



HEART TO HEART

a conversation with

Anna Quindlen

Chef Showcase Participants

Michele Leff – 12th Street Catering – www.12stcantina.com

For over 25 years, 12th Street Catering has brought our passion for food and quality service to our Philadelphia area clients. As a family-owned business, we understand that your event needs to reflect your style. We listen to your needs and desires and work with you to create a custom menu that you will be proud of and your guests will enjoy. Our 25-plus years of experience allows us to provide you with an exceptional culinary experience that is unique to the occasion. We also know that any event takes time, planning, and quick resolution of unforeseen glitches. Our experienced staff are proactive and friendly--fretting about the details so you don't have to.

Alison Barshak – Alison at Blue Bell – www.alisonatbluebell.com

Chef Alison Barshak, who earned a national reputation as the debut chef at Striped Bass the year it was awarded Esquire's coveted title "the best new restaurant in the country," opened her sophisticated suburban bistro in May 2003. Now four years old, Alison at Blue Bell, a liquor license & BYOB, is drawing Center City Philadelphians and New Yorkers to Blue Bell, PA. They're coming for Barshak's contemporary American cuisine with Mediterranean, Southwestern and Asian influences, with an emphasis on seafood. Barshak interacts with customers, from the open kitchen and by walking around the cozy 65-seat restaurant, and 20-seat outdoor veranda, making it a personal experience for the chef and her diners.

Raelyn Harman – Bistro Cassis – www.pondrestaurant.com

Pond Restaurant and Bistro Cassis are new dining experiences on the Main Line. We serve cuisine from around the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. Seconds from the Route 476 and Route 30, our newly renovated dining rooms set in a four season landscape create the feeling of stepping away from the ordinary. The Contemporary French and Mediterranean cuisine prepared by award winning Chef Abde Dahrouch, (Best of the Main Line, Main Line Today; Best of the Best, County Lines; Best of Life, Main Line Life), will delight any palette and is certain to become an instant favorite for casual diners and fine food and wine connoisseurs alike.





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Maria Cain – Bredenbeck's Bakery - www.bredenbecks.com

Bredenbeck's Bakery & Ice Cream Parlor is a full line sweet bakery that has been in the Philadelphia area since 1889. Our master bakers take pride creating everything from scratch, using only the finest, top quality ingredients. We bake like you would in your own kitchen. The ice cream parlor serves hand-dipped sundaes, milkshakes, and cones, and features rich Häagen Dazs and Bassetts ice cream and light Dannon frozen soft-serve yogurt. Bredenbeck's is known locally and nationally for its handmade butter cookies (the widest selection in Philadelphia!), fancy dessert miniatures, special occasion tortes and custom designed wedding cakes.

Grey Heck – Cake

Open all day for sweets, Cake Bakery also offers lunch and breakfast hours on weekdays and brunch on weekends. The mealtime offerings are, for the most part, simple: fruit and granola, grilled cheese and chicken salad. But dismissing the ordinary-seeming menu would mean missing out on savory treats like a fluffy frittata of smoked cheddar and caramelized onion with pepper-dusted home fries or an autumnal salad of wheat berries, roasted beets, butternut squash, goat cheese and dried cranberries. A meal here is not complete without at least one treat from the case. The chocolate pecan tartlet has the gooey underpinnings of a pecan pie, but contains its stickiness in a prim chocolate crust; a frangipane tart's buttery pate sable encircles soft almond paste studded with sour cherry. Clearly, Cake has not forgotten its original mission — and neither should you.

Maki Evans – Cupcakes Gourmet - www.cupcakesgourmet.com

From our Signature Double Dark Chocolate to our trendy Chai Latte cupcakes, love is in the details at Cupcakes Gourmet. All our cupcakes are specially prepared with the finest gourmet ingredients such as premium French-chocolate cocoa, Nielsen – Massey pure Madagascar Bourbon vanilla, and real dark chocolate sprinkles.





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Ellen Yin – **Fork** – www.forkrestaurant.com

Fork is a nationally acclaimed New American bistro offering delicious food that is seasonal, fresh and inventive. The menu is printed daily and reflects international influences from around the world. Fork uses only the highest quality ingredients, many of which are supplied by local farmers from throughout the Philadelphia area. Part of Fork's allure is its hip, stylish, sophisticated interior, where the dining experience is anything but stuffy and uncomfortable. Fork's hand-painted chandelier shades catch your eye as you look above the cast-concrete bar. Hand-painted velvet-patterned curtains fall gracefully from ceiling to floor, adding to the restaurant's comfortable, friendly setting. Since opening, Fork has received the praise of many local and national publications, including the New York Times, USA Today, Town and Country, Food and Wine, Wine Spectator, Zagat's and Gourmet. Fork's lunch and brunch menu have been recognized by Philadelphia Magazine as being the best in the City. And whether you are planning on dining with us, or just interested in a cocktail, stop by and try out our highly praised wine list - winner of Philadelphia Magazine's "Best of Philly" award for "Wine List with Real-World Prices."

Ellen Davis – **FruitFlowers, Incredibly Edible Delites** – www.fruitflowers.com

FruitFlowers bouquets make beautiful and tasteful gifts and are unique party centerpieces. Often imitated but never duplicated, FruitFlowers bouquets are perfect for birthdays, hospital gifts, anniversaries or simply as a way of saying "thinking of you".

Margaret Kuo – **Margaret Kuo's** – www.margaretkuos.com

Known for our authentic Chinese and Japanese cuisine, Margaret Kuo's award winning restaurants have always been a favorite among dining connoisseurs. We invite you to a memorable experience of quality Asian cuisine in a culturally romantic setting.





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Kim Alexander – Great Harvest Bread Co. - www.greatharvestwayne.com

We are a local, family bakery making the best in whole grain and specialty breads, muffins, scones, cookies and many other baked goods from “scratch” everyday. We get up before the sun, but that’s how we can have all our products available for you, our customers, on your way to school, work or to stop and visit a special friend. We grind Montana-grown wheat daily and make our own fresh whole wheat flour. We bake our breads and other baked goods from scratch and use no artificial preservatives. Our process creates moist, flavorful breads that taste wonderful and retain their freshness for 8 to 10 days. Nutritionally, these whole grain products just can’t be beat.

Rosemary Tran – Melograno Tuscan Bistro

It's not that the folks who regularly patronize this snug Italian bistro don't want you to discover it for yourself, but after taking one meal at Melograno you'll selfishly agree that this is one of those places you hope never loses its "off-the-radar" quality. Subtly dressed with wooden tables, hardwood floors, fresh flowers, bare white walls and an open kitchen, Melograno has the look and feel of the little neighborhood eateries found in Europe. And the food, it's safe to say, could give any of those places a run for their money – especially the mashed potato-stuffed ravioli and bistecca alla fiorentina.

Meridith McLoughlin – Meridith’s – www.meridiths.com

Combining old-world European decor with a Tuscan flair, MERIDITH'S Restaurant is a comfortable bistro environment. Specially selected evening entrees are offered to compliment daily offerings including ginger salmon, varying risotto selections and home-made gnocchi. The menu is versatile with poultry, meat, fish and pasta selections and MERIDITH'S uses only the finest fresh ingredients. All offerings are hand-made on site, including fresh baked goods from MERIDITH'S own ovens. Winning "Best of the Main Line" awards in 2003, 2004, and now for 2005, owners Meridith and George McLoughlin know the restaurant business and their clientele well.





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Janet Meeker – **Philadelphia Fish & Co.**– www.philadelphiafish.com

That Janet and Kevin Meeker turned their attention to seafood was no accident. Janet was born in Connecticut and raised on New England seafood. She and Kevin met at the University of Maine. Janet was getting her masters in social work - lessons which have come in handy in the restaurant business - and Kevin was studying architecture. But Kevin had already been bitten by the restaurant bug. A native of Cherry Hill, NJ, Kevin had traveled the world, cooking and tasting his way through the Caribbean, South America, North Africa, and Hawaii. He developed a love for seafood prepared with ethnic ingredients.

Josephine Leone – **Ristorante San Marco** – www.sanmarcopa.com

Owners Leo and Josephine Leone are justifiably proud of their establishment, which occupies an expanded nineteenth century schoolhouse on a small hill where Bethlehem Pike intersects Dager Road. They purchased the property in 1998. They named it after their baby son, Marc, and set out to create the restaurant of their dreams.

Danielle Fagnani – **Sprazzo Gelato Dolci Espresso Bar**
www.sprazzocafe.com

Anyone who visits Italy is immediately drawn in by the social ritual of enjoying coffee and dessert, especially the Fagnani family, because it is so much a part of their Italian-American heritage. As travelers through Italy, one cannot ignore the essence and aromas of coffee spilling out into the streets from numerous cafes. The desire for Italians to stop and spend time sharing food and drink was the Fagnani family's inspiration for Sprazzo.





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Susanna Foo – Susanna Foo Chinese Cuisine - www.susannafoo.com

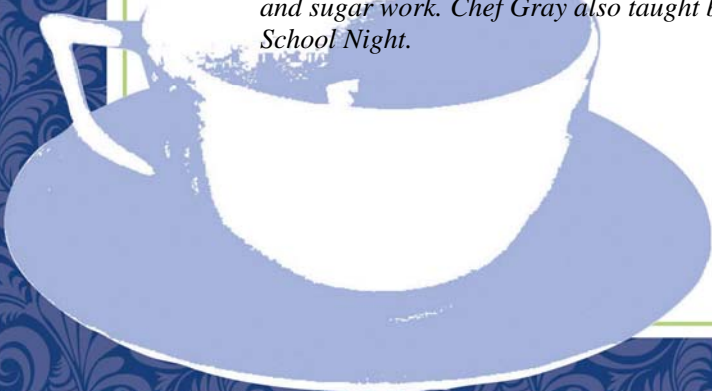
Susanna Foo Chinese Cuisine is located in Center City Philadelphia and is a cornerstone of the prestigious restaurant row. Fully accommodating for public and private dining, Susanna Foo is the ideal location for your next event. From an intimate one-on-one dinner to the most important meeting of the year, Susanna Foo will spare no effort to make your visit an unforgettable experience. Our experienced staff provides the utmost in professional service and care with a variety of options, including a premier Chef's Table (8 to 12 guests), private/banquet rooms (15-100 guests), and of course, our famous public dining room.

Suzette Bowen– Suzette's Sweet Sensations - www.suzettesweetsensations.com

Suzette's SWEET SENSATIONS is a boutique bakery specializing in cakes and desserts. We take tremendous pride in being able to create virtually any cake that you can imagine, for any occasion. From the sophisticated and complex to the simple but elegant, from fun to whimsical, whether for weddings or children's birthday parties, let us make the cake a highlight of your event.

Eileen Gray – The Cake Art Studio - www.cakeartstudio.com

The Cake Art Studio is owned and operated by Eileen Gray. Eileen has been a pastry chef for over 15 years. She graduated with highest honors from The Restaurant School in Philadelphia where she earned a degree in Pastry Arts. She was selected class valedictorian by her chef instructors. After graduation Chef Gray worked with Master Pastry Chef Gunther Heiland at Desserts International. She went on to become the assistant Pastry Chef at The Hotel Atop the Bellevue and was the Pastry Chef at A Taste of Britain for 8 years. While working at A Taste Of Britain, Chef Gray specialized in making traditional English wedding cakes and developed her interest in the British/Australian style of cake decorating and sugar work. Chef Gray also taught baking and tea-tasting classes for the Main Line School Night.





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Lauren Smotrys – **Velvet Sky Bakery** - www.velvetskybakery.com

Velvet Sky, located in the quaint neighborhood of Jenkintown, is a modern style of bakery that is making its way across the country. Throw out everything antiquated about what you think passes for baked goods, and discover why Velvet Sky is the freshest bakery in the area. Loads of shortening and big cans of pie filling be gone! Here we use butter (literally, tons of it), sugar, eggs, fresh fruit, and all of the finest baking ingredients on the market. Our chocolates are from Belgium and the Netherlands, not the middle of Pennsylvania. Oh, and as for variety, how is more than forty types of cupcakes? Need a cake for your next event, we do that too, even in peanut butter. From fondant cakes to our signature cupcake towers, Owners Lauren Smotrys and Chef Pete Zelem make sure its better in the clouds at Velvet Sky Bakery.

Melissa Brannon – **Uncommon Taste Catering**– www.uncommontaste.net

Uncommon Taste Catering is creating unique and unforgettable events. Combining cutting edge cuisine with impeccable service for rave reviews and repeat performances. Exciting food with intricate flavors, we are passionate about our distinctive celebrations.

Judy Wicks – **White Dog Café** – www.whitedog.com

The White Dog Cafe is located in three adjacent Victorian brownstones in the University City section of Philadelphia. Known for our unusual blend of award-winning cuisine and social activism, the cafe presents numerous events throughout the year which please palates while raising consciousness. Visit our website to find out how we derived our name, read our tail-wagging menus, learn about our Sister Restaurants in the Philadelphia area and around the world, join a community service project or how we take a stand on social issues.

