

CHEFS THAT SIZZLE

Fresh Food Ideas/Fresh Chef Experience

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Kathy Douglas' love for preparing food started at a young age while cooking and baking beside her mother in Dayton, Ohio.

Culinary Arts wasn't an option during her formative years so she pursued her secondary education in Graphic Design and Strategic Marketing at Central Academy in Cincinnati, Ohio. After 10 years of working as a marketing director for major retail stores, she left the corporate marketing world to start her own firm. Throughout her career, the inspiration of getting a second degree and owning a food-related business was always on her mind. So after 20 years of owning her own firm, she enrolled at Sullivan University where she graduated Summa Cum Laude.

Her experience in entrepreneurship gave her the desire to own a culinary-related business, however, the thought of a consumer-based teaching business occurred while attending the university. Kathy feels she was very fortunate to spend time as a Teaching Assistant for two great instructional chefs at Sullivan - Eugene Bell and Danielle Gleason. Additional inspiration to teach came from her classes with chefs Rob Beighey and Sam Mudd. "I appreciated all the chefs at Sullivan. But I really owe a lot of gratitude to these four; they were an outstanding inspiration. Without them, I would not have created my business model. Each one played a role in helping me form what I am doing today."

Kathy Douglas' business concept, Fresh Food Ideas, develops and executes ideas focusing on the creation of food-based products and food services. The core business emphasizes instructional food preparation programs sold through the flagship product - Fresh Chef Experience. Additional product offerings are extensions created to target Fresh Chef Experience clients. They include Fresh Chef Bakery, offering desserts for the Fresh Chef Experience events and a small catering company, Fresh Food

Ideas Catering, offering small catered private dinners and parties.

Fresh Chef Experience was originally designed to be purely an in-home instructional program with all the food and equipment provided to execute the class. However, it was the response of the first few customers that made Kathy realize they were looking for a party. "All of our cooking classes turn into parties. There is always wine, or cocktails, food, and fun all happening in the safety of someone's home. That's the beauty of doing these at the client's location; everyone just kicks back and enjoys themselves."

While Fresh Chef Experience required an upfront investment in cooking equipment, Kathy felt it was well worth it. "During our cooking classes, we teach everything from prepping raw ingredient to plating the final dish. So we are using all kinds of equipment from knives to pans to sous-vide equipment and everything in between. I figured out early on, if we provide our own equipment there is better control over the quality of the end result. Plus, owning the equipment has made for faster clean up after the event; we just pack and go."

Overcoming logistical issues were also a big part of creating Fresh Chef Experience. Fresh Chef Experience classes needed to not exceed 2 to 2-1/2 hours, so any recipes selected for the menus needed to fit time constraints. "This was a new concept, so I really didn't have much to gauge against. I needed chefs and menus that would maintain profitability. I was lucky and found a few great chefs and we put together a large variety of menu options. Fresh Chef Experience offers 150 menus at three price points. I know that sounds like a lot, but interestingly enough, I found the menus are real "thought starters" for our

clients. Under our guidance, they prefer to mix and match recipes to create their own party."

Outside of cooking parties, Kathy has a strong desire for Fresh Chef Experience to serve the community. She volunteers to be a part of Dare to Care's Cooking Matters/No Child Hungry Program and teaches a 6-week after school class at 3-5 schools per year for Jefferson County High Schools and Middle Schools. As part of the program, Dare to Care Food Bank supplies the students food to take home to prepare the menu they learned.

Additionally, Kathy volunteers for the Food Literacy Project at Oxmoor Farm. She is a guest chef teaching elementary school students a menu at the Farm to Fork after school club and knife skills to the adult directors and summer youth volunteers.



You can also find Fresh Chef Experience teaching classes at Williams-Sonoma in Louisville and Lexington throughout the year – upcoming appearances are posted on the website www.freshchefexperience.com. Kathy's recipe blog, featuring her recipes and food photography, are also found on the website. Additional information about Fresh Chef Experience can also be located at: www.facebook.com/freshchefexperience www.instagram.com/freshchefexperience www.twitter.com/@freshchefkathy

Butter-Poached Lobster Tails with Tarragon Truffle Pappardelle and Spring Pea Puree

Lobster Tails

4 lobster tails
Clarified butter, melted

Pappardelle

1 ½ cups cream
8 ounce box of Pappardelle
2 ounces black truffle butter
2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Kosher salt
White pepper

Pea Puree

2 cups fresh spring peas
½ cup vegetable stock
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice



"This is one of my favorite recipes to teach because it shows the flexibility with a sous vide immersion circulator."

Lobster Tails

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Blanch the lobster tails in boiling water for 1-1/2 minutes. Immediately add to bowl filled with ice water. When cold, remove the shells from the tails – set the shells and the lobster aside in separate bowls. To a container fitted with an immersion circulator, add enough melted clarified butter that would cover all the lobster tails. Set the immersion circulator to 140 degrees. When the butter is heated to temperature, add the lobster tails and poach in the butter for 20-25 minutes. Remove from the butter and place on a warm plate, cover with foil.

Pappardelle

While the lobster tails cook, add the cream to a medium saucepan. Add the lobster shells and bring the cream to a simmer. Simmer for 20 minutes, strain through a fine mesh sieve to remove the shells. Keep the cream warm, discard the shells. Heat a large pot with boiling water. Add a handful of salt and cook the pasta according to the package directions. Strain the pasta.

In a large sauté pan over medium low heat, melt the truffle butter, whisk in the cream. When combined, add the tarragon, lemon, and a ¼ teaspoon of kosher salt. Bring to a simmer. Taste and adjust seasoning with kosher salt and white pepper. Add the pasta and stir gently to mix thoroughly. Keep warm.

Pea Puree

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add the fresh peas and blanch for one minute. Strain off the water and add the peas to a high-speed blender. Add the stock, salt, olive oil and lemon juice; blend until very smooth. Adjust the seasoning. Add to a saucepan, cover and keep warm on low until ready to serve.

