

Watch, Listen, Learn, and Taste at COOK

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Katie Cavuto-Boyle, a popular Philadelphia chef/nutritionist, played to a sold-out audience of diners at COOK, 253 S. 20th Street, on Thursday evening, July 11. Chef Cavuto-Boyle's version of a barbeque is a celebration of refreshing summer foods. The menu included five courses: scallop, watermelon, and ginger ceviche; kale salad with grilled figs and smoked gorgonzola; chorizo, shrimp, and clam "bake" (really a stew); seared flank steak with chimichurri (traditional Argentinean condiment) and green bean salad; and a dessert of grilled cantaloupe, ricotta, and honey. While Cavuto-Boyle worked she talked about what she was preparing and her thoughts about food in general. Diners watched, listened, and ate, and asked questions throughout the evening.

Cavuto-Boyle's demonstration of healthy barbeque food was one of over 20 culinary events each month, sponsored by Audrey Claire Taichman's COOK, in partnership with *Philadelphia Magazine*. A chef or expert, sometimes a cookbook author or celebrity chef, conducts a demonstration about two hours long in COOK's state-of-the-art, fully-equipped kitchen-classroom, with space for a maximum of 20 learners. Each event focuses on a different subject, including ethnic and regional cuisines, restaurant signature dishes, desserts, brunch, cocktails, wine, beer, baking, holiday favorites, canning and preserving, specific foods and more. COOK posts a list of demonstrations on its website the first week of the month before they will be held. Prices vary. The price for the Katie Cavuto-Boyle event was \$140 per person. Though relatively pricey, this was a full-course, soup-to-nuts meal, with bountiful wine.

Highlights of upcoming fall events include Michael Santoro of The Mildred, Lucio Palazzo and Marco Espinosa of Shiprock Popup (Navajo tacos), South African cookbook author Mary Rolph Lamontagne, and Lithuanian chef Michael Laiskonis, according to Lily Cope, Executive Director, who plans the demonstrations in conjunction with Audrey Claire Taichman, proprietor, and Michelle Flisek, Director of Operations.

As the guests entered, Cope and Flisek greeted them hospitably, showed them to their seats, and served water and bread.



Katie Cavuto-Boyle conducting a demonstration at COOK.

Guests reviewed the food and wine menus for the evening, posted on a chalkboard. When all guests arrived, the hosts served wine, choice of white or red, and asked guests to introduce themselves and answer an icebreaker question, "What is your favorite thing to bring to a barbeque?" Cavuto-Boyle started to talk and work, assisted by Hayley Kurtz. Cope and Flisek served each course gracefully and graciously. When food was served, everyone got quiet. During clean-up between courses, guests conversed and the atmosphere became more lively and congenial as the evening progressed.

Katie Cavuto-Boyle is an expert in nutrition and president of Healthy Bites market and café, offering food services including nutritional consulting, personal chef, and meal delivery. She promotes farm-to-table fare and the use of seasonal, local ingredients. Her philosophy is "Eat real food." Cavuto-Boyle is the dietitian for the Philadelphia Phillies, teaches nutrition at West Chester University, writes food blogs, and has been featured on national TV shows. She holds a master's degree in clinical nutrition from Tufts University and degrees in culinary arts and nutrition from Johnson and Wales University in Providence, RI.

Cavuto-Boyle loves simple cooking, focuses on nutrition, flavors, and seasonality, using recipes that take little time and few ingredients. She doesn't like to bake -- it's too exact. She gave the audience general tips about ingredients she used, such as: eating kale is like taking a multivitamin and mineral supplement; kale from the fall harvest is sweeter than the early summer harvest; there are many figs trees around Philadelphia that are accessible to the public; eat small amounts of rich, flavorful cheese; if you are not supposed to eat salt, substitute citrus in recipes to brighten and balance the flavors; zest is an antioxidant; make a batch of a different grain each week and then use it as breakfast cereal, in salad, as a side dish, or added to soup; roasting is the easiest form of cooking; and colorful vegetables, and fruits and raw nuts and seeds, are the healthiest foods.

COOK also sells cookbooks and kitchen supplies and hosts private events. For more information and to see the list of demonstrations each month, go to www.audreyclairecook.com or call 215-735-COOK. For more information about Katie Cavuto-Boyle and Healthy Bites, go to www.healthybitesdelivery.com.