

FOOD & DRINK MAY 22, 2015

Feast Q&A: PR exec moonlights as cooking instructor

HIGHLIGHTS

Paulette Bruce teaches the popular Good Eats classes in Sacramento

Her classes include a series that teaches men to cook called 'Just for Guys'



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Paulette Bruce has been a force in the Sacramento food scene for years, even though she doesn't have a restaurant or bakery. The owner of a public relations firm, she spends her spare time teaching people to cook and to embrace the idea that the best parts of life come together through food. Her [Good Eats](#) classes have become a local fixture. Bruce grew up in Bakersfield, the daughter of a Basque mother and an Italian father who did not speak English when they arrived in the U.S. For information on her classes, visit www.goodeatscookingclasses.com or call (916) 498-9804.

- Q:** What is your favorite tool in the kitchen?
A: I use my hands before anything. But those silicone spatulas are fabulous. Also, a knife sharpener because you should sharpen your knives every day. I use a zester a lot, too.
- Q:** What is your favorite cuisine?
A: I would have to say Italian and Basque. For my family, I cook that the most. As long as it's fresh, does not have a lot of ingredients and a lot of fussiness to it, that's what I like to cook.
- Q:** What is your guilty pleasure?
A: A good piece of chocolate.
- Q:** Among your many cooking classes is the "Just for Guys" series. Is there a difference between how men and women cook?
A: There's a huge difference between men cooks and women cooks. Men are more free-wheeling. They are so much fun in the kitchen. Women tend to really follow the directions of a recipe. People learn in different ways. Some learn by watching and some by doing. I find women are more into learning by following instructions.
- Q:** What's the biggest mistake beginners make in the kitchen?
A: They don't know how to take care of their knives. They don't measure properly. They'll just dump a measuring cup into a flour bin and throw it into a bowl.
- Q:** How has the local food scene changed since you've been here?
A: The food scene has totally changed! The awareness of farm to fork is greater. There were no farmers markets back then. The restaurants have changed. The cooking stores have changed. We used to just have a small part of a department store. Now there are whole stores where you can find all these wonderful pieces of equipment.
- Q:** Wine or beer with dinner?
A: Wine, probably because I was raised that way. I enjoy a good red. I do like bourbon though.
- Q:** When was the last time you cut yourself in the kitchen?
A: Last week. And you know why? I was going too fast, my hands were wet and I knew it was going to happen - and it did.
- Q:** What piece of kitchen equipment is on your wish list?
A: A double oven and a six-burner cook top. And an ice maker.
- Q:** What is it about cooking that gives you the greatest joy?
A: It's the one connector that brings family and friends together. Nothing connects people as deeply as food does. Sitting around a table and sharing is everything. It's where kids learn who they are and where they come from.

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PAULETTE BRUCE

Founder of Good Eats cooking classes

Her cooking classes, including a "Just for Guys" series, are held in the culinary center at East Bay Restaurant Supply (522 North 12th St., Sacramento).

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