



VITALY PALEY BIO

Chef/Owner - Headwaters, Imperial , The Crown & Paley's Place

Critically-acclaimed chef, accomplished restaurateur, and noted cookbook author, Vitaly Paley has cemented himself as both a leader and a trailblazer in the American culinary scene. Through his award-winning food, creativity, and deep-rooted passion, it's no wonder he is referred to as "The Dean of Chefs," by the Portland, Ore. food community. With more than 25 years experience, a 2005 James Beard Award for "Best Chef Pacific Northwest," and an April 2011 winning battle on *Food Network's* "Iron Chef America" under his belt, the Russian-born and French-trained chef explores the historical significance of food and his heritage through diligent research. Vitaly believes cooking is as much about soul-searching and mood as it is about rigorous technique and constant repetition, "we're always out there, putting our heart and soul on the plate," said Vitaly on *Oregon Public Broadcasting's Think Out Loud*. Vitaly has been instrumental in defining regional Northwest cuisine and is well-known for his clean preparations of local, sustainably-grown ingredients to produce seasonal, perfectly-executed dishes.

In October 2016, Vitaly, along with his wife/partner, Kimberly Paley, opened Headwaters inside the historic Heathman Hotel. He is the third James Beard winning chef to take the helm of the property. The menu is the collaborative effort of Vitaly Paley and Executive Chef Tim Eckard, showcasing local ingredients from Oregon's diverse bounty. Vitaly pays homage to the rich history of the location by reviving the iconic tea court, adding a Russian flare that speaks to his own heritage. Digging deep into the past to develop the Russian tea menu, "what better way to remember your past than through food...the flashbacks keep rolling in, it's like I'm standing next to my grandmother in the kitchen making a dish after dish," Vitaly noted on *Oregon Public Broadcasting's Think Out Loud*. One of the most anticipated restaurant openings of the year, Headwaters has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Sunset Magazine*, *Bon Appetit Magazine*, *The Oregonian*, and *Portland Monthly Magazine*.

In 2012, Vitaly opened Imperial, centered around an impressive wood-fired grill and rotisserie that incorporates use of native hard and fruitwoods. "Day in, day out, Vitaly Paley's restaurant on the bottom floor of downtown's Hotel Lucia is a wood-fired, scratch-made machine that turns out a greater volume of sheer luxury than any other restaurant in Portland," *Willamette Week* noted in their 2016 Best Restaurants guide. Imperial was named *Sunset Magazine's Best Hotel Restaurant in the West* in 2016, *Willamette Week's Restaurant of the Year* in 2015, one of *Food & Wine* magazine's Best New Bars in America 2014, and one of 2013's Top 11 Barbecue and Grill Restaurants by the *Huffington Post's* Steve Raichlen. Always creating, in 2014 Vitaly returned to his childhood roots and launched his Russian pop-up, DaNet, illustrating pre-Soviet Russian cuisine. The popular monthly pop-up dinners contributed to *Portland Monthly's* Restaurant Critic Karen Brooks naming Russian the "Cuisine of the Year." And in 2017, Vitaly opened The Crown, a bar serving up New York style pizzas inspired by his adoration for the city.

Born near Kiev in the former Soviet Union, food has always played a special role in Vitaly's life. He was raised on meals prepared by his grandmother in and atop of the fireplace, made with fresh, farm grown ingredients – tomatoes and strawberries straight from the garden, milk from the weekly delivery, and handmade cheese. Vitaly and his parents immigrated to the United States in the late 1970s for a chance at a better life and more opportunity. The artist-like touch Vitaly brings to cooking, stems from his extensive training as a concert pianist. After attending The

Julliard School, Vitaly decided to shift his focus away from music to food. He landed at World Yacht Cruises where he met French Master Chef Michele Bordeaux who encouraged him to continue his culinary education. Vitaly then earned a Grand Diploma from the French Culinary Institute where he was personally influenced by Julia Child and Jacques Pepin.

In 1995, after working at a two-star Michelin restaurant in France, Vitaly and Kimberly returned to their home in New York City. Shortly thereafter, the Paley's moved to Portland, Ore. and opened Paley's Place Bistro & Bar. The critically-acclaimed restaurant is located within Portland's Northwest district and prides itself on elegant fare that showcases local, sustainably-produced food with Franco-Russian influences. Vitaly and Kimberly published their first cookbook in 2008, *The Paley's Place Cookbook: Recipes and Stories from the Pacific Northwest* (Ten Speed Press). Well-matched wine pairings, evocative photography and features on local food producers round out the book, which has received both national and local media recognition.

Vitaly was nominated as a 2012 and 2013 James Beard Foundation Semifinalist for Outstanding Chef and was named the 2011 StarChefs.com Portland Rising Stars "Chef Mentor of the Year" exemplifying his dedication to giving back to the culinary community. He is active in industry events including Feast Portland dinners for the James Beard Foundation, the International Pinot Noir Celebration, and International Association of Culinary Professionals while also devoting time to countless national, regional and Portland-based charity events. Vitaly Paley and Vitaly Paley Restaurants have earned recognition over the years in national media outlets including *Food & Wine* "Empire Builders" in 2012, *Saveur Magazine's* "Top 100," *The New York Times*, appearing on *The Martha Stewart Show*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Bon Appetit Magazine*, *Wine Enthusiast*, *GQ*, *Oprah Magazine*, *USA Today* and *Travel & Leisure* as well as local support and accolades from local media outlets such as *The Oregonian*, *Willamette Week*, and *Portland Monthly's* "Chef of the Year" in 2012.

Vitaly Paley bridges the gap between culinary generations, providing one-on-one mentorship for many of the country's rising star chefs. He continues to redefine regional and international cuisine, cultivate talent and push boundaries.

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