

Learning to Cook Wellness at the Studio of Good Living



Chef Phoebe Credit: Studio of Good Living

Do you ever feel that you alone at the stove are too many cooks in the kitchen? Do you have the number of that local takeout place memorized? Finally, there is a cure for that kitchenphobia: cooking classes and wellness programs with Chef Phoebe Schilla at the Studio of Good Living.

The cooking classes offered at the Studio of Good Living will teach you the technical basics, so you won't almost burn down the house (*again*), as well as food innovation, themed cuisine and tasty/healthy meals, so you can be the talk of the next family potluck. Chef Phoebe takes the bite out of cooking and makes it a fun, accessible experience for people of all backgrounds, so you can learn to cook dishes that your blood pressure, taste buds and loved ones can all enjoy.

Chef Phoebe draws her comforting kitchen etiquette and food-mastery from a lifetime in the kitchen. Phoebe was raised eating like a hippie in Northeast Maine; “hippie” being short for a kitchen free of processed foods and making lots of food from scratch, like baking homemade bread and gardening seasonal veggies. The cooking style of her mother and great aunt inspired Phoebe, giving her an appreciation for whole, natural, seasonal foods. “We made almost everything ourselves; we had a garden in the backyard, in the summer we had a strawberry patch, and we even tapped our own maple syrup from the trees in the yard,” says Phoebe.

Her mother and great aunt were talented, self-taught cooks and welcomed young Phoebe into the kitchen for experimentation, inspection and fun. Phoebe and her siblings entertained themselves by acting as Assistant Chefs for their mother. “One of the things I enjoyed most about being in the kitchen was fostering relationships,” says Phoebe of cooking with her big family, “there was lots of cooking, talking and laughing. It wasn’t a high-pressure environment. You had your part, you learned, and if it got messed up, it was okay.”

At age 15, Phoebe started looking into culinary programs around the globe. She knew what she wanted to do; she was born to cook. After high school graduation, Phoebe made the voyage to France to study at the esteemed Le Cordon Bleu. “The food world [in France] is completely different,” says Phoebe, “we shopped the Farmer’s Markets every day. There were whole rabbits hanging in the windows of Butcher shops. Seeing and utilizing whole chickens, incorporating heads and innards into dishes, brought ‘where food comes from’ home in a very visceral way.” Using the whole animal gave Phoebe an appreciation for all of the parts.

After completing her studies at Le Cordon Bleu, Phoebe traveled to New York to study at the Culinary Institute of America. Under the instruction of intense chefs and the constraint of tight deadlines, Phoebe perfected working swiftly and effectively as a team in the kitchen, in order to create large, scrumptious meals. “The Cordon Bleu and the CIA couldn’t be more different,” says Phoebe, “The two educational styles complemented each other and gave me a well-rounded education. As a result, I know a lot of minutiae about the culinary arts and I feel comfortable cooking just about anything.”

After graduation, Phoebe found another foodie-community on the warm West Coast in the form of the Bay Area, which she calls “a special area for foodies.” She was drawn to the Bay because of our well-known, innovative food scene, opportunely situated in close proximity to wine country. She describes the unique Bay Area vibe as a community of like-minded people, fueled by passion and the availability of great, local produce. “There is so much passion here,” says Phoebe, “it’s locally driven and extreme in terms of devotion to locally-sourced ingredients. And there are so many great ingredients at your fingertips.” The locally sourced food “tastes better,” confirms Phoebe. She supports local, sustainable food and believes that it is important to know your farmer, where your food comes from and how it’s grown. From local farm-to- Studio of Good Living kitchen cooking, we can form a foodie-family-connection yielding scrumptious, local dishes.

Whole food cooking classes, Signature Experiences, nutrition counseling, yoga classes and mindfulness techniques offered at the Studio of Good Living have roots in the comfy, community- and wisdom-driven kitchen of Phoebe’s childhood. Classes incorporate individual attention, support experimentation and are grounded in technique. They range from cuisines around the world, such as French cuisine, to learning how to make Light and Healthy meals, to delicious, envy-worthy desserts. The cooking classes at Studio of Good Living are a group project, filled with Phoebe’s individualized support. They conclude with the group dinner, where students partake of their fruitful creations. “[Whole food cooking] tastes better, and it’s better for you!” says Phoebe.

Phoebe learned at an early age the importance of a wholesome diet and the intimate connection between nutrition and wellness. Signature Experiences break the bounds of the kitchen, incorporating cooking with elements, such as the wholesome Ferry Building Farmer's Market, transformative yoga classes, and self-pampering trips. The Studio also offers nutrition counseling and mindfulness techniques, asserting a desire to not only enhance nutrition, but also to enrich lives.

The inspiration behind the Studio of Good Living stems from Phoebe's love of community in the kitchen and passion for cooking, which she ably, patiently and warm-heartedly imparts to anyone visiting the Studio of Good Living. "I think everyone should know a few recipes to nourish and nurture family and friends," says Phoebe, "it gives us the ability to connect to each other in a way we can't normally do. If you sit down with your loved ones once a day, or every other day, your life will improve immeasurably, both physically and mentally." Your taste buds will thank you too!