

Dish Omaha – April 16th, 2025

Jeff: Time for Dish Omaha, KVNO's resident foodie, Diane Watson. Good morning, Diane.

Diane: Good morning, Jeff. Hey, what's a cooking skill you've always wanted to learn?

Jeff: Cooking skill? Throw pizza in the air.

Diane: Oh, we got to look for a class on that specifically. You know, cooking instruction was a \$200 billion industry in 2024, expected to be \$450 billion by 2032.

Jeff: Wow.

Diane: There's so many places around the metro where you can literally sharpen your skills. I wanted to talk about a few of them. Currently, Metro, with its Culinary Institute, their catalog lists 55 non-course classes you can take.

Jeff: Wow.

Diane: Most of these are one day, one night, one evening, but every kind of topic you can think of, all kinds of baking. They're doing Lenten food-specific cooking, working with masa, homemade salsa, sushi, knife skills, sake pairing, probably not with the knife skills. You might want to separate those two out. Then they have tons for kids, teens, and they do a culinary boot camp for kids, which is a four-day actual food competition.

Jeff: Really?

Diane: I took a sushi class at Metro a few years ago. It was great. You roll your own food, you get a little glass of sake, and you eat your food that you make. I realized then, sushi is something I'm going to go out for. I was not very good.

Jeff: I know a young man who might enjoy one of those classes.

Diane: Really, really fun. If you go and look at the kitchen stores, they've got some great options, too. Sur La Table does one-day, one-morning, couple-hour classes, all kinds of baking. You can learn Szechuan, you can learn the foods of Spain, homemade pasta. Have you ever made homemade pasta?

Jeff: Homemade pasta, no. Homemade sauce, but not the pasta.

Diane: I've never made pasta either, so I think I'm going to look into that. Then they've got these great date night classes that are themed with culinary specifics, like rustic Italian, Japanese bistro. I looked up the menu for this luxe French dinner because it was right up your alley. Get this, seared scallops with champagne beurre blanc, Pommes Anna, Errico Verre, which is green beans with garlic, parsley, butter, and poached pears. You make all that stuff with your date, and then you eat it. Then Williams-Sonoma has a different take on it. They do demonstrations, so there's no cost. You just come in and watch them. They'll do coffee-making demonstrations, and they've got a Texas-style chili demonstration coming up. They're just 30 minutes, and you can just look at their schedule and drop by.

Jeff: Nice.

Diane: Catering concerns have some options, too. Heirloom Fine Foods, which is in Midtown, they focus a lot on farm-to-table, has some stuff coming up. But I looked at their things they've been doing. They did an Argentina and Peru-themed cooking class. Again, one day, schnitzel and strudel. Their winter in Tuscany class featured a robolita soup, which is a Tuscan bread soup, Tuscan winter ragu served with pasta and a citrus olive cake.

Jeff: My goodness.

Diane: Right? They're in Midtown. This month, they've got some wine and cheese class, classes at Millwork Commons, along with wine and chocolate. They're also offering a Mother's Day brunch class. You can do private classes for a group. I've done that for some work folks before.

Jeff: Oh really?

Diane: That's really fun. Chef around the block...

Jeff: Great team building.

Diane: Exactly, and still very competitive. Chef Around the Block also offers about six different classes. He teaches basic kitchen skills in all of them, everything from knife skills to food safety. One thing that really struck me is he packages up the leftovers, which are very important to me as a Leftover Chef, to take home. He's got an Indian class coming up, where you'll be making chicken tikka, chicken tandoori, samosas, and naan. I've never cooked any of those.

Jeff: Wow.

Diane: Some pretty interesting...

Jeff: That's amazing.

Diane: Yes. And then there's a national online group called Cozy Meal, where you can book cooking classes, private chef to come into your home, team building. They pluck chefs out of every market to connect you. It's kind of like Viator for food.

Jeff: Okay. It's virtual?

Diane: Yeah. No, no. A lot of them are virtual, but some of them are in person.

Jeff: Oh, really? Okay.

Diane: Yeah, so he connects with local folks. And then there are pop-ups that happen from time to time. Hy-Vee had a kids class. Kitchen Council does a few. We're here at a university, reminding us that we're never too old or experienced to learn more. So, I've actually signed up for the croissant-making classes.

Jeff: Have you?

Diane: At Sur La Table, so-

Jeff: Do you need a tester?

Diane: I'll be bringing one in.

Jeff: Okay. Can't wait. Diane Watson, KVNO's resident foodie Dish Omaha. Thanks a lot, Diane.

Diane: Thank you.