



inflight dining

CONGRESS OF CHEFS AND SOMMELIERS

Continental's executive chefs, Siegfried Lang and Gerry McLoughlin, are the orchestrators of distinctive inflight dining at 35,000 feet. They meet regularly with their Congress of Chefs, a carefully chosen group of culinary experts who continually evaluate the ever-changing trends and popular flavors of food. In addition, Continental's sommeliers are expert wine aficionados who assist our beverage committee in the selection and pairing of wines. This month, we profile one of our executive chefs and one of our vendor partners.

– Tammy Briggs

EXECUTIVE CHEF SIEGFRIED LANG

You'd think with all the new international destinations that we have added over the last two years that Continental's Managing Director of Food and Beverage Planning Siegfried Lang would feel somewhat overwhelmed with the task of creating authentic menus. But Chef Lang remains unruffled by the challenge. Nearly 40 years' experience in the food service and hospitality industry is the reason for his equanimity. Serving travelers on new destinations as far away as India and Argentina, Lang obviously does an outstanding job, as Continental was once again ranked highest in Customer Satisfaction Among Traditional Network Carriers in North America by J.D. Power and Associates. Of the seven key areas evaluated, food service is a significant part of the inflight services assessment.

Chef Lang grew up watching his parents run a restaurant in Germany. He attended a private school specializing in training for business management while simultaneously completing an apprenticeship. With his degree in hand and a family background in food, the young graduate subsequently

enrolled at the Bad Reichenhaller Hotel School. Afterward he focused on a cook's apprenticeship while attending a vocational school for the hotel industry. Lang is pictured with Guenter Neubig, a vineyard owner and one of Lang's oldest friends.



In 1970, the chef immigrated to Canada to pursue his career in the hospitality world. There he worked at the Four Seasons Hotel in Toronto and at Cara In-Flight Kitchens. Lang later moved to Texas, and he currently resides in Houston. He is responsible for planning and developing menus, selecting products, and negotiating with suppliers. Lang is also credited with assembling

Continental's Congress of Chefs and the Celebrity Chef team, which authenticates food trends.

He is an active member as well as a regional culinarian with La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, an international society devoted to culinary arts and fine cuisine. Lang and his wife, Margot, have been married for 37 years and have two daughters and a grandson, Kieran.

– T.B.

ALDO'S GOURMET

Chances are that if you shop at any high-end specialty food store, you have come across Aldo's Gourmet Pasta Sauces. From pastas to tantalizing sauces, Aldo's has been creating Italian products since 1991.

We have all read success stories about the hardships that people endure along the way, but Aldo Grubich's story truly stands out. Grubich grew up in Peru with his Italian family, leaning both the Italian and Spanish languages. At the age of 19, with truly nothing but the clothes on his back, the adventurous teenager moved to the United States in search of the American dream. Learning English with every exhale, the young man convinced a New York City restaurateur to take a chance on him, sans salary! With his inherent knowledge of food and spice combination, coupled with an eagerness to learn, he had found his calling. In 1976 Grubich relocated to Houston – a city ripe for the restaurant business.

By 1986, he had become a business partner and executive chef at Sausalito, an eatery formerly nestled in Houston's upscale River Oaks area. One of his devoted regulars repeatedly suggested that Grubich bottle his sauces, and after much persuasion, he started a product line called Aldo's

Gourmet Pasta Sauces. Since that time, the business has enjoyed tremendous expansion.

In 1997, seeing need for quality Italian imports, Grubich ventured back to his ancestral homeland, the Umbria and Tuscan regions of Italy, to find the perfect blends of ingredients. He established Aldo's Gourmet Imports, importing olive oils, vinaigrettes, and dry artisan pastas. His latest venture, founded six years ago, is Lancelot CV, which produces fresh and frozen products for use throughout Western Europe.



Continental's head chef Siegfried Lang was introduced to the Aldo's product line over 10 years ago and today, we feature many of the company's sauces, salad dressings, and entrées on our flights. Chef Grubich is an original member of our Congress of Chefs and of course, a large contributor to our Italian pasta development!

Grubich's products fare well with the public too, as his Puttanesca sauce was named "Best Thing in a Bottle" by *Houston Press*. He has appeared on numerous morning news cooking segments and gives back to the community through various charitable efforts. He is pictured with wife and business partner, Dana, at a reception for major contributors to the Bush-Clinton Tsunami Fund.

– T.B.