

Bernardo's Restaurant in Hanson hosts cooking classes

Hanson restaurant owner teaches customers how to whip up scrumptious 'meals-in-minutes'

Photos



Maureen McCarthy/GateHouse News Service

Chef Bob Cioffi, owner of Bernardo's Restaurant in Hanson, prepares various chicken dishes in his restaurant kitchen for 29 student chefs at a January cooking demonstration.

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Posted Mar 02, 2009 @ 01:26 AM

Last update Mar 02, 2009 @ 01:38 AM

HANSON — Chef Bob Cioffi, owner of Bernardo's restaurant in Hanson, is spicing up business by hosting monthly cooking demonstrations in his home-away-from-home: The Bernardo's kitchen.

"My style of cooking is to fit in within the perimeters of added value and variety," Chef Bob said before the opening of a recent cooking demonstration. "The premise of the class is to show people you can do a lot with less."

Students of all cooking levels are learning how to whip up scrumptious "meals-in-minutes," satisfying the most discriminating taste buds and pocketbooks.

"The class gives people a bird's eye view of how a commercial kitchen works and how simplistic multiple entrées can be created and prepared at home," Cioffi said. "I show people a lot of variety, whether pasta, seafood or chicken, while eliminating their fear of experimenting."

During last month's class, Cioffi welcomed 29 student cooks into his pristine kitchen. The theme of the evening was chicken, Cioffi said. "...because it is affordable."

Mouth-watering grilled chicken with egg plant and roasted red peppers with fresh mozzarella; stuffed chicken breast with ricotta and spinach drizzled in a light tomato basil sauce. These were just a few of the final dishes prepared for student consumption.

"They ate everything," Cioffi said. "There were 22 full plates of food lining the kitchen side, each one uniquely different from the other and each of these dishes can be done in 3-5 minutes."

After all meals have been prepared, all participants are seated in the Bernardo's dining room for the sampling portion of the class and offered a complimentary glass of wine or non-alcoholic beverage. The cost per cooking class is \$45 per person.

Gwen DeVasto of Bourne was given a Bernardo's cooking class gift certificate from her daughter for Christmas. She said she has taken many classes in recent years, but none of them were as large as Bernardo's.

"I am not a novice cook," DeVasto said. "People who come are interested in talking about cooking and we often swap recipes."

The self-taught chef has been a restaurant owner for more than eighteen years. Bernardo's, located on Main Street in Hanson, offers a variety of Italian and traditional meals, each bursting with flavor yet easy on the pocketbook.

Cioffi said he is hoping to develop a cookbook and launch a DVD series this year.

Chef Bob said he enjoys opening his kitchen to patrons and allowing them to experience the actual preparation of their food. And because of this, he said, they tend to support his restaurant.

"It establishes a friendly working relationship. We get to know them and in turn, gives them a nice comfort level," he said of his restaurant and business approach.

On The Web:

www.bernardosrestaurant.com