

# CHEF DALE DOOLEY

I guess you can say my love for food started as a child. My mother and grandmother cooked a variety of Polish fare for family holidays and everyday meals. Growing up on the south side of Chicago did not expose me to trendy, upscale restaurant cuisine, but I was influenced by good-ole down-home, hearty Chicago food. Deep Fried shrimp, Italian beef sandwiches, polish sausage and kapusta, Chesdan's and Falco's pizza, and kolachkis. Not very healthy but darned tasty!

Working my way through college in Urbana- Champaign was my first exposure to the restaurant industry. Places like Treno's, Coslow's and Eddie's were my food laboratories and playgrounds. Calzones, Quiches, fresh-made soups and bar food that fueled many an all night study session. I also had my first exposure to Italian and Chinese food. Fresh pastas and sauces and stir-fries.

Back in Chicago in the mid eighties, I worked for a major restaurant chain, Lettuce Entertain You, where I honed my skills as a line cook, caterer and event planner. For a brief time I managed the kitchen in vegetarian restaurant at Belmont and Clark, where I was exposed to vegetarian and vegan cuisine. Tempeh, Tofu, hummus, and Middle Eastern and South American fare.

During the nineties, I became chef at various hospitals working with several contract management companies. There I learned discipline in a corporate setting while continuing to hone my skills in recipe and menu development, food courts and upscale catering. I also learned a great deal about special diets working with dieticians.

I eventually became a regional director of culinary, where I traveled all over the United States. Projects in New Orleans, Miami, New York, Boston, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Houston, San Antonio, St. Louis, San Francisco, Napa Valley, Las Vegas, Nashville, Memphis and many cities and rural towns in between exposed me to a great deal of regional foods and customs. All made from scratch recipes instilled in me a passion for quality ingredients.

The new century brought me new opportunities in hospitals, senior dining and corporate dining. Weary of corporate life, I decided to use everything I learned to start my own personal chef business. My focus is on exquisite food using local quality ingredients served in the most elegant settings with superior customer service. I hope to bring to your table everything I have learned working and playing in the food world in the last twenty-five years.

In my spare time I love to cook for, and party with my friends. I like to read, mostly politics and philosophy, and of course cook books. I am involved in the community helping with the local edible community garden, The Ruby Garden, and trying to establish Chicago's first totally Green dog friendly area (Dog Park). I live on the third floor of a three flat in Rogers Park with some loving friends and my two-year-old Labradog, Cody.

– Dale Dooley