

BERGEN

health & life

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End notes

by Rita Guarna

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Jamais at his eponymous eatery, featuring artwork by Patrick Mimran

A CHAT WITH

Bruno Jamais

THE 49-YEAR-OLD PARISIAN, AN ENGLEWOOD RESIDENT AND FORMER MAITRE D' AT MANHATTAN'S FAMOUS DANIEL, ON CARS, FOOD AND HOW—DESPITE A SETBACK—LIFE'S STILL MOVING FULL SPEED AHEAD

Tip of the chapeau: "I'm indebted to chef Daniel Boulud for giving me the opportunity to preside over one of the country's finest venues for classic French cuisine. He taught me English too."

Cars for a cause: "I always had a passion for cars, and a talent for restoring antique ones. I owned a Ferrari, a Porsche, a Lotus, a Maserati and several American cars from the '50s. But I sold my collection to support my Manhattan restaurant, Bruno Jamais, for the last eight months prior to its closing on New Year's Eve, a victim of the economy."

An era's end: "I'd like to thank the loyal patrons of my establishment over the past seven years."

Plans for 2010: "Finding myself and my next passion."

The race of life: "Racc-car driving is therapy for me, and I love the thrill of speed. Sometimes I race alone, other times I take a 'co-pilot' who is not afraid to go fast. The fastest I've driven is more than 200 miles an hour—on a Porsche track close to Paris."

Current wheels: "A Range Rover."

Ultimate stress-buster: "A long ride on my Harley-Davidson."

Favorite meal: "Not necessarily a complicated one, but one that's well prepared and presented. Say, a rib eye or Porterhouse steak with potatoes gratin or truffled mashed potatoes."

Go-to healthy meal: "Any type of lean fish and steamed vegetables."

Sip of paradise: "I usually like a good Bordeaux such as Chateau Latour or Mouton Rothschild. In the summer, Paul Goerg Rosé Champagne."

Local dining: "I like to go to Solaia, my friend Michel Bittan's Italian restaurant in Englewood."

Why live in Bergen: "It's close to Manhattan, but has what I believe is a better quality of life."

Personal look: "I like to wear Loro Piana and Berluti—sporty casual and chic. And watches that match my outfit, such as Panerai and Audemars Piguet."

Frames of reference: "I have a collection of art from the French artist Cyrille Margarit, who works with digital photos projected onto brushed aluminum. The pieces were on display at my restaurant."

Film favorites: "*The Shawshank Redemption*, *Midnight Express*. And *Basic Instinct*—I'm a huge Sharon Stone fan."

Must-see TV: "*Top Chef* on Bravo."

Musical choices: "Jazz, classical and some '80s pop. I like Ray Charles, James Brown and Billy Paul. Billy Paul's 'Your Song' basically became a theme song for my restaurant. The customers would hear it at least once in an evening."

Quartet of passions: "Besides life and love, cooking, traveling, collecting car memorabilia—and my beautiful Siberian husky, Mr. B."

Travel thrill: "The island of St. Barts in the Caribbean."

On the nightstand: "Car magazines."

Best advice ever: "To treat everyone with equal respect and always to act ethically, personally and professionally."

En famille: "I have a daughter, Jessica, who is 26. She lives in France, has a boyfriend in the restaurant business and works for a temp agency that specializes in restaurants and the hospitality industry. And I am getting married in 2010 and trying to become a father again."

Can't live without: "The people I love." ■