The Black Pig Meat Company is “the brainchild” of Chefs Duskie Estes and her husband, John Stewart, of Zazu Kitchen and Farm. Duskie and John are first and foremost chefs, but they also have a small farm and process their own charcuterie for the restaurant. They source sustainably grown hogs that they use to make their signature bacon and other pork products, which they distribute through select retail and wholesale outlets from California to New York City.

Restaurant & meat-processing facility

Six days of the week Duskie and John serve their charcuterie and other items on their restaurant’s menu. Every Tuesday, the restaurant closes so Duskie and John can turn the kitchen into a state-inspected “custom exempt” facility to process meat. This allows them to serve their meats on plates or sell by the pound “to go” at the restaurant. John became a California Department of Food & Agriculture processing inspector to facilitate this Tuesday ritual, and regional inspectors visit their operation 2-3 times per month, often unannounced. In contrast to the meats that Duskie and John sell at the restaurant, the meat they sell through distributors must be processed at a USDA inspected facility.

An essential partnership with small farms

Duskie buys her hogs from three small, regional farms and one large farm in Iowa. The three smaller farms (two in California, one in Washington) and the large farm are all careful about what they feed their pigs. Duskie and John widely promote the value of selling quality processed meat (particularly bacon) from animals that are sustainably raised on family farms. The heritage breed pigs they source are well cared for: they are raised without antibiotics or hormones, have vegetarian feed, roam free in pastures, and the sows are not put into farrowing crates to give birth to their piglets. This lets their pigs “just be pigs” and have the freedom to express their “piggyness,” says John. As Duskie emphasizes, “I believe that all animals and especially my pigs should have a great life….and one bad day.”

Making sustainable bacon

The process Duskie and John use for making bacon is done using the highest standards. The end product has a superior flavor compared to the bacon one usually finds on the market—product that is “wet cured” and injected with salt water and “smoked” with liquid smoke in less than a day. Duskie and John’s bacon is instead dry cured with brown sugar for up to 21 days and finished with applewood smoking for another 12 hours. The Sonoma Meat Company and Carlton Farms are the only companies who will cure their bacon this way, using Duskie’s recipe. The result of this careful process is bacon unlike any other—balanced with salt, sweetness and real applewood smoke and a satisfying thick-cut meaty strip.

Charcuterie is the branch of cooking devoted to prepared meat products, primarily pork, such as ham, bacon, and sausage —Wikipedia
While costly, sustainable bacon is in demand

Putting the time and care into their bacon and pork products is not cheap. In fact, Duskie says that their meat is 4–5 times more expensive than equivalent commodity products. For a 12 oz package of bacon, she charges $13–$14 locally, $18 in East Bay stores, and $25 through Williams-Sonoma. Duskie believes consumers need to be educated about the costs of sustainable food; she and John educate customers at the restaurant by providing information about the meat that they serve and the process that goes into raising those animals. She believes their business is successful because she is persistent, committed and willful.

History: from chefs to charcuterie

Duskie and her husband were not always the “King and Queen of Pork” as they have fondly been called. They started off working as chefs in Seattle. The salumi trend was just beginning to surface in the 1980s and 1990s and John wanted to learn how to make salumi from one of the masters. He turned to Armandino Batali, a Boeing engineer who had opened a shop in Seattle called Salumi, a successful shop that quickly had food-conscious Seattleites lining up outside.

When Duskie and John then moved to Sebastopol, California, they bought a small farm and started a garden. They opened Zazu, complete with a garden behind the restaurant. They now supply about 30% of the produce for the restaurant from the garden. Duskie and John started learning how to make charcuterie from Armandino Battali’s son, celebrity chef Mario Batali, and in 2005 started their meat-processing business by supplying The Grateful Palate, a “Bacon of the Month” club, with their salumi. They have been making bacon and other pork products ever since.

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A sample Zazu Kitchen and Farm dinner menu from December 2015.

**nightingale bakery bread w/ dry creek extra virgin olive oil or clover sweet cream butter ... $3.50/basket**

**salumi from john the butcher...**
11 oz. or choose 3 ... 20 or the entire butcher's board! ... 89
a jar of our pickles ... 5 try with a glass of lambrusco!
red, white, + green kimchi coppa di testa
piccante devil's guich rabbit terrine
felino liberty duck pate
sanguinaccio liberty duck ham

**antipasti from the farmer...**
6.5 ea. or choose 3 ... 17 smoked pepper pepperonata
rubies beets, verjus, hazelnut eggplant + cocoa nib caponata

**from the cheesemaker...**
7.5 ea. or choose 3 ... 22.5 weirauch "saint rose" (sheep)
penny royal "boont corners" (sheep + goat)
shaft's blue (cow)
fiscalini cheddar pimento cheese (cow)

**starts**

RODEO JAX, black pig bacon caramel popcorn ... 4
black pig bacon wrapped date + harissa ... 2.5 ea.
liberty duck bun, hoisin, persimmon ... 5.95 ea.
sonoma dry jack caesar ... 14.5 add bocconcini ... +3
burrata bruschetta, chichories, saba, onion strings ... 15.5
a bucket of black garlic chicken wings + u-pick if u-like anise hyssop ... 12
brussels + bacon salad, poetzol ranch apples, marcona almonds, bohemian creamery capriago ... 14.5
lettuce, pomegranates, persimmon, gabriel farm asian pear, reeves hill goat cheese, pistachios ... 14.5
cup of spicy tomato soup + a tiny bellwether cromody grilled cheese sandwich ... 12

**our handmade pasta**
macbryde farm egg noodles, melting leeks, grana padeno, egg yolk ... 17
mostaccioli, short rib + oxtail sugo, backyard rosemary ... 27.5
chitarra carbonara, black pig pancetta, lacinato kale, sebastopol mushrooms, backyard sage ... 25

**mains**
pumpkin risotto, brown butter, backyard sage, preston farm spigarello ... 24.5
SURF + TURF - mussels + lamb merguez, saffron, fennel, backyard meyer lemon ... 27.5
diestel turkey tikka masala, sweet dumpling squash, cauliflower, eggplant, black rice, mint yogurt ... 24.5
liberty duck, preston turnips, farrootto, cranberry chutney ... 29.5
black wattle pork chop, yukon potatoes, preston spigarello, apple + quince chutney ... 29.5
the DIRTY burger, bacon-in-the-burger, liberty duck pate, caramelized onions, cider vinegar chicharron ... 18.5
grilled flatiron steak, point reyes blue cheese ravioli, ruby chard ... 33
45 day aged rib eye, escarole bagna cauda, horseradish gremolata ... 49
porterhouse, grilled romanee caesar, crispy fingerlings ... 85 * (serves 1-2)

**sides**
8 ea. or choose 3 ... 19.5
black pig bacon
rubby chard, chili flake, garlic
escarole bagna cauda
all-american fries + buttermilk dipper

we make our own bacon & salumi from pigs that roam free. we source local, sustainable & ethical meats. we farm in three locations in sonoma county: the barley, macbryde farm in forestville, and davis family vineyards in healdsburg.

**FAMILY STYLE by 48 hour preorder**

the whole beef shank + porcini noodle strogonoff ... 199
includes one "get shanked @ zazu" t shirt serves up to 8-10

a whole honey + chili glazed pig head w/ toast ... 65
serves 8-10 as a starter

because of multiple counterfeit $100 bills within sebastopol, we can no longer accept older versions of this bill without the blue strip. we apologize for the inconvenience.

CDC Ryan Pack Sous Nick Mazzuca Farmer Paul Schuesler Salumist John Stewart Chef Proprietor Duskie Estes
Zazu Kitchen + Farm | 6770 mckinley street, #150 | sebastopol, california 95472
707.523.4814 www.zazukitchen.com