

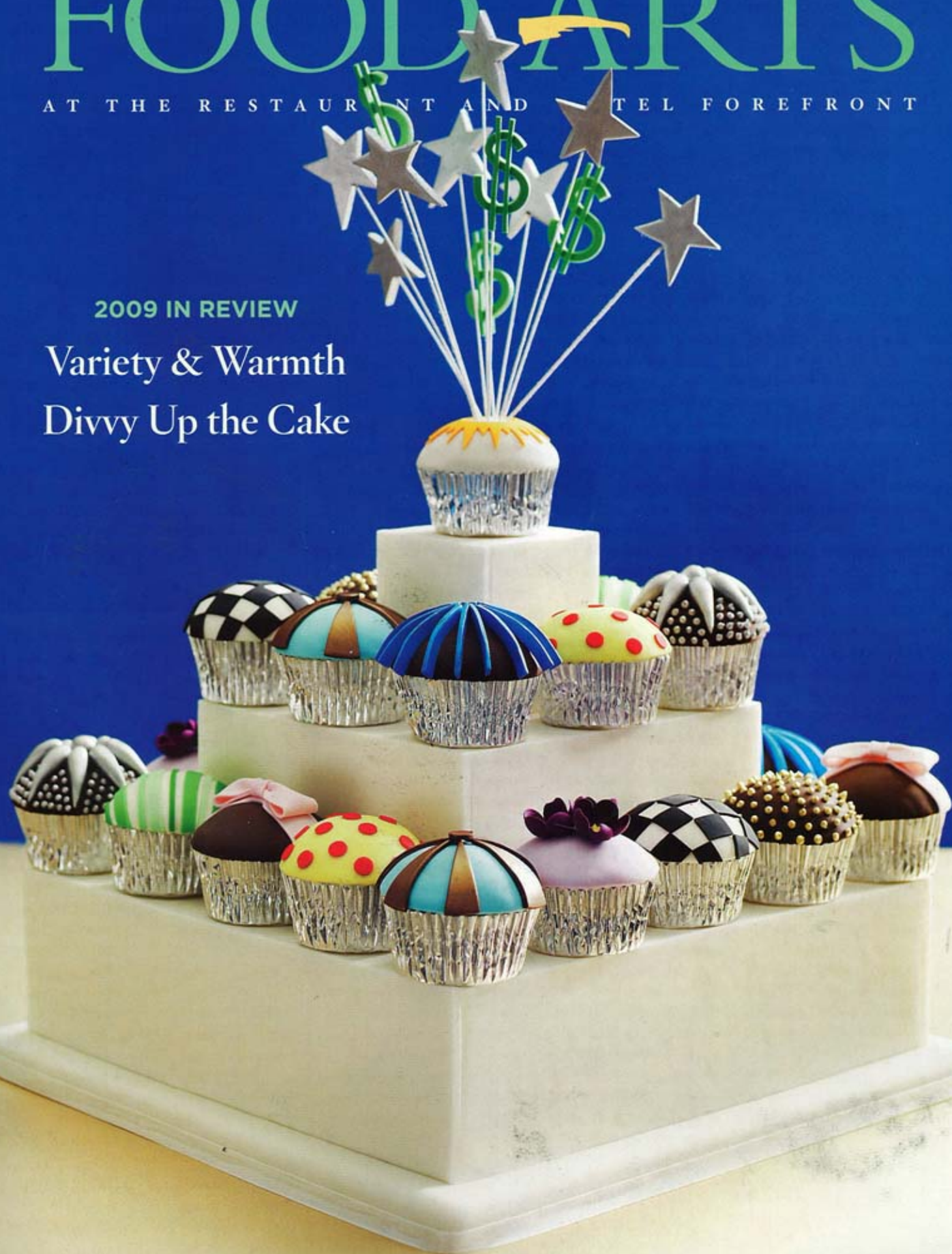
DECEMBER 2009

FOOD ARTS

AT THE RESTAURANT AND HOTEL FOREFRONT

2009 IN REVIEW

Variety & Warmth
Divvy Up the Cake





Deep Dish

FLORIDA—Fasten your seat belts! This winter **Norman Van Aken** returns to Coral Gables, where he made his mark in the mid-1990s as the founding father of New World cuisine at his much-missed namesake restaurant. His new place, **Norman's 180**, will open in February in the old Hoja Nueva space in the **Westin Colonnade Hotel**. Leading the kitchen as co-chefs are two Van Aken vets, **Phillip Bryant** and **Justin Van Aken**. As the name indicates, Norman's 180 marks a shift for Van Aken. "Norman's 180 will be a broadly American restaurant that brings comfortable familiarity side-

by-side with dishes that are hallmarks of America's ethnic diversity in a vibrant, energetic setting," explains Van Aken. "The Latin-Caribbean base I began with stretches out now to include street foods and classics from around the globe. With my son cooking with me, my gaze also moves on to new directions with more farm and sustainability goals guiding us." • **Barton G. Weiss**, chef/owner of **Barton G. The Restaurant** (South Beach), opened **Prelude by Barton G.** in October in the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts (Miami). • **The Forge** closed for a redo and reopens this month with a reworked design, new menu, and new chef, **Dewey LoSasso**, who recently shuttered his restaurant North One 10 (Miami).

NEW YORK CITY—**Mandy Oser**, director of strategic partnerships at **Le Bernardin** and longtime right-hand (wo)man to **Eric Ripert**, branched out on her own with the opening of **Ardesia**, a 30 seat wine bar, at 510 W. 52nd St. Complementing the wine list are charcuterie, cheeses, and offbeat snacks like house-cured duck *bánh mì* and homemade pretzels. Chef **Amorette Casaus** worked recently at **El Quinto Pino**. • In other nibbly news, owner **Jason Denton** and partner **Joe Denton** (the brothers behind 'Ino and 'Inoteco) are focusing on crostini and other Italian eats at **Corsino**, which opened in October at 637 Hudson St. (formerly Frederick's Downtown). **Steve Connaughton**, who worked with the Denton brothers at **Bar Milano**, is