



Chicken cacciatore is one of the many Italian recipes prepared by Yuri Sbandati. He teaches cooking classes, too.

by THOR ERICKSON
photography by SIMONE PADDOCK

A New Twist on Home Cooking

Personal chefs bring expertise, variety and fun to your kitchen



Lisa Glickman



Yuri Sbandati



David Abell

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Sometimes the best home-cooked meals are those that are prepared in your own kitchen, but by someone else. Think about it: people hire a service to clean the house, wash the windows, look after the children or tend the yard. With today's hectic lifestyles, some people just don't have time to cook, but still want to eat a healthy family meal at home. For some families having someone else do the cooking is almost a necessity. Still other people just want to have fun at their own parties. Personal chefs offer a wide range of services from meal planning to shopping to cooking, and then they'll clean the kitchen and do the dishes. They will cook for one or 100. Personal chefs do all their cooking in their clients' kitchens. And they can accommodate dietary needs and other preferences in a way that most restaurants can't. They will come to your home for a single event or on a regular schedule. Depending on what is prepared, the cost for three dinners for a family of five starts at about \$330.

When it comes to personal chefs, Central Oregonians have quite a few from whom to choose.

Juri and Kinley Sbandati

Cooking is in Juri Sbandati's blood. He was born in Florence, Italy, and, like most Italian families, his family loved to cook. As a child, he learned the family's cooking secrets working alongside his grandmother. When he was a teenager, he worked at Florence's *Il Mercato Centrale*, selling fruits and vegetables.



Juri and Kinley Sbandati also take groups of cookery students to Tuscany each spring to share some of the finer points of preparing Italian cuisine.

"Cooking is who we are as a people," he said. "We have been doing it for thousands of years."

While earning a doctorate in history at the University of Florence, he apprenticed with an Italian chef, catering high-end functions. He met his wife, Kinley, while she was living in Florence.

In 2005, they moved to Bend and started Sbandati Personal Chef Services.

"We moved here because Bend reminds us of Italy," said Kinley. "There is beautiful scenery, and people are active, yet laid back."

The Sbandatis' specialty goes beyond Italian food. "It is an Italian experience," said Kinley. "Juri combines

his education in Italian history with his culinary skills. It's an edible history lesson."

They offer a private party prepared in the client's kitchen with a traditional, five-course Italian meal with dessert. They consult with the client before the event about food preferences and the style of the dinner. It can be a casual dinner or a formal dining experience. "This has the traditional flow of an Italian meal," Kinley said. "It can take several hours to enjoy this meal."

Sbandati also offers to cook a week's worth of meals for a family. The food is then refrigerated or frozen and preparation and serving instructions are left behind with the clients.

The Sbandatis also offer cooking classes in which they teach the history and technique behind traditional Italian cooking. They give private classes in clients' homes and offer group classes in their kitchen at Deschutes River Ranch in Tumalo.

Come spring, the Sbandatis take groups of students to Tuscany. Students stay in an Italian villa where they can enjoy a variety of regional activities such as cooking lessons, including

cooking in traditional terra cotta and in wood-fired ovens, and get a look at how some traditional Italian ingredients such as olive oil and pecorino cheese are made.

The Sbandatis cook for parties of any size.

"It's amazing the variety of clients that we get," said Kinley. "We love being able to be a part of the client's life and family and home. We have met some of our best friends doing this."

Lisa Glickman

As newlyweds, Lisa Glickman and her husband, Marshall, found themselves entertaining a lot. Rather than being overwhelmed by the task, she taught herself how to be a great cook by cooking for her family and friends. Then Glickman started teaching others to do the same as a cooking instructor at In Good Taste, a cooking school and gourmet store in Portland. There Lisa worked and taught alongside chefs and cookbook authors such as Corey Schreiber, Hugh Carpenter, Philippe Boulot and Marcus Samuelsson.

Glickman enhanced her self-taught culinary skills when she followed her husband around the world for business. They first moved to Spain, where she learned about Spanish flavors and cooking. Later her husband's work took them to Italy, France, Russia and Japan, where they ate in some of the world's best restaurants. After a short stop in Boston, the Glickmans moved to Bend in 2007.

She brings all her cooking and travel experience and passion for food and entertaining to her client services. "I like putting my own touch on some of the things I've tasted, adding a new twist or dimension," said Glickman. "I also enjoy creating themed situations by bringing Spain, Italy or Asia into a client's home with decorations and food."



Chef Lisa Glickman prepares, cooks, decorates and supervises at the table in her Executive Chef Service. Other cooking plans are also offered.



Lisa Glickman uses local ingredients in her recipes whenever possible but will also search for foods to fill requests. Glickman turned a love for cooking and entertaining into a career that has been further flavored by her travel and eating experiences around the world. A savory black sesame-seed tuile is filled with crème fraîche and ahi tuna tartar then topped with chives. The appetizer marries French and Asian cuisines.

Glickman offers a "Dinner Club," in which a client may book four, multi-course gourmet-themed dinner parties for up to ten guests. This service includes menu and wine consultation for each event, and help with the presentation from setting the table to arranging flowers to plating the meal. Her "Executive Chef Service" offers everything from menu planning and decorating, to formal tableside service. For this service, Glickman works with the client to plan one entire event in advance: she prepares, cooks, decorates and supervises the entire meal. In her "Sous Chef" service, Glickman acts as the client's assistant in the client's kitchen. She teaches, guides and assists them throughout the planning and prep and most of the cooking to ensure the dinner party's success.

She also offers casual buffets, themed luncheons, brunches and cocktail parties, and cooking classes in her clients' homes.

In all cases, Glickman uses local ingredients when possible, but will also seek hard-to-find items to fill special requests. From menu planning to preparation and clean up, Glickman's ultimate goal is to help her clients create a great experience and not just feed them.

David Abell

David Abell has thirty years of literal and figurative soup-to-nuts experience in the food-service industry.

"I started as a dish dog and worked my way up," said Abell. He learned the ropes and became fluent in cuisines including classic French, Mediterranean, Italian, Asian and Pacific Rim.

He cooked at restaurants on the Hawaiian island of Kauai for fifteen years before heading to Bend to become the executive chef at Broken Top Club.

Phyllo-wrapped Coconut Shrimp with Apricot Horseradish Dipping Sauce

By Lisa Glickman

- 3 sheets phyllo pastry, thawed and kept under moist towel
- 20 medium to large shrimp, peeled, deveined, patted dry with tails left on
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1½ cups grated unsweetened coconut
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Dipping Sauce

- ¾ cup apricot jam
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons grated—not creamy—horseradish

LINE rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Arrange shrimp in single layer. Lightly salt and pepper shrimp. Carefully place a sheet of phyllo pastry on a pastry cloth or large cutting board and brush with melted butter making sure to reach all edges.

PICK up a fistful of grated coconut and gently toss onto pastry creating a thin, but even, layer. Place second sheet of phyllo on top of first and repeat with butter and coconut—then repeat with the third sheet of pastry.

USING a pizza cutter, gently slice pastry horizontally through the middle. Then slice vertically through the middle. Working from the center out, slice phyllo into twenty strips.

GENTLY pick up a phyllo strip and starting at the tail, wind the pastry around the shrimp so that it is covered completely. Place back on parchment, brush with more melted butter and sprinkle with a bit more coconut. (Pastry-wrapped shrimp can be covered loosely with plastic wrap and kept in a refrigerator for up to four hours.)

FOR dipping sauce, combine all ingredients in a small bowl and mix together completely.

PREHEAT oven to 375°. Bake wrapped shrimp for twenty minutes or until golden brown.

SERVE coconut shrimp with dipping sauce.

Spicy-sweet meets seafood-crunchy when phyllo-wrapped shrimp are dipped in a sauce made of apricot jam, mustard and horseradish.



Pollo alla cacciatora is traditionally prepared with olive oil, dry-cured black olives and rosemary. Carcciatore means hunter in Italian.

Pollo alla Cacciatora (Chicken Cacciatore)

By Yuri Sbandati

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| 1 whole 4- to 5-pound chicken or eight pieces of chicken | 5 sprigs fresh rosemary, chopped fine |
| Flour | Salt |
| Half-liter red wine | Black pepper |
| 1 red onion | 1-cup water |
| 2 carrots | Extra virgin olive oil |
| 5 celery sticks | 15 Italian dry-cured and pitted black olives |
| 10 ounces tomato paste | |

BUTCHER the chicken and cut into eight pieces: two wings, two legs, two thighs and two breasts. Leave the skin on—it holds lots of flavor. Coat in flour. Chop the red onion, celery sticks and carrots into medium-size chunks.

PREHEAT the oven to 350°. In a frying pan, cook chicken pieces in extra virgin olive oil until they become golden. In a second pan, heat more extra virgin olive oil and stir-fry the chopped vegetables with half of the rosemary. After five to eight minutes, add the pieces of chicken to the vegetables and, over high heat, stir-fry the chicken and the vegetables together. Add the wine and cook until the alcohol has evaporated. Add salt and pepper to taste, and the tomato paste.

TAKE the pan off the heat and stir in one-cup water, the black olives and the rest of the rosemary. Put the uncovered pan in the oven for approximately one hour or until the chicken is fully cooked (a probe thermometer should read 160°), and the sauce has thickened. When it is done, serve the chicken pieces and ladle some sauce over them. Buon appetito!

Hunan-style Lamb Chops

By David Abell

4-pound lamb rack cut into single rib-bone chops

Marinade

- 1 cup oyster sauce
- 1 cup hoisin sauce
- ¼ cup sesame oil
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons minced ginger
- ¼ cup minced green onion whites
- ¼ cup toasted sesame seeds
- 2 tablespoons minced cilantro
- 2 tablespoons Sriracha, sambal or other Asian hot sauce



Hot sauce provides a kick to the marinade in Hunan-style chops.

COMBINE all ingredients except chops. The marinade should be about the thickness of syrup. If too thick, thin carefully with a little water.

MARINATE chops for eight hours.

DRAIN and grill meat on the barbeque for a great appetizer or main course. Should make about four chops each for four people. Unused marinade will last for a month in the refrigerator.



The marinated and grilled chops can be served as an appetizer or a main entrée depending upon the appetite and the number of diners.

“I traded one paradise for another” said Abell, an avid outdoorsman. “Snowboarding, fly-fishing, cross-country skiing, canoeing, you name it, I do it.” In addition to the sporting opportunities, he loves the food bounty of the Northwest: wild mushrooms, huckleberries, fresh seafood and so on.

“My cooking is definitely influenced by what is in season, and what I can find locally,” he said.

Abell, whose experience includes having cooked in a hospital, specializes in catering to clients’ dietary requests. “Vegetarian, gluten-free, lactose-free, low-cholesterol and other specialty diets such as The South Beach Diet are some regular requests,” he said.

Abell has a wide range of clients, including busy families who don’t have time to cook, such as former NFL quarterback Drew Bledsoe and his family, who live in Bend.

Abell prepares everyday comfort food customized to the tastes of his clients and stocks clients’ freezers with meals prepared especially for them. In addition to being a personal chef, he teaches cooking classes and caters formal dinner parties and large events.

Abell meets with potential clients at their homes to determine their needs, dietary requirements and tastes. He then writes each client’s custom menus, shops for ingredients and prepares the meals in the client’s kitchen. When he is done he leaves detailed instructions for the client to finish the meals and leaves the kitchen spotless. **BHL**



TAKE A PERSONAL APPROACH TO COOKING

For photographed step-by-step instructions of the chefs’ recipes, visit www.bendliving.com.



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