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Spunky Kitchen Marketing: Adventurous Corporate Cooks Turn Cooking Classes Into Lasting Client Relationships

With every marketing dollar at a premium, smart marketers are looking for opportunities to ensure that their marketing efforts lead to real bottom line dollars. Enter Karel Anne Tieszen, chef and author of *In Your Own Kitchen: Reality Cooking at Home* (www.kitchen-friends.com). Tieszen has been Chef, guide and chief marketing friend for corporations who seek a new way to take relationships to a whole new level for more than 9 years.

“When I first started holding cooking classes for companies, I felt the classes would help team members bond through their cooking adventures,” says Tieszen, known as Chef KAT at the Kitchen Friends Cooking School in Duncanville, Texas, where she developed and tested the recipes for the classes over the last nine years. “Learning something new puts everyone on a level playing field. It creates a more relaxed environment because no one is trying to be the expert – everyone begins as a newbie.”

What Chef KAT did not predict is how popular the classes, which range in size from 10 to 32 guests, would become with sales and marketing teams who want to create a memorable experience for special VIP clients.

“We have clients who have been doing these classes for five years or more. Individuals will fly in from all across the United States to meet with high profile clients,” says Tieszen. “We’ve even had some of the hosted VIP clients become clients. It has been great to get to know so many executives who are passionate about client service.”

Chef KAT creates a fun, adventurous environment where simple, yet dazzling recipes can come to life under her directive. Clear step-by-step instructions take ambitious but inexperienced home cooks through recipes for dishes like Baked Alaska that many people consider “too hard.” Amazingly, almost all of her class recipes have just seven steps or less.

Corporate professionals dress casually and cook dishes right alongside of their guests. Laughter and learning are all part of the experience. After the meal is ready, the group dines together and critiques the dishes.

Karel Anne Tieszen began teaching home cooking instruction in her kitchen in the suburbs of Dallas in 1999. She has studied at Anne Willan's La Varenne Cooking school in France, held a short-term apprenticeship at Troisgros, a legendary three-Michelin-star restaurant just outside Lyon, France, and has been a part of Jim White's Texas State Fair Celebrity Chef Kitchen since 2000. Prior to that, Tieszen was a corporate executive at TU Electric so she not only knows her way around the kitchen, but around the boardroom too.

For more information about corporate marketing cooking events call 214-763-4358 or visit her site online at www.kitchen-friends.com.

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