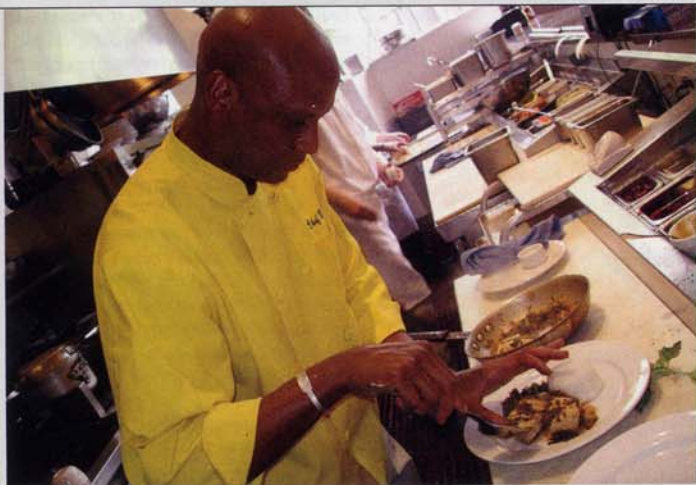


# Home Cooking with Joey Altman

Edward Blyden serves up a stew for his lunch club



Gordon Biersch may have elevated pub cuisine a few notches above bangers and mash, but at **21st Amendment** (563 Second St., 415-369-0900) you'll find soulful, beer-friendly food created by chef Edward Blyden, whose cooking is a robust, pedal-to-the-metal flavor ride. But don't worry—Eddie knows how to drive. Born in Nigeria and raised in Russia, Blyden had an extraordinarily diverse upbringing. He went on to train in some of the top restaurants in Zurich, the Caribbean and New York.

Blyden stays true to his classical training in his *biergarten* fare: house-made bratwurst, spaetzle cified with Hobb's apple-smoked bacon and crispy light fish and chips made with fresh red snapper and fries. When it comes to chilies, his Caribbean knack for spicing up dishes takes your palette to the precipice, forcing you to go back for another bite of his three-chili spiced

Grouper stew



Niman Ranch pork chop or his Jamaican jerk chicken.

At home, Blyden continues a Monday lunch club, a 10-year-old tradition that started in when he lived in Zurich. He prepares a lunch for about of his six foodie friends who supply the beer or wine. The group shares recipes and ideas but mainly *kumushka* (Russian for "gossip"). Here's his recipe for a dish that has become one of the club's favorites.

## Eddie Blyden's Grouper Stew

*Blyden pays homage to his roots in this dish. "Wild greens are used a lot in West African cooking," he says. "This stew is easy, fast and comforting—it's like a jolt of home for me." Serves 10.*

- 2 pounds grouper fillets (or any firm white fish), cut into 4-ounce pieces
- Salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 yellow onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 1/2 habañero chili, seeded and minced
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped garlic
- 6 tablespoons finely chopped ginger
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 3 pounds greens, such as chard or mustard, trimmed and roughly chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons bonito flakes
- 1 tablespoon dried *herbes de Provence*
- 3 fresh tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- 1 1/2 quarts water

Season grouper fillets with salt and pepper; set aside. In a heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium heat, heat the olive oil until hot but not smoking.

Add the onions, celery and chili to the pot, stirring until the onions are soft and translucent, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger and tomato paste and cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes, before adding the greens, bay leaves, bonito flakes, dried herbs and tomatoes. Cook for 5 minutes more.

Add the water, bring to a boil and reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 30 minutes. Add the grouper and simmer for another 10 minutes. Serve over white rice, such as jasmine.

*Joey Altman is the host of Bay Cafe on KRON Channel 4 every Sunday evening.*