

What's Cookin' > homeward (un)bound.

Tuesday, Sep 27 2011

This week's tablehopper: homeward (un)bound.

Merhaba! I am **back from three glorious weeks in Turkey**, a country that totally blew my mind. There was so much natural beauty, I can't believe how many well-preserved ruins I visited, I encountered such kindness and genuine hospitality, and hello, the food was just beyond. Those people know how to EAT. Talk about a food-obsessed culture, whoa. Looking forward to writing my trip recaps within the month, but first, I have 2,000 photos to sort through. I know, shutterbug gone crazy here. I blame you, Turkey! It was a trip of a lifetime—and I am so grateful for how smoothly it went considering all the moving parts! The kindness of strangers always makes such a difference.



One of my favorite sunsets in Istanbul, complete with Turkish crescent moon. Photo: © tablehopper.com.

I've been spending the past four days wading through the **2,200 emails I came home to** (oh, joy), which is probably what crashed my Entourage database on

Friday night. I KNEW I should have stayed on vacation. Fortunately I had many, many cocktails waiting for me at the **SF Cocktail Week Legends Awards** on Saturday night. I had a good time presenting a few winners with host Duggan McDonnell, but my favorite part of the night was seeing how truly touched the winners were with their awards. Winners: Jennifer Galligan of Small Head Foods for the Trailblazer Award, Lacey Winters of St. George Spirits

for the Renaissance Award, and... for the Lifetime Achievement Award. I have many lovely and...
“Yeah, it’s a good time to start hating me again, because Tuesday I leave for a week-long press trip to Piemonte, organized by Beni di Batasiolo winery.”

No rest for t

Sunset SAVOR the Central Coast event, and judge the **LA vs. SF: Food Town Smackdown—Cocktail Edition** competition on Sunday. I am then scooting back to SF in my car Sunday evening, because someone needs to get home and pack her bags again. Yeah, **it’s a good time to start hating me again, because Tuesday I leave for a week-long press trip to Piemonte**, organized by Beni di Batasiolo winery. It will be my first time visiting the region, and I can't freaking wait; I also can't believe Barolo and Barbaresco are in my binoculars. Pinch me (and trust, there's plenty to pinch right now).

Man, this column is full of a lot of catch-up—three weeks worth of news. Almost killed me. It's gonna hurt you too. Fortunately my colleagues at all the various news outlets were still churning out the stories while I was eating kebabs and drinking ayran (a salted yogurt drink). Get ready.

As if you didn't have enough to read, this **Q&A with me on the Huffington Post** went live while I was traveling, I hope you enjoy it. (Thanks for the interview, **Tami Yu!**)

Cheers, gang—you're so nice to come home to. Mwah! Let's get to this, shall we?

Marcia Gagliardi