

Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining

Cooking is for Everyone

By Susie Iventosch



Dianna-Davis Condon teaches Del Rey students Kathryn Silveira (middle) and Riley Hummell (left) how to make apple galettes with puff pastry and crème Chantilly in her after-school cooking class Photo Susie Iventosch

Cooking isn't just for moms and dads, anymore. I am continually impressed by the number of school-aged children who are big fans of The Food Network. Every day I hear about a young foodie, who spends more time watching Iron Chef, Alton Brown and Big Daddy's House than cartoons ... and I love it! They're writing school reports about famous chefs and tagging along with mom and dad on excursions to the farmers' market. It follows that youth cooking classes are very popular offerings for after school enrichment programs these days.

Dianna Condon of Orinda is a partner in Savory Affairs, a local business that specializes in catering and personal gourmet meal services, as well as cooking classes for adults and kids alike. She says her cooking classes at Del Rey Elementary School fill up quickly.

"The kids are really interested in learning," she said. "I think the Food Network has had a huge impact on them. I love seeing the ear-to-ear grins on the faces of my clients while they are learning to cook or are eating really good food."

Orinda parent Jen Weizmann saw the cooking class in the enrichment program last year, and since her son Kieran, 8, has always been interested in cooking, she tried to sign him up only to discover the class was full.

"Kieran was really disappointed," she said. "So, this year, I watched for it and signed him up early. Now, he's in his second

eight-week session and loving it!" Weizmann says both of her boys are really into cooking. Cayden who is 6, is still too young for the series, but he was able to do a special kindergarten class last year around Thanksgiving. They love watching the Food Network and cooking and also enjoy raising vegetables in the family garden. They like to try to find recipes that include the produce they grow at home, too.

"Two years ago, the boys got a KitchenAid from Santa Claus and I have to ask them to use it," Weizmann pointed out. "And for Christmas this year, they insisted we buy a deep fryer for my husband!"

Kieran's favorite Food Network shows are the Iron Chef and Alton Brown.

"They're funny and they make cooking seem like fun," he said. "My teacher, Dianna, also makes it fun. I like rolling out dough and chopping vegetables, but my favorite was the coconut macaroons ... dipped in chocolate!"

Kieran didn't even like coconut before he made macaroons in cooking class.

He really likes Tyler Florence's mashed potatoes, because "you cook the potatoes in milk and it makes them taste richer."

For his school project, he is writing a speech about Mario Batali.

"You're supposed to write a biography about someone," he explained. "It has to be three to five minutes. Someday I'd like to go to

Mario's restaurant."

When asked what piece of equipment was missing from his family's kitchen, Kieran said they don't have a food processor, which he'd like, but also he thought it would be nice if Alton Brown would come to his house and give him an outdoor kitchen, like he did for someone on television one time. That way he and his mom could hang out with guests rather than retreat to the kitchen when they're cooking for parties!

Hmmm ... maybe Alton Brown could stop by my house on the way!

Condon who changed careers midlife, began her professional culinary training seven years ago, when she signed up for a cooking externship program jointly conducted by Viking Home Chef and the California Culinary Academy. That's where she met her business partner, Carl Drosky, but it wasn't

don taught at Viking in addition to offering local classes for adults and children in the Orinda area and "cooking" birthday parties.

"Ironically, we both followed our passions to the same spot, and last year decided to collaborate in all aspects of the business," Drosky noted.

The gourmet meal service, designed for people who want a tasty, healthy, high-quality meal ready to eat when they are, offers three entrees each week in addition to several side dishes, and a weekly soup. Savory Affairs caters events from a dinner party of 12 to large events for 100. Cooking classes are conducted for youth and adults, and birthday parties for each category.

"What I enjoy about working with clients in the Lamorinda community is that they allow me to share my passion for food with them," Drosky mentioned. "When I'm teaching them cooking tips in a



Tomato Tart in progress

Photo courtesy Savory Affairs

until recently that they teamed up with Savory Affairs.

"For about 18 years I was in sales of robotic machines for the medical industry," Drosky said. "I was looking to make a career change, and since I've always enjoyed working with food, I signed up for the 12-week essential series. Every week we learned a different cooking technique."

After completing the program, Drosky began teaching at Viking Home Chef and later opened his catering business and gourmet meal service, while Con-

don taught at Viking in addition to offering local classes for adults and children in the Orinda area and "cooking" birthday parties.

Whether it's children or adults, they usually become friends as well."

Dianna feels the same way about her work.

"When I have given someone a positive glimpse into cooking and sharing food it feels wonderful. I can't think of a better way to bring family and friends together. People love food!"

For more information about Savory Affairs, please visit: <http://www.savoryaffairs.com/>

Savory Affairs Tomato Tart

- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 1 tablespoons thinly sliced chives
- 1 pound firm, ripe tomatoes of even size and shape
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ teaspoons ground pepper
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup sherry vinegar
- 2 medium shallots, finely minced
- 1 sheet puff pastry

This recipe is available on our web site. Go to: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com> Susie can be reached at suziven@hughes.net

- Preheat oven to 400.
- Whisk together sour cream and chives in a small bowl. Chill until needed.
- Core the tomatoes and slice lengthwise into quarters. Remove seeds.
- Gently and thoroughly mix together tomatoes, salt, pepper, thyme, garlic and olive oil in a medium bowl.
- In a 7 inch, ovenproof sauté pan, combine butter, brown sugar, vinegar and shallots. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer and reduce by half. Mixture will be dark and syrupy. Set aside to cool.
- Arrange tomato wedges, cut side down, in a circle in the sauté pan. Fill in the center with 2 - 3 wedges. Pour remaining sauce on top.
- Return sauté pan to medium heat and cook until liquid from tomatoes has evaporated (6 - 8 minutes). Remove from heat and set aside for 5 minutes.
- Cut a 9 inch circle from the puff pastry. Place over the tomatoes and tuck the edges into the pan. The syrup and pan are hot. Be careful.
- Place pan in the oven and bake for 25 minutes or until pastry is golden brown.
- Remove from oven and let rest for 5 minutes.
- To unmold, place top side of a plate over the pan and quickly invert the pan and plate.
- Lift the pan off the tart and reposition any tomatoes that may have moved out of position.
- Cut tart into wedges and top with the sour cream mixture.
- Serve immediately. Serves 4

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LAMORINDA's Restaurants

--- updated February 18, 2009 ---

American			
Bistro	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7108	
Chow Restaurant	53 Lafayette Cir, Laf	962-2469	
Quiznos	3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-0200	
Ranch House	1012 School St, Mor	376-5127	
Terzetto Cuisine	1419 Moraga Way, Mor	376-3832	
The Cheese Steak Shop	3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-1234	
BBQ			
Bo's Barbecue	3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7133	
Burger Joint			
Flippers	960 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-1567	
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	400 Park, Mor	376-8888	
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	76 Moraga Way, Ori	254-8888	
Café			
Express Cafe	3732 Mt. Diablo Blvd # 170, Laf	283-7170	
Ferrari - Lucca Delicatessens	23 Lafayette Cir, Laf	299-8040	
Geppetto's cafe	87 Orinda Way, Ori	253-9894	
Rising Loafer	3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd Ste B, Laf	284-8816	
Susan Foord Catering & Cafe	965 Mt. View Drive, Laf	299-2469	
California Cuisine			
Metro Lafayette	3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-4422	
Shelby's	2 Theatre Sq, Ori	254-9687	
Chinese			
Asia Palace Restaurant	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor	376-0809	
Chef Chao Restaurant	343 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-1740	
China Moon Restaurant	380 Park St, Mor	376-1828	
The Great Wall Restaurant	3500 Golden Gate Way, Laf	284-3500	
Hsiangs Mandarin Cuisine	1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori	253-9852	
Lily's House	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf	284-7569	
Mandarin Flower	581 Moraga Rd, Mor	376-7839	
Panda Express	3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-0288	
Szechwan Chinese Restaurant	79 Orinda Way, Ori	254-2020	
Uncle Yu's Szechuan	999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf	283-1688	
Yan's Restaurant	3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-2228	
Coffee Shop			
Millie's Kitchen	1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf	283-2397	
Squirrel's Coffee Shop	998 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-7830	
Village Inn Café	204 Village Square, Ori	254-6080	

Continental			
Petar's Restaurant	32 Lafayette Cir, Laf	284-7117	
Vino Restaurant	3531 Plaza Way, Laf	284-1330	
Duck Club Restaurant	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7108	
French			
Chevalier Restaurant	960 Moraga Road, Laf	385-0793	
Hawaiian Grill			
Lava Pit	2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori	253-1338	
Indian			
Swad Indian Cuisine	3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-9575	
Italian			
Giardino	3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-3869	
Knox Restaurant, Lounge	3576 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-5225	
La Finestra Ristorante	100 Lafayette Cir, St. 101, Laf	284-5282	
La Piazza	15 Moraga Way, Ori	253-9191	
Mangia Ristorante Pizzeria	975 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-3081	
Michael's	1375 Moraga Way, Mor	376-4300	
Mondello's	337 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-2533	
Pizza Antica	3600 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-0500	
Postino	3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-8700	
Ristorante Amoroma	360 Park St, Mor	377-7662	
Japanese			
Asia Palace Sushi Bar	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor	376-0809	
Blue Ginko	3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-9020	
Kane Sushi	3474 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-9709	
Niwa Restaurant	1 Camino Sobrante # 6, Ori	254-1606	
Serika Restaurant	2 Theatre Sq # 118, Ori	254-7088	
Tamami's Japanese Restaurant	356 Park St, Mor	376-2872	
Yu Sushi	19 Moraga Way, Ori	253-8399	
Jazz Dinner Club			
Joe's of Lafayette	3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Laf	299-8807	
Mediterranean			
Petra Café	2 Theatre Sq # 105, Ori	254-5290	
Oasis Café	3594 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-8822	
Turquoise Mediterranean Grill	70 Moraga Way, Ori	253-2004	
Mexican			
360 Gourmet Burrito	3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1270	
El Charro Mexican Dining	3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-2345	
El Jaro Mexican Cafe	3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-6639	
La Cocina Mexicana	23 Orinda Way, Ori	258-9987	

Mucho wraps	1375-B Moraga Way, Mor	377-1203
Baja Fresh Mexican Grill	3596 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8740
Celia's Restaurant	3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8288
El Balazo	35180 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-8700
Maya Mexican Grill	74 Moraga Way, Ori	258-9049
Numero Uno Taqueria	3616 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1333
Pizza		
Mountain Mike's Pizza	3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-6363
Mountain Mike's Pizza	504 Center St, Mor	377-6453
Pennini's	1375 Moraga Rd, Mor	376-1515
Round Table Pizza	361 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-1411
Round Table Pizza	3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-0404
Village Pizza	19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori	254-1200
Zamboni's Pizza	1 Camino Sobrante # 4, Ori	254-2800
Sandwiches/Deli		
Bianca's Deli	1480 Moraga Rd # A, Mor	376-4400
Europa Hofbrau Deli & Pub	64 Moraga Way, Ori	254-7202
Kasper's Hot Dogs	103 Moraga Way, Ori	253-0766
Noah's Bagels	3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-0716
Orinda Deli	19 F Orinda Way, Ori	254-1990
Subway	396 Park St., Mor	376-2959
Subway	3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf	284-2627
Subway	Theatre Square, Ori	258-0470
Seafood		
Yankee Pier	3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-4100
Singaporean/Malaysian		
Kopitiam	3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1653
Steak		
Casa Orinda	20 Bryant Way, Ori	254-2981
Tea		
Patisserie Lafayette	71 Lafayette Cir, Laf	283-2226
Tea Party by Appointment	107 Orinda Way, Ori	254-2206
Thai		
Amarin Thai Cuisine	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd # B, Laf	283-8883
Baan Thai	99 Orinda Way, Ori	253-0989
Royal Siam	512 Center Street, Mor	377-0420
Siam Orchid	23 Orinda Way # F, Ori	253-1975
Vietnamese		
Little Hearty Noodle, Pho & Pasta	578 Center Street, Mor	376-7600

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