

Opening Remarks

Eat, Drink and Be Savvy: The Food and Beverage Beat

April 7, 2004

WCBS-AM - Bob Lape, "Dining Diary" Editor, Crain's NY Business Restaurant Editor

First of all, any real extravagant gifts for Erica may be sent to me. I will feel no remorse.

We'll lift that one from her shoulders.

One thing about being in the market for 35 years is you know the players and you have a lot of friends and it's a joy to be with as many of you as are here today, many of you with whom I have broken bread at the table often, across the room, in a corner, and we know pretty well what we're up to. But I would briefly recap some of the needs and interests of the special outlets that I have.

Crain's New York Business of course is restaurant reviews from the tri-state area every Monday. Every other week the "Bits and Bites" thing is restaurant news: it is openings, it is closings, it is key personnel shifts and that's all. It is not any promotion of any kind. WCBS and the "Dining Diary" feature is pretty broad based, and in that we may have reviews, news, trends, market surveys, human interest things, almost anything about eating and drinking from anywhere at all in the world that might interest or particular audience.

And our particular audience for both *Crain's* and WCBS is skewed "up". It is a well-read, well-traveled, well-spending, discriminating audience that goes for the better things.

That's how they read it and these are the people who listen in the areas that they listen to it. And in my other work as a freelance writer I have tended to go with the premise that if the end justifies the means, it might as well be the high end. And that is why I like small ship luxury cruises. I like going to South Africa to find out for "Food Arts" the wine story over there, which is quite spectacular. I like reporting on the Royal Scotsman for Mercedes' *Momentum* magazine or the Amalfi Coast for the *Bergen Record*, but the point is yeah I suppose I am open to a press trip now and then but I'm not going to conceal it from anybody. It's going to be right out front. Chances are I won't use it on the radio unless I very specifically identify where it came from and how it came in the door.

Another thing that I would point out to you is that in a brand new, active new partnership with the travel and food author, cookbook author and food consultant Joanna Pruess, we're going to be ramping up what we think is going to be a great website, it is FoodWineTravel.com in the next couple of months. So we're going to be working on that hard in the near future.

These are the main areas. We've talked enough about love, now we'll talk about hate, Lisa said, "Give us the loves and the hates." I don't happen to have any hates but I do think there are ways that we can work better together, more effectively for each other, and some of it goes to things that have been said already. Particularly: know who we are and what we do.

I can't use phone calls either or follow up calls, we don't have the time for that. I'm FoodBob@aol.com, that's pretty simple, you can get to me there.

Remember that a pitch is not the whole ball game and therefore you don't need this much you need a damn good idea well thought out, well written, well aimed and coming right at us and we can act on that right there.

I hate colored paper, whether it's in a press kit or anywhere else. About 10 years ago, about the time Karine Bakhoun got very good at it, putting out press kits in beige, ecru, red, puce... Man, you can't read these things! And you're going over these things, "Damn it, what's the light in which we can best read this?" White's great. Clean print is great.

Beautiful writing is the best thing in the world and that is what drives us: the word. We live and die by the word, not the sword in this game.

So well-written stuff right on target, right on point will get us every time, win our attention, win our follow thru and win us. And it is a joy to be with you, thank you for inviting me. We look forward to working closely with you in the future and it's a joy to break bread with you. Thank you.