Jord Pierce
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You can't write that! I'm not a pussy!
Jord Pierce, the stew vulture who mans
the burners at Euclid Hall, is recounting
the summer he spent in England, working as a
stag at a hoity-toity country hotel and re-

taurant that, upon his arrival, welcomed him
with four naked Latvians lying side by side by side.
“They screamed at me, so I
had to sleep in the hallway,
and I felt so alienated that
I called my mom, crying.
That's the part that you
can't write,” pleads Pierce, who eventually
relents, adding that by the end of his stage,
his naysayers — the same guys who initially
thought he was a “silly American idiot” —
were calling him Captain America.

Pierce, who worked the line at Rioja
for nearly four years under chef Jennifer
Janslinski (who also owns Euclid Hall and
Bistro Vendome with business partner Beth
Gruitch), is arguably one of Denver's top
rising-star chefs. He’s confident, brilliantly
innovative and, at 26, one of the city’s young-
est kitchen kingsnakes to pioneer a line that
turns out what may very well be the most
ambitiously crafted menus in Denver.

When speaking volumes about a kid who
spent three years working at Applebee’s —
and appreciates every second of his tenure
there. “I loved working at Applebee’s. It was
a great job that taught me awesome line
skills, and a great middle step, where mass-
volume, down-and-dirty hard work and
a lightning-fast pace was all part of the job,”
says Pierce, whose first gig as a line monkey
was throwing pies at Dino’s, an iconic Italian
restaurant in Lakewood.

Still, Pierce’s first solid meal as a baby
wasn’t a burger, macaroni and cheese or a
gilled cheese sandwich, but raw fish from
Sushi Den: “Right off the bottle, I was at
Sushi Den, eating steamed sushi rice and
toro tartare.”

Years later, he was on the fast track to a
culinary degree at the Denver campus of
Johnson & Wales University. “I knew that
I loved the restaurant pace and that I loved
food and the kitchen environment, and I
wanted to work on my finesse and technique,
as I went to culinary school to learn as much
as I could,” says Pierce. But culinary school,
he insists, wasn’t nearly as valuable as he’d hoped.
“Knowing what I know now, I think
that culinary school, in general, kind of
teaches the remedial basics to the median,
and I felt like I had to demand a good educa-
tion from the instructors,” confesses Pierce,
who graduated summa cum laude in 2005.

“This is my life, this is what I do, and I
take it very, very seriously,” he says about
his new position at Euclid Hall. “I like being
the keystone of what we’ve set up here, and I
love that there are people falling in love with
Euclid Hall, falling in love with food that
they might be uncomfortable with” — bone mar-
row and blood sausage, for example. “And I
really love the fact that people are putting
a fork in their poutines, even though it’s a
castrastrophe to their body.”

So far, it’s been a tremendous ride for
Pierce, but he’s smart enough to know that
the path to culinary greatness is a lifelong journey.
He addresses that in the interview that fol-
lowers — where he also talks about fulfilling his
dream, body parts, eggs and the egg hustler.

Greatest accomplishment as a chef: Euclid
Hall is my greatest achievement as a chef, by
far. From running the business side to being
the face for the food and creating a family
here, from the people who walk in the front
doors to those who come in through the back,
it’s been like the realization of a goal and
the fulfillment of a dream in a lot of ways.
This is a goal that’s been a culmination of
the last seven years.

Favorite Ingredient: Eggs. They’re a formi-
dable platform on which to demonstrate tech-