

# Haute cuisine in the valley's high huts

## Local chef at the top of his game in rustic cabin

**Carol Busch and Natalia Hanks**  
SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

VAIL — Planning a hut trip in mid-September requires a sense of humor, since the probability of waking to a foot of snow on the deck is quite high. Planning a hut trip in mid-September that involves haute cuisine requires a gifted chef with a sense of humor — and a penchant for adventure. Fortunately, Thomas Newsted has both.

Newsted recently partnered with the Gore Range Natural Science School to donate his time, services and food to create a "Gourmet Getaway at Peter Estin Hut." The trip promised unforgettable cuisine in a rustic setting that would be brought to life by a science school naturalist. The trip's date was pre-determined — come rain or shine. Bob and Roberta Schmidt purchased the trip during a live auction at Science on the Green, the school's annual golf fundraiser, which takes place in June. The science school connects youth and adults to our mountain environment through hands-on natural science education.

On Saturday morning, Sept. 15, a blizzard hit the valley, almost calling off the trip. But Chef Newsted was determined to make a go of it and encouraged the Schmidts and their guests to join in the adventure. The entourage arrived at the hut nestled in the sub-alpine forest at an elevation of 11,200 feet with several inches of snow on the ground.

Upon arrival, Chef Newsted and his two sous chefs, Canyon Jacob and Eli Hoster, hauled crates of dishes and food supplies, champagne, linens and cande-

### Dressing for a hen

The following recipe for green apple and truffle oil emulsion complemented Newsted's Le Poêle de Game Hen entree but can accompany many meat dishes.

**Green apple and truffle emulsion**  
 ½ ounce butter, whole  
 2 Granny Smith apples, skinned, cored  
 ¼ ounce shallots, sliced  
 3 ounces champagne vinegar  
 1 ounce sugar, granulated  
 ¼ cup sour cream  
 ½ ounce black truffle oil

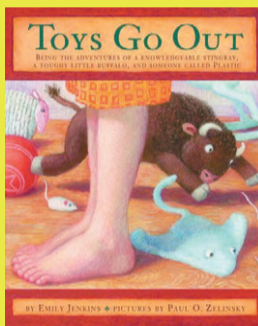
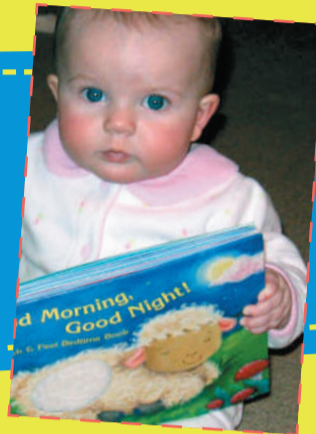
- Prepare the apples as instructed.
- Saute apples with shallots in butter for three minutes on medium-low heat.
- Add the champagne vinegar and sugar cooking the mixture until it is almost dry.
- Remove from heat, cool to room temperature, fold in sour cream and place into a bar blender.
- Puree the mixture on low speed and drizzle in the truffle oil slowly to emulsify.

labras to the hut and began their preparations. Meanwhile, guests joined science school naturalist Christiane Hinterman on an exploratory ridge hike.

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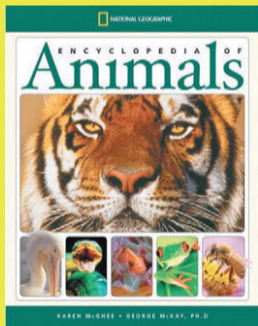
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by Emily Jenkins ~

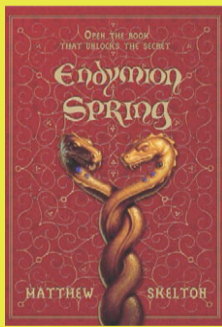
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