



SOMETIMES A GREAT STEAK CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

**Is there a defining moment in your life? –
An event that you'll always remember? –
A discovery that is so earth-shattering that things will never be
the same?**

For me, it happened at St. Elmo...

Dear Michael:

My name is Joseph Bentley. You probably haven't heard of me. We food critics are an odd lot, and we operate under cover most of the time.

You see, I thought I knew steak.

After all, I've been in this business for nearly 30 years, and I've eaten at hundreds of the finest restaurants – across America and around the world. But when I discovered St. Elmo Steakhouse in Indianapolis, it was an **epiphany.**

I only **THOUGHT** I knew steak. St. Elmo changed the definition forever. And though I live in Omaha, Nebraska (some call it the steak capital of the world), I do my best to jump on a plane or drive the 9 hours to Indianapolis at least once a month. And what calls to me across the miles is not a woman – not a business opportunity – not a sense of duty. It's a St. Elmo steak. And I'm going to tell you how you can try one for free!

Located near the corner of South Illinois and East Maryland in the heart of downtown Indy – and not far from the famous speedway – is a stately brick building constructed in the late 1800's. It looks substantial and well-kept

like many of the old downtown buildings, but as you get closer you notice a certain level of understated elegance as well.

A tasteful sign announces the presence of this old establishment, yet you might not notice it if you weren't looking. When you swing open the polished mahogany and brass door, you note its thickness and weight – a foreshadowing of the meal to come. The 20-foot ceilings, worn hardwood floors, and immaculate wood paneling invite you back to a less hurried time and place...reminiscent of a turn-of-the-century Chicago saloon. Founded by an old Navy man in 1902, the restaurant was named after the patron saint of sailors, St. Elmo.

It was, and still is, a place where salesmen and tycoons come to seal the deal, where attorneys and politicians strategize and plot, where coaches and players celebrate wins and lament losses, where celebrities come to unwind from a show. Their pictures line the walls – often with a scribbling of kind thoughts and generous comments about the place.

Though elegant and distinguished, it's never stodgy. It's a place where important events are celebrated. Animated conversations abound. You are even free to laugh out loud!

In the mid-90s, St. Elmo was given a multi-million dollar makeover, providing a more customer-friendly and comfortable environment without undercutting the charm of its turn-of-the-century roots. This included building a large, open kitchen viewable by guests in the bar, adding several private dining rooms (which will accommodate from 5 to 170 people), and designing an award-winning 20,000-bottle wine cellar.

AWARD-WINNING

"Best Steak House", "Best Waitstaff" & "Best Restaurant" 2004
[Nuvo - Reader Poll](#)

"Best Steak House in Indianapolis 2004"
[Indianapolis Monthly magazine](#)

"Best Wait Staff Award 2004"
[Indianapolis Monthly magazine](#)

"Critic's Choice 2001"
[Indianapolis Monthly magazine](#)

"Best Award of Excellence" Wine List
[Wine Spectator magazine](#)

But all that is just ambience – and lots of places have that.

So what makes St. Elmo truly unique? It's the steak... (and believe it or not – the shrimp cocktail too...but more about that later!)



Imagine a 10 or 14 ounce center cut Filet Mignon that is delivered to your table *still sizzling*. You can hear it coming from across the room and all eyes follow its progress. Those in the dining room who have not yet been served watch with obvious envy, while those who have eaten nod knowingly at the adventure that awaits you.

The New York Strip, Porterhouse, Rib Eye, and Prime Rib are also outstanding cuts of meat. But there's nothing quite like the St. Elmo Filet. The Filet Mignon comes from the heart of the beef tenderloin. It's an elegant cut known for both taste and texture. But this filet also comes from the highest quality cattle – midwestern and grain-fed. This gives the steak superior marbling which not only creates the distinctive sizzle, but with natural aging, also makes it the tenderest, tastiest piece of beef you've ever experienced.

This superb steak can be cut with a fork, and almost melts in your mouth.

Of course there are many other selections at St. Elmo. Besides the wonderful array of steaks, St. Elmo is also known for its **veal and pork chops, Australian lamb, and generous marinated chicken breasts**. After you eat there several times in the same week, you might enjoy seafood for a change. St. Elmo matches the quality of the best seafood houses in town with **Maine lobster, crab-stuffed prawns, walleye**, and whatever other fresh catches are available that day. But there's still nothing like the steak!

“USDA Prime: Prime grade beef is the ultimate in tenderness, juiciness, and flavor. It has abundant marbling -- flecks of fat within the lean -- which enhances both flavor and juiciness. Prime roasts and steaks are unexcelled for roasting and broiling.” United States Dept. of Agriculture

“I invented the USDA meat grading system. Prime is the best that exists. While working for the government, I wasn’t allowed to comment on any particular restaurant, hotel, or other provider of beef for public consumption. However, now that I’m retired – I can say that not only is USDA prime beef the best in the world – but St. Elmo Steakhouse in Indianapolis is the best I’ve ever seen at preparing it. Somehow they take USDA Prime, and add a touch of magic. Eating a steak at St. Elmo can change your life!”

John Brighton

National Director, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA (ret.)

Denver, CO

The **salads** are fresh and crisp and include one that combines a delightful medley of sliced tomato, onion, and crumbled blue cheese. My personal favorite is THE WEDGE: a chilled iceberg lettuce wedge smothered with creamy blue cheese dressing, blue cheese crumbles, , and chopped tomatoes. Along with salad, your steak might welcome the company of a baked potato, steak fries, or redskin mashed. Extras include sautéed mushrooms, onion rings, creamed spinach, and fresh vegetables.



But there’s one other thing at St. Elmo’s that can almost compete with the steak!

And that’s the **Shrimp Cocktail!**

You haven’t had shrimp cocktail until you’ve had it at St. Elmo Steakhouse. I’m not usually a big fan of horseradish. But I’m a HUGE fan of the amazingly potent cocktail sauce that surrounds the generous serving of plump shrimp in this signature appetizer. Sometimes I drop in just for the shrimp cocktail!

The chefs make their tantalizing sauce fresh each day from their own secret recipe. It’s a taste that will have you crying “Uncle” and loving every minute of it. It’s strong enough to clear the worst head cold or to make grown men weep (for joy that is). I’ve never tasted anything quite like it. And as fast as the jolt hits you – it’s gone. No lingering burn like you get from spicy food. Just a strong wake-up call, followed by sublime satisfaction.

One of my favorite pastimes is to sit and watch people try it for the first time. The uninitiated will invariably treat it like any other cocktail sauce, scooping the shrimp with a generous dollop. When they turn bright red and their eyes start to water – followed by uproarious laughter – the whole place laughs with them. There’s nothing like a meal at the St. Elmo Steakhouse.

After enjoying St. Elmo’s for years, I decided that more people needed to share my delight. This was just too good to keep secret. So I approached the owners, Steve and Craig Huse, with an unusual idea. I said,

“I am in contact with hundreds of people who understand and appreciate good food, travel frequently and widely, and are centers of influence. If you can get these folks to visit your wonderful establishment, the whole world will soon know about St. Elmo Steakhouse.”

So after some brainstorming, Steve and Craig asked me to write you this letter and invite you to St.Elmo’s as their guest! That’s right. During the month of July, you (and a guest if you’d like) are invited to try St. Elmo’s

for yourselves and see if everything I'm saying is true. All you have to do is order a shrimp cocktail at the normal menu price of \$11.95. Beyond that you can order any meal on this delightful menu, along with one bottle of the premium house wine: **Fattoria Le Terraze Rosso Conero 2000**. And you won't be charged a penny! (Of course, I'd recommend you leave a nice gratuity for the outstanding wait staff.)

Menu prices will increase for the first time in four years – beginning in September. Now is the time to visit! I hope I have the pleasure of bumping into you soon at St. Elmo's! I'll be watching for your epiphany when you take your first bite!

Yours truly,

Joseph Bentley
International Food Critic



P.S. All you have to do is bring this letter (and a guest if you'd like) to St. Elmo's during the month of July, enjoy a delicious shrimp cocktail appetizer at the normal price, and you will receive your choice of sizzling steak with all the extras – absolutely free! An invitation like this is unlikely to ever come again, and is only being offered to a select group of individuals. So make your reservations today. You'll LOVE the experience!