

# Great Product, Bold Flavor

Certified Hereford Beef highlights Chef Jonathan Scinto's unique cuisine.

by Julie Mais



Chef Jonathan enjoys working with Certified Hereford Beef products because of their luscious taste and melt-in-your-mouth tenderness. Be sure to visit the [CertifiedHerefordBeef.com](http://CertifiedHerefordBeef.com) blog for this "Parm Crusted Steak with Rainbow Coleslaw and Sweet Potato Strips" recipe.

Celebrity Chef and TV Personality Chef Jonathan Scinto's culinary philosophy is product first, flavors second. Looking for a starring steak to enhance his competitive edge in the upcoming World Food Championships, Chef Jonathan is confident Certified Hereford Beef's (CHB®) tenderness and flavor qualities can take him to the top.

The Long Island, N.Y., native has had a love for experimenting in the kitchen since childhood. After graduating from the New York Institute of



Technology, Chef Jonathan worked for several restaurants and was later hired by Post Perfect to work in its Catering & Client Services department, working with A-list clients.

In October 2014, he auditioned for MasterChef on FOX and was picked as a contestant on Season 6 of the hit TV show. Making a name for himself as a TV personality, Chef Jonathan has also appeared on Food Network Chopped, Amazon Studios Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, ABC's Quantico Season 2, FOX's Blacklist: Redemption, Showtime's Homeland Season 6 and News 12 Long Island Cooking Segments.

He was also chosen by the Food Network and the Cooking Channel to compete on Rooftop Chopped and Iron Chef Showdown, hosted by Ted Allen and Alton Brown.

## Experimenting with flavors

For the past two years, Chef Jonathan has focused on combining Italian rustic flavors and Asian influences to create his concept called "Itasian," as seen on the Food Network several times.

His culinary concept is unique to the business. "Italian and Asian are actually very similar in the rusticness and freshness," he says. "They go together well and came about one day when I was experimenting with flavors."

Chef Jonathan says Itasian is not really a cuisine, but a flavor. "There's certain dishes I'll use with Itasian, but it's really bringing different flavors and cultures together that most people don't think will blend together."

CHB is a natural fit for his concept. "Using Certified Hereford Beef has been fantastic, because the cattle giving us the beef, creates a product so soft and luscious — the spices I use melt into the meat itself."

In a sense, Chef Jonathan stumbled upon the CHB brand. “I learned about CHB when I was doing an internet research, but I knew about the cattle before because my father-in-law worked as a cowboy years ago.”

He was looking for partners to work with for the World Food Championships — the largest competition in Food Sport, where the grand champions of previous years compete for a chance at winning more than \$300,000 in prize money.

“I had several wagyu companies reach out to me, but I really wasn’t looking to use that product because so many chefs are using that now,” he explains. “I wanted something completely different to use in my competition, and that’s when I came across CHB. I was looking for “steak” in the internet search and the CHB brand is what popped up.”

After conversations with CHB team members, Chef Jonathan tried a CHB filet.

“I thought, and this is my personal preference, the filet they sent me was 10-times better than wagyu. It had better texture, flavor and was luscious.” He shared the steak with his wife who he says is a steak eater. “She couldn’t believe how tender it was. She didn’t use a knife. It was ‘fork-cutable.’ We could use our fork to cut it —that’s how soft and tender the filet was.”

Next, he tried a CHB Choice New York strip steak. “The Choice steak was even more tender and delicious,” he says.

In November, Chef Jonathan will compete for the third time in the World Food Championships and his first time entering the steak competition.

“I won the people’s choice award last year in the ‘Taste of America Challenge,’ and this year I wanted to do steak, the toughest category,” he says. “It’s going to be very tough this year with 100 competitors in the category and only 10 people advancing to the next round, but I’m bringing an amazing product, so I’ll have a leg up. We’ll be talking in November about a first-place win.”

### Product and flavor

Other than competing, Chef Jonathan says he often prepares beef for his clients. “I have a lot of clients that love beef and steak and look for highest grade meat possible,” he says. “However, I want to work with not only A-list clients, but people who aren’t educated on different kinds of beef.”


Chef Jonathan has numerous tasting events planned for 2018, focusing on his Itasian flavors. He will be participating at BrunchCon in Brooklyn and is planning to serve more than 2,000 steak and egg samples.

“My goal is to educate people on my flavors and the products I use, and really highlight CHB,” he says. “I want to give people the opportunity to try the best quality meat out there and have a chance

## Follow Chef Jonathan’s culinary journey

 Facebook: [Facebook.com/ChefJonathanS/](https://www.facebook.com/ChefJonathanS/)

 Twitter: [@ChefJonathanS](https://twitter.com/ChefJonathanS)

 Instagram: [chefjonathans](https://www.instagram.com/chefjonathans)

 YouTube: [Chef Jonathan’s Itasian Kitchen](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

to make purchases down the line. I want to get people’s minds flowing about flavor and product.”

When preparing a dish for clients, Chef Jonathan says what’s important is the product and what it can do and the flavor used on that product.

“For example, if you know what a Choice steak can do, you want to highlight the meat and not overdress it or over season it,” he says. “It’s good to be playful and creative, but I look to showcase product. My Itasian cuisine uses different flavor profiles, and my clients have a journey through culinary experiences. That’s what’s great about CHB — it’s tender and the flavor is just absorbed in. I was blown away, and knew I was onto something and that my clients would love this product.”

Focusing on product first and flavor second is what Chef Jonathan does in his own kitchen, as well. “People mistake that as a chef I always eat 5-star cuisine. I like what you like eating. When I cook at home, I eat steak often and enjoy craft hamburgers and bacon.”

He adds, “People are surprised — they think I’m eating caviar and imported lobster tail. That’s how I cook for my clients, but at home I cook for seven people which includes my wife, three daughters, dad and my brother, and we like to have home cooked comfort food as a family.”

### Behind the CHB brand

Local farmers and ranchers behind the CHB brand is what Chef Jonathan appreciates. “When I looked at what the CHB brand is about, I was happy that it’s local farmers and ranchers,” he says. “That’s what I focus on, working in the local community, and I like to shop local markets — that’s what CHB is about.”

Chef Jonathan will be working with the CHB brand this year, showcasing CHB product during events and on social media. You can also find him sharing recipes and cooking tips on the [CertifiedHerefordBeef.com](https://www.certifiedherefordbeef.com) blog.

“We are excited to partner with Chef Jonathan,” says Amari Seiferman, CHB chief operating officer and general manager. “His culinary philosophy of product first and flavor second, along with his blend of rustic and fresh, pairs well with our high-quality, great-tasting beef.”

Chef Jonathan adds, “It’s really been a blessing to work with such a great product. I’ve had a blast with it and it has been a great experience.” **HW**

*...continued from page xx*