

My Lunch with Bob McClure of McClure's Pickles

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Stephanie Ehrlich, Wave Hill's Special Projects & Events Producer, lets us in on some of the behind-the-scenes conversations with food purveyors at Sunset Wednesdays this summer.

I learned about Bob through my friend Tom Mylan, the butcher at Marlow & Daughters, blogger and all-around Brooklyn food god. Bob and I made a plan for him to come to Wave Hill, where he'd never been, and discuss Sunset Wednesdays. We met in the parking lot. Bob looked just like I thought he would—a youngish hipster from Brooklyn, complete with mud-colored hoody and baseball cap. What I didn't expect was that he'd be such a sweetheart and bring me treats in the form of PICKLES! Now this was the start of an excellent meeting.

First, Bob's sheer delight at seeing our spectacular vista, and his genuine interest in looking at the gardens and greenhouse, made it clear that he's a great guy. Then we went to the Wave Hill Café where I ordered my favorite sandwich they offer—a curried chicken salad on walnut raisin bread. Savory and sweet. Yum! Bob ordered the same, and that's the second reason why I think he's fab. (Hey, it's nice when people go with your recommendation.) After sandwiches were eaten, and details about the program discussed, Bob broke out the pickles. They were perfect. Garlicky, crunchy and just plain delicious. The pickles he'll bring to Wave Hill in July will be made of this summer's cucumber harvest from a local farm in New Jersey. Super local.

He also shared his top-notch relish and mustard. The mustard is strong and brined with Brooklyn Lager. Bob's dream is to create a line of 50 mustards, each made with local, handcrafted beers from around the country—a 'United States of Mustard,' if you will. The mustard, he said, goes really well with dark chocolate. He went on to recount a tale of working his booth at the Brooklyn Flea, next to his chocolatier pal Daniel Sklar of Fine and Raw Chocolates (who also gets to showcase his fabulous stuff at a Sunset Wednesday this summer). Just like the old Reese's Peanut Butter Cup commercials, Daniel got some chocolate in Bob's mustard. Bob got some mustard in Daniel's chocolate. So they did a little purposeful sampling and discovered that these two great tastes really do taste great together! They are currently working on a finished product that combines the two. (If we're lucky, it will be ready for both their Sunset Wednesdays appearances). Meanwhile, never one to hear about a food possibility and not try it—I ran back to the Café for some nice fair-trade chocolate. We dipped it into the mustard, and sure enough, it worked! Bob assured me that Daniel's Fine & Raw Chocolate is an even better complement to the mustard. I can't wait to try it!

Meantime, check them both out online at www.mcclurespickles.com and www.fineandraw.com.

