

Q&A

FORD Focus

We chat with Jeremy Ford about life as a FATHER AND A CHEF

By Mary Murray

Chef Jeremy Ford is many things: the winner of *Top Chef* season 13, the co-host of Tru TV's *Fast Foodies*, and the culinary mastermind behind Miami's Stubborn Seed and **The Butcher's Club**, a new modern steak house inside the PGA National Resort. But perhaps the descriptor he's most proud of is father of three. The native Floridian always takes Father's Day off and spends it with his daughters the best way he knows how: picnicking by the water, playing some Rummikub, and cooking dinner at home. *PBI* recently caught up with Ford to chat about family, cooking, and his latest venture. (pgaresort.com)

PBI: Growing up, did you cook at home with your parents much? What would you make?

Ford: We did a lot of grilling. My dad or my uncle would go fishing and they would bring it back to the house. We used to grill cobia. It's one of



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AT THE BUTCHER'S CLUB IN PGA NATIONAL RESORT, CHEF JEREMY FORD CRAFTS CRUDOS USING LOCALLY CAUGHT FISH AND BITES SUCH AS GRUYÈRE CHEESY PUFFS, JAMÓN SERRANO, AND BLACK TRUFFLE JALAPEÑO POPPERS.

What's something your kids like that surprises you?

My 14-year-old eats everything because I started her very, very young growing vegetables and stuff at the house. She does really well with raw fish, which is strange to me. It's a textural problem for most people. We were in L.A. shooting season two [of *Fast Foodies*] and she came to stay with me for about a week on her summer break. It was so cool because I took her out to Spago—Wolfgang Puck's flagship—and the waiter was so shocked that she was eating caviar and the little raw salmon "ice cream cone" thing that he does. She loved all of that stuff.

What would be your top tips for preventing picky eating in kids?

One, you have to lead by example. If you're eating mac and cheese out of a box, they're going to want mac and cheese out of a box. It starts with the parents leading by example and showing that they eat their vegetables. Secondly, I think when you're younger you're more apt to be stubborn, so you've got to really start breaking that young instead of waiting until they're already set in their ways. And then introduce things without forcing. Forcing a child is the worst thing to do, because you get frustrated, the child gets pissed off, and no one wins that battle.

What excites you most about creating food for The Butcher's Club?

The Butcher's Club is actually the food that I like to eat. I like simple. I love eating at Stubborn Seed—don't get me wrong—but I crave meat and potatoes. When those doors open at 5 o'clock, [I'm] the first order, getting a steak, some creamed spinach, and the bravas.



MICHAEL PISARRI

my first memories of paying attention to the grill. And a lot of fried chicken, a lot of that.

How do you like to share your love of cooking with your kids?

I love to cook with them, they don't like to cook with me. My oldest, she's very interested in baking and pastry. If I cook dinner, she'll be more apt to take the dessert preparation. She does a really good flan, but my favorite thing she's ever made was this gooey brownie-Oreo thing.



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WHAT'S FORD'S BIGGEST TAKEAWAY FROM HIS TIME ON TOP CHEF? FIND OUT AT PALMBEACHILLUSTRATED.COM/JEREMYFORD