

Carolyn's Cuisine spreads the passion of her cooking

Abrams' business blends kitchen skills, hospitality experience

By Deb Silverthorn

Carolyn's Cuisine, born of a lifetime passion of cooking for family and friends, makes dining in your home as easy as checking the boxes. From preparation to presentation, Abrams is known for her personal style, her seasoned — literally and figuratively — recipes and a delivery of love and care for her clients.

Abrams' menus include gluten-free, paleo, vegetarian and myriad other special diets. She's had clients with significant medical issues, making mealtimes still something to look forward to. Leaving out the bad foods, but always leaving a good taste in the client's mouth, Abrams delivers and caters simchas and special events of 100 guests or fewer.

"Bring me an idea, and I'll bring it to life on your dinner plate," Abrams said.

Weekly offerings are available for one or more nights per week, with customers choosing from posted menus or a la carte. Flexibility is the key to her success, Abrams enjoys working with clients' schedules and needs.

"I'm excited about what I do every single day, and I love it," she said. "While some staples remain, I'm always trying new recipes — updating and upgrading items — bringing the best tastes from around the world to my clients."

A Dallas native, and fourth-generation Congregation Shearith Israel member, Abrams is the daughter of the late Anita and Charles Marcus and sister of Fraser. She's a graduate of Hillcrest High and a former BBYO and USY member.

Abrams met her husband, David, in 1985; the couple was introduced by Mark Kreditor. Their first date was at a Joys of Jewish Learning class. The couple has a son, Samuel, who enjoys making his way through the kitchen with his parents.

A Life Member of Hadassah, Abrams has been involved with Shearith Israel's Sisterhood and the National Council of Jewish Women. She has donated her goods to several organizations for their auctions.

A fan of the theater and onstage as a youngster, Abrams was convinced by her uncle to get

a degree in hotel management. "Just in case that theater thing doesn't work out," he told her. With said degree from the University of Denver in hand, Abrams began her career with Hyatt Hotels and later with Chuck E. Cheese. She then spent 20 years working with Phil Golman, her uncle and owner of Phil Golman Foods, as a sales manager serving hotels, synagogues and other entities. After additional years with U.S. Foods and then Bassham Foods, it was time for Abrams to reinvent herself.

"My friends and family always told me I was a great cook, and I'd done some small catering jobs," she said. "It was time to 'go for it' and my executive-chef-in-my-own-kitchen business was begun."

Abrams creates weekly menus, emailing them to her customer base, who must respond by Friday for the following week. Each meal includes a soup or salad, an entrée and two side items. Desserts are available at a separate charge. Abrams' salads vary from field greens with pistachios, figs and goat cheese with an agave vinaigrette, to an Israeli salad, to caprese on skewers.

Meals are delivered Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays in containers that will keep fresh for three to four days or that can be frozen for later use. Abrams always includes instructions for how to reheat and recommended preparation and serving tips.

Meal options can be made from two soups, such as sweet potato or black bean, and a choice of six or more entrées that might include Moroccan beef kabobs, soy and ginger salmon, butternut squash and beef stew, cheese enchiladas and chicken curry, and from eight sides that may feature quinoa cakes with sun-dried tomatoes and cheese or roasted vegetables.

"We've always known Carolyn to be a great cook and with our extremely busy lives, both professionally and in the service and volunteer work we do, having a personal chef each week is both a luxury and a necessity," said Louis Zweig, whose family loves Abrams' pistachio salmon, eggplant parmesan, vegetables and salad with figs.

Abrams has prepared receptions for Temple Emanu-El, including a number of Friday



Carolyn Abrams, a fourth-generation Dallasite, loves for her clients to be happy. "The meal plates are my canvas and I like to 'paint' creatively."

night Oneg welcome events. "Carolyn always has great ideas and beautiful platters that are always as delicious as they are artsy and decorative," said Sharon Willey, who, on behalf of the Women of Reform Judaism, coordinates receptions at Temple Emanu-El.

Her event menus include roasted lemon rosemary chicken, sweet and sour or beer brisket, pistachio salmon with many vegetables and, for dessert, pecan bars, bread pudding, dark chocolate truffles or a flourless chocolate cake — like the one she first made David 31 years ago.

"I used to cook with my mom when I was young, and she'd



Photos: Courtesy Carolyn Abrams

Rabbi Shira Wallach of Congregation Shearith Israel was in for a treat when Carolyn Abrams delivered a special birthday meal. Abrams delivers meals and caters some events.

always tell me I'd improved on her recipes. I've never taken a recipe at face value because I love to make each one my own," said Abrams, who hopes that when people sit down to her meals, they feel the homecooked touch.

"I love for my clients to be happy. The meal plates are my canvas and I like to 'paint' creatively."

For more information or to order from Carolyn's Creative Cuisine, visit carolynscuisine.com or call 214-597-3992.

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