjoyed the ridiculous essays I wrote in grade school. I never thought some silly stories I wrote as a kid might propel me toward work I still do today, but that's how it worked out."


On top of being an enjoyable read, Eric's reviews are purely positive ones at that, another quality that sets this food critic apart from the others.

"Small, local businesses, and particularly restaurants, have a hard enough time getting by as it is," Eric says. "Imagine you've poured your heart, soul, and savings into opening a restaurant, and that all gets extinguished due to one bad review. Admittedly, there are some restaurants that just suck, but I figure if they do suck, patrons will figure that out on their own. I don't want to be party to destroying someone's livelihood if I can help it."

In the future, Eric hopes to drastically increase readership as well as his food palate by blogging not only on local Colorado eateries, but places around the world.

"I'm hoping my blog brings good press to restaurant folks who work extremely hard for a living," he says. "I hope my blog reaches readers in every country on the planet at some point. This means I want to review and recommend restaurants and breweries around the globe. It's a big world, so clearly I have a ton of work yet to do." Eric hopes blogging about local eateries will bring positive press to the community and document the pure enjoyment to be found in the culinary experience.

"I think restaurants, bars, cafes and the like play a huge role in bringing people together," he says. "Sure, if it gets too late at night, some dudes take in a bit too much liquid courage and things can get ugly in a variety of ways, but for the most part, meeting friends out on the town for dinner or drinks is a positive thing, and I want local eateries and pubs to be successful."

*You can follow Eric's blog at <http://unchainedeatery.wordpress.com/> 



RESTAURANT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ERIC LENDERMAN

Fruition, Denver — Fruition is the best restaurant in Colorado, in my opinion. It's consistently excellent on all major points - food, service, atmosphere, value... It's tough to beat for Date Night and special occasions.

Bru Handbuilt Ales and Eats, Boulder — Their unfiltered beer and sourdough pizza are two great reasons to make a weekly trip.

Steuben's, Denver — Great comfort food, laid-back atmosphere, and hip decor.

Kasa, Boulder — This is our go-to sushi place in Boulder, and the owner (Mimi) is one of the world's friendliest and most enthusiastic hosts.

Falling Rock, Denver — One of the best beer-on-tap selections in the country.

