HOLLYWOODGLEE, LLC
1226 N Salsipuedes Unit C 1(805)704-5994 |https://hollywoodglee.com Larry@HollywoodGlee.com

FILM REVIEW: La Tradition #nbff

Description

Newport Beach Film Festival.

La Tradition, a documentary film written and directed by Jeff Fliegler under the GrubTribe umbrella, charts the evolution of culinary chef and restaurateur Pascal Olhatsâ?? and his influence on the fine dining scene in Southern California. The title of the film is the name of Olhatsâ?? first restaurant in Newport Beach. For the last 30 years in the OC (Orange County, Calif.), Olhats has imbibed and shared his culinary, his kitchen techniques and etiquette on cooking shows, in culinary classes and through his restaurants and catering businesses. Making extensive use of the interview, Fliegler captures the essence of the Frenchman while revealing his culinary creations, his devoted proteges and Olhatsâ?? dedication to bringing the finest dining and culinary experiences to his customers and clients alike.

GrubTribe, a culinary focused media site, got the idea to bring cameras into Olhatsâ?? work space to get close to the food and its preparation. Olhats went along with the idea quipping that â??people will do anything to get close to my food.â?• According to Fliegler it was more than that, â??â??Pascal is one of my personal heroes, and it was such a great experience to tell his story. For the past year, weâ??ve been following Pascal and all the chefs heâ??s mentored to get the footage for the film.â?•

La Tradition opens with an eye-pleasing, Hollywood-style frame of Olhats and quickly moves into how he got his start as a chef. Not missing a beat, Olhats passes the credit to his mother who mentored him

at the tender age of seven on his first creation, mayonnaisse! Often credited with bringing real continental cuisine to the Newport Beach culinary scene, Olhats colorfully expands the concept playfully posing the question â??in what context?â?• and â??what is continental cuisine? From what continent?â?• with a hearty laugh that the audience mirrored. Olhats stated simply that he attempted to share his culinary background in classical cuisine with a lighter approach utilizing flour and herbs with reduction to create a more refreshing cuisine to the heavy, butter and creamy foods of the more traditionally thought of French cuisine. The result has culminated in Olhats being called the Ambassador of Orange County Cuisine.

Throughout *La Tradition*, Fliegler creates an excellent portrait of Olhats with broad, yet intimate strokes. Apparently, in an effort to organize his footage, Fliegler added categories to the film and displays each with large, block-lettered overlays. The categories included: (1) If you canâ??t take the heat get out of his kitchen; (2) Julia Childs, the Ambassador of French Cuisine; (3) Kick Ass Sea Bass; (4) Life On The Farm; (5) The Legacy. Each category comes complete with Olhats and his proteges providing ample documentation on an extraordinary culinary career and lifestyle. Comments on Olhats such as â??first in the kitchen in the morning and last to leave at night,â?• â??First class guy, my cooking mentor who also taught me the business side,â?• â??Best representative of French cuisine in the United States,â?• and â??French brother from another mother,â?• serve the viewer and the chef quite well in delineating a man, his passion and his dedication and sense of duty to the fine art of culinary and its French tradition.

I found *La Tradition* to be a very enjoyable film to watch. To hear the chefâ??s proteges recount the day-to-day triumphs and tribulations experienced and endured to get to where they are today coupled with Olhats own colorful commentary made for a very heartwarming and a very heartfelt story. Warmly recommended.

Category

1. #NBFF
2. Documentary

Tags

1. Actor
2. Cinema
3. culinary
4. Director
5. Documentary
6. Festival
7. Film
8. French
9. GrubTribe
10. Julia Childs
11. Newport Beach
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13. Producer
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15. Q&A

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16. Tribute

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hollywoodglee