

HOT DATE

Soup's On

SF'S ANDREW FREEMAN COOKS UP A BASH FOR THE JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION.
BY VANESSA BRUNNER

Although he's spent much of his adult life working with the hospitality and food industries—he currently runs his own restaurant-marketing agency—**Andrew Freeman** hasn't quite risen to the ranks of, say, Emeril Lagasse. "My friends don't really believe I can cook, but I can!" says the Panhandle-neighborhood resident. Freeman has spent nearly a decade volunteering as an event organizer for the James Beard Foundation, the national nonprofit that aims to preserve the tradition of American cuisine.

This fall, Freeman will cochair the **James Beard Foundation's Taste America** on **September 28**, a fundraiser commemorating the organization's 20th anniversary (jbfasteamerica.com). A \$250 ticket buys a special dinner at the St. Regis Hotel's Yerba Buena Terrace, prepared by star chefs, including Traci Des Jardins of Jardinière. James Beard, America's first celebrity chef, paved the way for today's superstar-crazed restaurant scene. "Cooking schools are full of young people who dream of becoming a celebrity chef," says Freeman.

Doubts about his culinary prowess aside, Freeman says, "Like James Beard, I love American food. And I make one mean hamburger."

