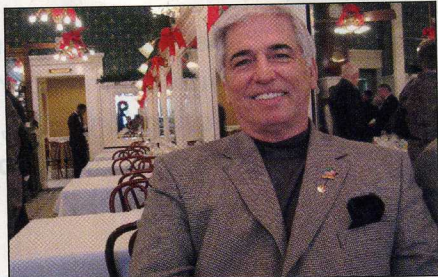


Outliers

ASIDES & INSIDES

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Where to eat in New Orleans? This former AMA chief has some suggestions, p. 36.

Dining with Dr. Donald

Along with surgeon, attorney, college professor, former American Medical Association president and consultant, Donald Palmisano has another title he can add to his curriculum vitae: restaurant critic. The New Orleans native has posted an online guide to Crescent City restaurants on the Web site for his risk-management business. (See the guide at intrepidresources.com/html/restaurants.html.)

Finding a good place to eat in the Big Easy is pretty simple, so Palmisano whittles down his list by removing places where cigarette smoke drifts into the nonsmoking section, where it's too loud to carry on a conversation or "if the atmosphere is snobby or unfriendly." He also keeps track of which places remain closed because of Hurricane Katrina-related damage. Unfortunately, this includes his favorite place, Tony Angello's, where he recommends that patrons don't even look at the menu and simply ask maitre d' Dale Messina to select their orders. For some places, such as the famous Commander's Palace, which reopened Oct. 6, 2006, and is located in the city's Garden District, Palmisano recommends taking a cab or using valet parking because "it is best not to wander about in this neighborhood."

Palmisano says he's received some criticism for suggestions like that, but that he's just following basic recommendations for self-preservation he learned from his father. "My daddy was a policeman, and he taught me rules I've always followed."

Palmisano learned about food from the other side of his family. His mother's parents owned Caronna's Restaurant and Bar on Magazine



The physician and gastronome visiting New Orleans' historic Galatoire's Restaurant, which made his list.

Street in the city's Irish Channel, and he tells how his grandfather would take him on early-morning shopping expeditions to the city's famed French Market. He says he learned about being a food critic from a high school friend, Gene Bourg, who reviewed restaurants for the *Times-Picayune* newspaper.

Since New Orleans is the site for many medical-related conferences, Palmisano says he was always asked for restaurant recommendations, so he typed up a list which he distributed to colleagues. He then noticed the list was routinely getting included in attendees' packets for various conventions and conferences, which resulted in him getting e-mails and letters from people all over the world.

"It developed a life of its own," he says of his new sideline.