

*Hola! Hello! Bienvenue! Buongiorno! Guten Tag! Hej! Habari! Okay, don't mean to get carried away, but I'm feeling very global today. I wish I was in Cuba right now. Monday was a very, very sad day for my family, but as Maya Angelou recites, "still I (we) rise."*

If you're reading this today, Wednesday, June 24th, please mosey on over the **The Washington Post Food & Dining Section** right now! I am today's guest food blogger at **The Washington Post** online! This is huge for me and am beyond excited about the opportunity to write for this awesome, most fair and centered national paper! Not just because it's **The Post**, but because its close to home, literally and figuratively. This has extra special meaning to me because I grew up reading The Post everyday. I wrote my undergrad senior thesis based on a storyline that broke in The Post. My default Internet homepage is the Washington Post. I know the history of the Post. I love the Post. It's the best paper, hands down! So to be invited to write, even if for just one day, makes me very giddy. Kim O'Donnell does a fabulous job of penning the daily food blog, "[A Mighty Appetite](#)." She is currently hosting a Summer event called "**Eating Down the Fridge**." It's pretty neat and I'm confident something we can all relate to! So, in lieu of posting a food a recipe here this week, please visit the Washington Post [Food & Dining section](#) today and read my article. I promise you'll be in for a treat! And leave a comment. We all love comments...

Back to business. Ironically, my day on Monday started off wonderfully. I had a productive lunch meeting with the President and owner of a very popular restaurant in Atlanta. He wants me to provide copy for his new ventures' business plan. Great gig, I think, since the loot will be generous. Not to mention the honor of him loving my published articles in local magazines and framing them to hang in his restaurants.

That meeting ended a 2 week streak of great happenings and developments, most of which I'll share today. If you read the last post, you may have noted me mention the new site design. Well, it's done! Since I've launched **Flanboyant Eats**, I've been switching out the look of the site with the seasonal

changes, so this 3rd version comes just in time for Summer! The new look was inspired by my desire to see more white space and more interactive and user-friendly features. More importantly, I was also interested in highlighting the areas you, my readers, like and click on the most. And since this blog is for YOU guys, it's my pleasure to bring some change.

I never thought food blogging would bring me this far! In 18 months, **Flanboyant Eats** has brought me work, offered me amazing presence on the web and more importantly has allowed **me to make new friends!** I love every single one of my readers and am thankful for the time and thoughtfulness each of you offer and share with me! You have enlightened me, challenged me and just made my life more interesting! With the plethora of über delicious and picture drooling blogs, the options to peruse are overwhelming, and yet still you make time to visit and say hello! I am deeply grateful for that. **Without you**, FE just wouldn't be!

So after two months of re-designing and conjuring up ideas, I am excited to roll out some fun and worthwhile features and projects I'm involved in and would love for you to join me. These are projects I've been developing over time and are motivated by deep-rooted concern for issues I feel need attention. Some are simple and fun, others are global and poignant. If you know me personally, you know I am passionate, relentless and a hard-worker! That same energy is applied to just about everything I believe in. And because this blog is my platform, I think it's perfect to use it to get my word and message out! I hope you'll love the changes, the additions and the look! We're still cleaning up some minor things and are continuing to work them out. Thanks for your patience as it's not 100% pimped out!

Here goes:

## **\*\*NEW FEATURES\*\***

*EATING AROUND THE WORLD:* I realize this blog is at times about my travel journeys as much as it is about food. Since I travel so much and most of it involves phenomenal eating and exposure to the world's culinary culture, I thought it'd be great to collectively share the experience with you! This basically highlights all of my travel stories and posts in one section in the right column. Images within respective travel posts will flash in a slide show. Some cool places so far include Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, France, Monaco, Mexico and Italy. I'm not even done with the Monaco pieces as the videos are still being edited and interviews are being transcribed. I feel like I need to start a production company and do all this in-house, but it's just so much! They will be done soon, though! Upcoming trips I can't wait to share: **Delectable Spain and Cuba!**

*FLANBOYANT TV!:* In looking at the sites' statistics, we realized that people really do click on the

videos! Yay! I always wondered how many of you really watch the low-budget vids I've infrequently done! Well, I'm glad to know you do watch and decided to move the placement of FETV! Some of you have even emailed me and asked me for more! You'll now see FETV directly under the main post. You can click on the "Currently Playing" video which will launch into a new window. The player I've chosen is very user-friendly! You can subscribe to my video podcasts channel via iTunes or Miro. That way you always have my cooking demo vids at your hands clicking! Right now there are 4 cooking demos, in addition to the full episode of my "**Emeril Green**" episode and a Verizon Fios TV feature. I'll also be adding my appearance on "Daytime" talk show in about a week, since most you didn't catch it live last month (see note below!). If there is anything you'd like to see me demo, shoot me an email and I'll make it happen! Lastly, I'm rolling out some videos in Spanish as well, which I'm excited about! I'm eager to connect to a Spanish-speaking audience so this will be a start!

*REAL CHEF TALK(tm)*: Some of you may know I'm a full-time freelance food/music/travel writer. It's an amazing job to have, really. I get to travel to neat and exotic places all over the world and meet extraordinary people. Those trips and excursions turn into published writings for several print magazines, nationally and in Atlanta. Well, I decided I'd bring you some of the action! **Real Chef Talk(tm)** is a new interactive section where you'll hear podcasts of interviews I have with our fave foodies! This will include chefs, writers, authors, restaurant owners, TV personalities and just plain cool people! The section was officially initiated two posts back with the **Michael Ruhlman** interview! If you missed it, please go back and check it out! He's a cool dude, and very knowledgeable! SO, twice a month, I will bring you a new and fresh podcast with conversations I have with these foodies! The line up includes: Chef Jeff Henderson, Paquito D'Rivera, The Nealy's, Chef Jose Andres and master world Chef **Joël Robuchon**! If there is any one particular you'd like to hear me chat with, please leave a comment or email me! I'll make it happen!

*BITES & TIPS*: (being tweaked and will be ready by the weekend). This section is small, but fun. A quick and useful tip or trick will be given every day! I'll be pulling information from my thick head and resources like "The Science of Good Food", "Food Lover's Companion" and others. The point is to offer you something you may not have known but could benefit from in your daily culinary musings! Enjoy!

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There are other features I've tweaked and some news ones being finished. Feel free to navigate the site and become familiar with the old and new goodies. I really like the **Herb & Spices** (click on the letter H in the circle to the right) section which showcases typical and everyday ingredients in Cuban and Latin cuisine. And the **Restaurant Review** area is under some redesigning. I do so many reviews in Atlanta and abroad and I really try to put them up as I go, but I'm still trying to catch up! There are literally about 10 I still need to post, including all the fantastic restaurants in Monte Carlo!

**\*\*NEW PROJECTS\*\***

**HELP ME FIGHT HUNGER! "One Comment. One Eats"**: My feelings on this are too deep to get into in one post, so I'll be short and to the point. I come from a poor island where food is STILL rationed. People are starving in Cuba. People die of starvation there. The **whole world** sees entirely too much hunger and it is all unacceptable. Period. To that end, I am a determined soul to help the campaign to end world hunger. Beginning in July, for **every comment** left on the **1st post of each month**, I will donate one food item to a local family or food bank. The goal is to be able to provide a needy family with food and supplies for the month. Imagine, 300 comments in one post could feed an entire family, or two, or three! We could fill pantries and refrigerators! **PLEASE HELP ME WITH THIS. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS LEAVE A COMMENT. THAT'S IT.** Ultimately, and hopefully, in a short period of time, I will extend this outside of Atlanta and will be shipping loads of food to families everywhere in the US. By October of this year I hope to start shipping out food to other states and cities; right in time for Thanksgiving! And in time, overseas! There is something we all can do. Mark your calendars and tell your blog network, your friends, your loved ones, your fam. Spread the word! Tweet it, Facebook it! Your support is appreciated.

*PRESSURE COOKING THURSDAYS*: So you all know I swear by the pressure cooker, right! Its is **MY THING!** I love it and am on a mission to reintroduce it to the masses! Everything about pressure cooking is great. It's green, it's energy efficient, it's time efficient and makes food that much better! On the 3rd Thursday of each month, I will be hosting a **pressure cooking challenge!** Participants will be given an ingredient to use in a pressure cooker. You then have 3 weeks to work your magic and show me what you can do! Submissions (including recipes and pictures) will be due on the 2nd Thursday. Winners will be announced on that 3rd Thursday and will be awarded SOMETHING! Don't know what yet, but trust that it will be FUN! Criteria and rules will be spelled out in the 1st challenge, starting July 16th! Stay tuned!

There are two more developments I want to share, but this post is already getting too long, so I'll wait until next time to spill the beans! It's kick ass type stuff! Stuff that'll have you eating flan for dessert. Stuff you'll tell your grandchildren about!! So yeah, make sure to come back and read all about it!

*\* badges for the last two events are being designed and will be ready shortly. If you participate, you get one!*

**\*\*OTHER GREAT NEWS!\*\***

### **ANOTHER APPEARANCE ON "DAYTIME" TV TALK SHOW!**

My appearance last month on "Daytime" went so well I was invited back! I'm EXCITED about this development because it's like the launch of this up an coming TV personality career! I'll be back in Tampa next month taping a few more segments, including some cool travel coverage. I made a yummy lemon almond flan last time. The next two segments will be even more delicious! I'll be making red snapper escaviche for one segment and then a full coffee and espresso party! Stay tuned for air dates in your city! *(the video of the flan will be up next week).*

There is other fabulous news to share, but under the direction of my publicist, I am not allowed to unzip my chatterbox. Drats! I can't wait to share all this other stuff. But we'll have to wait. I hope you scream for joy the way I did!!!

After 2100 words in this post, I hope I still have your attention! If so, thanks for reading, thanks for supporting, thanks for commenting and thanks for the love! You guys really are special to me and I am grateful for your friendships. I've learned A LOT since launching Flanboyant Eats and hope to continue growing with you!

Now go eat!