

From left: The Chaîne Gang: Vice Chargé de Missions Todd R. Saunders, Vice Conseiller Gastronomique Cesarina Antoinette Wheeler, Vice Chancelier-Argentier Elizabeth M. Georgantas and Chambellan Provincial Nord-Est, Bailli de Boston Marshall L. Berenson

CHAÎNE *Reaction*

A private Boston dinner club turns sustenance into an art form.

By Lisa Pierpont // Photography by Michael D. Wilson

During the day, you may find Marshall Berenson acting in a major motion picture, developing a screenplay project or coaching actors and performers. But the minute night falls, his nocturnal gourmand emerges. Berenson heads up La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs (chaineboston.com), a bespoke historical dinner club with 25,000 members worldwide that celebrates fine food and craft beverages. Here, Marshall tells all.

What is the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs?

La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs is the world's oldest and largest gastronomic organization, with chapters [*bailliages*] in over 70 countries worldwide and 125 cities in the U.S. La Chaîne is based on the love of food, wine, fun and the camaraderie of the table. The individual chapters have curated experiences ranging from gala dinner events to wine and craft beverage education forums to culinary education classes and international travel.

Explain your role.

As chambellan provincial nord-est [vice-president of the Northeast region], I work to manage and develop the many chapters in New England and New York. As bailli de Boston [president of the Boston chapter], I run our Boston local chapter's events and outreach programs, and manage the membership with the help of our coterie of local officers. I was introduced to the organization by my father, Richard Berenson, who was one of the founders

of the Boston bailliage in 1966, and have had the privilege of stewarding the group through our recent 50th anniversary celebration in 2016.

How fabulous are your soirees?

Our 50th Anniversary Gala at the Four Seasons Boston would have to be high atop the list, as would our 2018 Boston Chaîne Holiday Charity Soiree with Maître Jacques Pépin at the Parker House to benefit the Greater Boston Food Bank. Recent black-tie events at Wheatleigh in Lenox or at chef Daniel Bruce's Meritage at the Boston Harbor Hotel, or more casual 'Petite Chaîne' dinners at Pammy's or Pagu in Cambridge, are standouts as well. We are adding a charitable component this year.

This is the 50th anniversary of Chaîne. Why is it important to keep it going?

Food, wine and art are one, and the act of fostering high levels of gastronomy is important for the future. Encouraging local sustainability of food along with healthy respect for food and wine from afar will help the planet as we move into the future. There is no reason gastronomy and sustainability cannot go hand in hand, and by our work with the U.S. Chaîne Foundation's food and wine education scholarship programs and the International Young Chef and Young Sommelier competitions, we are working to seed the future with budding gastronomes well-versed in both sides of this equation that is so important for our planet's future.