



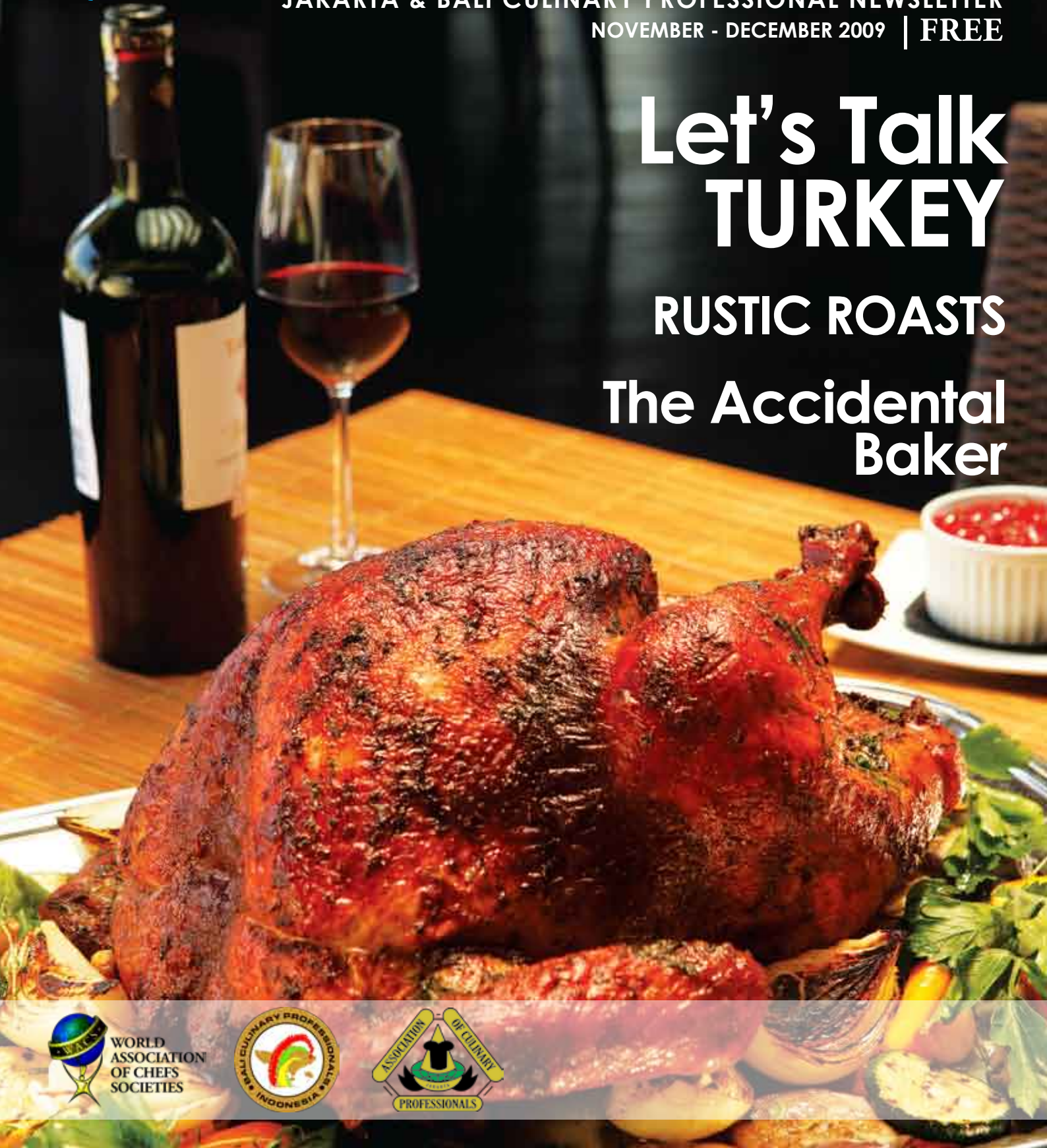
# TASTE

JAKARTA & BALI CULINARY PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER  
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## Let's Talk TURKEY

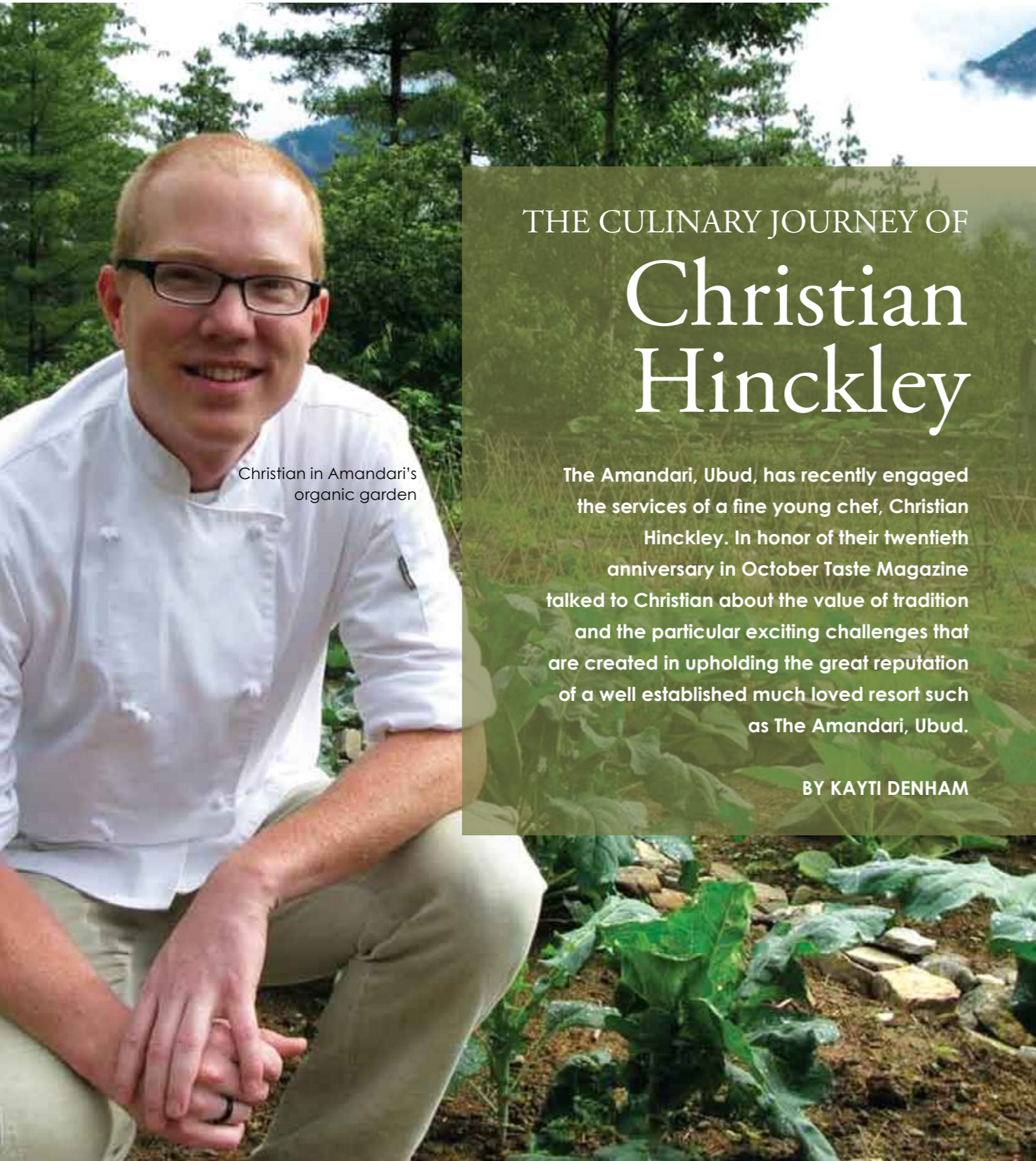
RUSTIC ROASTS

The Accidental  
Baker



WORLD  
ASSOCIATION  
OF CHEFS  
SOCIETIES





Christian in Amandari's organic garden

# THE CULINARY JOURNEY OF Christian Hinckley

The Amandari, Ubud, has recently engaged the services of a fine young chef, Christian Hinckley. In honor of their twentieth anniversary in October Taste Magazine talked to Christian about the value of tradition and the particular exciting challenges that are created in upholding the great reputation of a well established much loved resort such as The Amandari, Ubud.

BY KAYTI DENHAM

Grilled watermelon, Mahi Mahi, lemongrass crème fraiche, coriander



Christian, for his youth, has had an inspiring journey. From the north-west coast of the United States he was lured by the opportunity to work for the recently un-retired “Chef of the Century,” Joel Robuchon, at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas in his eponymous restaurant. Serving a very sophisticated menu of traditional French Cuisine in the desert that is Las Vegas gave Christian his first taste of the slightly bizarre world of high class dining in unexpected surroundings so it was no wonder that he felt Bhutan was a natural next step!

Christian admits he has made some unusual choices but explains they are progressive, the journey, the other way round, he says would have been very different. The atmosphere and tranquility offered in Bhutan would not have prepared anyone for Vegas, yet the unusual synthesis of twenty four hour a day ‘glamour’ and the demands of a French master chef was the perfect preparation for the more independent position of chef at the Amankora of Bhutan.

Here in the landlocked kingdom, “The Kingdom of the Thunder Dragon” the absence of neon lights, fast cars and furious living gave Christian the challenge he was searching for and the ability to create exquisite dishes that combine high quality ingredients with a simple approach to preparation that provides guests with satisfaction and pleasure rather than just awe.

The move to Amandari seems to combine the elements of both Christian’s previous positions. Ubud attracts an eclectic variety of visitors, many of whom have come to rely on the welcome of the Amandari and return regularly to enjoy the beauty of the resort and the comfort it provides.

Christian understands the needs

of his guests well, their desire to find the familiar, but also have the choice of the unusual, to be able to depend on the best quality of ingredients, the freshest produce and make choices based around personal preferences.

With this in mind he is approaching subtle changes to the menu with great care, his love of fine ingredients and dealing with local producers has brought him in to contact with the best suppliers on the island so he can make good judgments about his markets and his customers.

A gentle shift will begin with the lunch menu and only when he has reached his idea of happiness will he consider the next change.

Christian understands very clearly what it is like to ‘need’ your ‘comfort’ food and has his own particular favorites. A big fan of Japanese food he also enjoys the Indonesian menu, especially, and I have yet to meet a chef who doesn’t enjoy this, Babi Guling. Though Christian is the first chef I have met

that likes to drink Guinness.

No stranger to Bali, Christian had visited with his family previously and loved it, being in Ubud amongst the tranquility of the forest and close to the ‘natural’ Bali is a dream come true, and with close friends from his earlier journeys also living and working on the island Christian is looking forward to embracing the best of both his previous ‘worlds’ in the always glamorous and only very slightly remote resort of the Amandari.

To illustrate Christian’s feel for freshness and flavours his selection for Taste includes the piquant Tuna Tartare with truffle mayo and teriyaki glaze, a beautiful Mahi Mahi dish with the lightness and aroma of lemongrass and coriander and a really superb standard, the Spaghetti Carbonara with a velvety parmesan cream, basil and summer vegetables. Through his intelligent choices Christian creates the perfect way to celebrate the essence of the Amandari.

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