OG KUSH: A QUARTER CENTURY OF GAS JOSH D TALKS HOW HE BROUGHT THE STRAIN TO THE MASSES BY JIMI DEVINE
OG KUSH: A QUARTER CENTURY OF GAS

Josh D talks how he brought the strain to the masses

BY JIMI DEVINE

After over 20 years of excitement around OG Kush in Los Angeles, one of the men who spread it to the masses became the most southern grower to win the world championship of outdoor pot.

Josh Del Rosso, or Josh D as he is more famously known, absolutely crushed the mixed light category at The Emerald Cup in 2019, which the competition defines as the cultivation of mature cannabis outdoors or in a greenhouse where supplemental lighting can be utilized. Four of the top 10 entries belonged to Josh D’s Santa Barbara operation. While the Ice Cream Cake took home the top prize, Ghost OG, Motor Breath and the Dynasty OG we featured in our Thanksgiving picks a few weeks prior to the cup also found themselves with a coveted top 10 slot.

With the volume of entries for The Emerald Cup every year, it’s an impressive feat to even get one strain in the top 10. Doing it with four is ridiculous.

But it wasn’t always crazy OG Kush. Del Rosso came west at age 14 from rural New Jersey in 1987; he hadn’t discovered his green thumb yet but already experimented with pot before the move to California.

“I grew up in the middle of nowhere in southern New Jersey,” Del Rosso told L.A. Weekly. “When I moved out to Los Angeles I was pretty upset about moving. Then I found some green bud and I was like, “OK, this was meant to be.”

Now in his mid-40s, Del Rosso told L.A. Weekly: “When I moved out to Los Angeles I was pretty upset about moving. Then I found some green bud and I was like, “OK, this was meant to be.”

As soon as they got the house, they set up a grow only accessible through a trapdoor in Del Rosso’s closet. “So we were in the foundation of the house, it was a really large area. It was perfect.”

The first plants in the space came from Del Rosso’s collection of seeds he’d gathered over the years. Berger would claim to the squad that Florida had the best weed.

“I was like there is no way, this is California,” Del Rosso replied to his partner. Berger said that Del Rosso had to see this variety called Kush. Del Rosso dared Berger to attempt to bring the cut back to California. “Bring this back, I’d like to see this variety you’re always raving about,” he said.

“And so he did,” Del Rosso said with a laugh.
Berger went back to Florida to visit his friends and when Del Rosso arrived at the airport he had a ziplock bag with about 15 cuttings.

Of those cuttings, five ended up being the Bubble Kush. Another five were what we know as OG Kush today. (The remaining plants were a strain called KY, Kush crossed with another ingredient Del Rosso never figured out.)

While all of the Bubble and KY cuttings would produce roots, only one of the precious Kush cuts would survive its transcontinental voyage.

“We grew it up, I took some cuttings, and this is where the entire thing started from in Los Angeles,” Del Rosso said. For the next 14 years, nothing would compare to the finest OG Kush out of Los Angeles, “Del Rosso said. For the next 14 years, nothing would compare to the finest OG Kush today. (The remaining plants were Bubble Kush. Another five were what we know as Bubba Kush. Another five were what we know as OG Kush today.)

Del Rosso now admits in those early days it wasn’t Kush, but that’s what everyone in Los Angeles was hearing about and that’s what they wanted.”

Del Rosso and the small circle with the original OG cut added the OG to differentiate it from the new knockoffs. “To designate that it was really the original Kush from Florida that came from our group of guys,” he explained.

Del Rosso now admits in those early days he didn’t realize it was medicine. The idea of exposing himself and bringing in weight to dispensaries around the turn of the millennium was just simply the opposite of the way he operated.

“But every year it felt like we were being exposed to more benefits from it and it felt like they were being hidden from us,” Del Rosso said. Seeing results for patients suffering from vicious forms of epilepsy and Crohn’s Disease helped the point hit home harder. “I just knew it helped with my attitude. It helped with my balance psychologically and thought “maybe this will click for you, here try this I know it’s illegal. But fuck what they say, always question authority you know? And here we are.”

Del Rosso says Proposition 64 helped with his criminal justice concerns, but the direction the quality of product has taken in the years since is worrisome. We asked if the bar for a permit being set too high ended up hurting the overall quality of weed in the marketplace?

“I think they originally designed it a lot more fair,” Del Rosso said pointing to square footage. “I thought we would all have the same size facility and have a healthy competition out here and it would create a healthy market.

Then the lobbyists get in there, and then they’re saying you can go as big as you want if you have the money to buy up licenses to piggyback off each other.”

Del Rosso points to that moment as what put out the small farmer. “People could afford a 22,000-square-foot space, but they couldn’t afford to compete with someone like us who has 180,000 square feet.”

While the market is seeing a wider downward price trend as cannabis continues to exit the traditional underground market, Del Rosso said when it comes to actual quality cannabis prices are going up.

“I don’t see the whole price drop, that’s for weed that’s not very good,” said Del Rosso.

He said at some bulk producers in the Pacific Northwest he’s heard of prices getting down to $38 a pound. “But for good weed? In Washington? They’re still getting top dollar. Good weed is still going for over $2,000 a pound in Washington and Oregon.”

We asked Del Rosso where he thinks the top-shelf price point will balance out in the years to come? “For decent weed, it should be $40 bucks out the door. For really good weed? Maybe $50 bucks out the door.”

Del Rosso believes the problem is retailers are out of touch with reality as he witnesses them attempt wild margins, almost tripling wholesale prices.

“That’s unfair, I’m over here spending 120 days nurturing a plant to get it to market and within one transaction they’re making three times what I made? That’s ridiculous. I understand people have overhead, but it’s all about selling volume. It’s now about selling the most expensive weed.

A famed indoor grower, when Del Rosso first got the opportunity to move to the greenhouse, he was not excited. “But it gave me the opportunity to provide to the masses at $40 an eighth.” His favorite accounts are the ones that keep the price right there and he thinks everyone wins.

Now Del Rosso not only sits as a generational cannabis influencer from before social media was a thing, but also a world champion.
TIME FOR TEA WITH DAN LEVY
Schitt’s Creek co-creator, star talks final season

BY MICHAEL COOPER

Back in December, before physical distancing started, a not-so-subtle billboard popped up in Hollywood that turned a few heads. Advertising the just released sixth and final season of the groundbreaking and hilarious comedy Schitt’s Creek, the billboard — multiple stories tall and prominently seen on the Sunset Strip — featured show creator, writer and star Dan Levy kissing his TV fiancé, played by Noah Reid, on the mouth.

It instantly became a source of inspiration and, well, pride for many in the LGBTQ community. We flocked there to take selfies in front of it, be it sharing a kiss with our partners in tandem to Dan and Noah’s kiss, or individuals just wanting to snap a photo of the monumental ad for their social media.

In some cases, LGBTQ folks from out of town were stopping by the billboard on their way to or from LAX, remarking how they wished they could see something like this in their own home towns in the Midwest or South (another version of the billboard did appear in Toronto).

“The billboard was something that I knew I wanted from the minute we started talking about the season six campaign. I knew that a lot of our sixth season was going to be dedicated to this impending marriage, so it felt to me like celebrating that couple in a big way could be really special,” Levy says in a phone interview while on self-quarantine in his Los Feliz home. “I knew that I wanted to get a shot of us kissing, and I knew that I wanted that to be put up... I was thinking like best case scenario, we’d get a bus shelter. I did not expect a five-story billboard on Sunset Boulevard.”

While the billboard may be a huge five stories of LGBTQ visibility, it’s only the latest in a long-line of groundbreaking moments Levy and the show have provided for our community. In case you’ve been missing out on one of the funniest shows on TV, the premise centers on the wealthy Rose family — video mogul Eugene Levy, his wife and the other writers called Doyle’s Philan-

Pier sits deserted, the waves crashing against the pilings, the sound you hear is quiet and the only
directional TV sound to add to the waves. At the Santa Monica Pier Seafood Group has expanded to include Cast O’Hara herself, or from a book she gifted him and the other writers called Doyle’s Philan-

“Moira’s practically a drag queen, so it’s no wonder the gays love her so much.”

In terms of the show’s success, we can’t overlook the man responsible not only for giving Dan life but also, for what seems like an open and accepting uprising — his father, Eugene (his sister Sarah also appears on the show as Twyla). “My dad has always been supportive,” Levy explains. “I’ve been very lucky in the sense that my sexuality has never played a part in the way my parents loved me...I think coming from a family that was supportive and accepting really informed the writing and informs the storytelling. I wanted to tell the story of a family and a town that accepts everybody. That’s really been the philosophy from the start.”

The Levys’ open-mindedness and acceptance has definitely translated on screen to the Rose family. And while five-story billboards showing gay love are great, ultimately Schitt’s Creek is so universally appealing because it’s just a great show. LGBTQ folks love it, but so do cisgender straights. The characters are genuine, the stories are relatable and the jokes are smart and witty.

“It’s been pretty extraordinary to read the letters over the years from parents of queer kids who had not necessarily been supportive,” Levy says. “In watching the show, they were sort of given a more intimate look inside the lives of people in our community and they fell in love with the characters. And this shouldn’t be the case, but it helped inform them when it came to the lives of their own children [when] it should really be vice versa.”

Schitt’s Creek’s cast have been performing on Instagram Live to help raise money for their “Schitt’s Creek Gives Back” Go Fund Me, which has so far raised almost $130,000 helping those affected by COVID-19 through Food Banks Canada and Feeding America.
YUNNIE KIM
MORENA’S
MOQUECA STEW

With pantry staples for ingredients, The Albright owner’s recipe is perfect for the lockdown

BY MICHÈLE STUEVEN

While the Santa Monica Pier sits deserted, the carousel is eerily quiet and the only sound you hear is the waves crashing against the pilings, The Albright owner Ynnie Kim Morena is keeping busy and making the best of the home pantry on her Kim Chi Avocado website. In addition to recipes, she also offers an eye-popping selection of wooden grazing boards that feature everything from candy to crudité, cheese, meats and fruits for delivery.

Along with her husband Greg, Morena owns and operates The Albright on the pier under their EST. 1977 Group, a boutique restaurant group specializing in the revitalization of legacy businesses and curated food concepts. Under Morena’s direction, the EST. 1977 Restaurant Group has expanded to include Cast Iron Catering, Pappy’s and Rusty’s.

In 2013, the native Angelena took over the reins of Santa Monica Pier Seafood from her mother, leaving her career in the fashion industry and reopening the iconic spot on the pier as The Albright.

A big believer in the beauty of the pantry, Morena’s recipe for Moqueca Stew consists of ingredients that you may likely already have at home. For more tips from her and our video of the recipe, check out laweekly.com.

MOQUECA STEW

INGREDIENTS:

• 1/2 YELLOW BELL PEPPER, FINELY CHOPPED
• 1/2 RED BELL PEPPER, FINELY CHOPPED
• 1 SHALLOT, FINELY CHOPPED
• 3 CLOVES GARLIC, FINELY CHOPPED
• 2 GREEN ONIONS, CHOPPED (GREEN STEMS ONLY)
• 1/4 CUP CILANTRO, CHOPPED (RESERVE A TABLESPOON FOR GARNISH)
• 1/2 CUP CHOPPED TOMATOES
• 1 LIME, ZEST AND JUICE
• 2 TABLESPOON AVOCADO OIL
• 1 CAN FULL FAT COCONUT MILK
• 1 16 OZ. CAN OF CRAB MEAT
• SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE

DIRECTIONS:

• IN A HEATED SKILLET, ADD OIL AND SAUTÉ SHALLOTS AND GARLIC UNTIL TRANSLUCENT
• ADD THE BELL PEPPERS, TOMATOES AND GREEN ONIONS AND SAUTÉ UNTIL SOFTENED (AROUND 3-4 MINUTES)
• SEASON WITH 2 HEAVY PINCHES OF SALT AND BLACK PEPPER
• ADD LIME ZEST AND JUICE
• ADD CANNED COCONUT MILK AND STIR WELL. BRING THE SAUCE TO A LOW SIMMER
• ADD CRAB MEAT AND CILANTRO. THE CRAB IS ALREADY COOKED SO JUST CAREFULLY FOLD IN MEAT AND CILANTRO, SO THE SAUCE BECOMES WELL INCORPORATED WITH THE CRAB (ABOUT 4-5 MINUTES)
• SERVE OVER BASMATI OR JASMINE RICE AND GARNISH WITH CILANTRO
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