

Success Story: The Catered Claw

If you haven't been lucky enough to taste The Catered Claw's unique approach to seafood at a local Niagara event, you may be familiar with the company through co-owner Marnie Lynn Sennett's appearances on CityTV's Breakfast Television where she has a recurring role demonstrating recipes for preparing lobster, oysters, and even octopus. Marnie's aunt, Marie McDonald, was the long-time owner of Port Dalhousie's Marie's Seafood, and it was her influence, along with Marnie's grandparents' annual lobster boil for Club LaSalle in St. Catharines, that inspired Marnie and husband Mark Hoch to open The Catered Claw in 2001.

What makes The Catered Claw unique is not only their emphasis on seafood – as Marnie says, “we prefer to focus on our best dishes” so customers know they're getting something really special – but also the fact that they cater to every occasion from an intimate dinner at home to an event for over 700 complete with East Coast décor and a “Lobster 101” demonstration for those who may never have tackled a whole lobster before.

While many people know the company from big events like the “Event in the Tent,” Mark and Marnie put just as much care into preparing special dinners in private homes. They bring everything they need to create the meal with them, all the lobster cooking is done outside so there's none of the “East Coast Aroma” that some people would prefer to avoid, and “when we leave, the kitchen is cleaner than when we got there” says Mark. Not having to worry about cooking and serving also frees up the hosts to spend more time with their guests, not to mention letting them avoid the after-party mess.

Lobster is The Catered Claw's ultimate specialty, and the system they've developed for preparing it also sets them apart. As Mark points out, “most restaurants and caterers don't want to deal with lobster” which requires extra care in handling and cooking. Mark and Marnie have developed a method that ensures that each lobster is perfectly cooked, from the claws to the tail and everything in between.

The fact that they're able to provide hot lobster dinners for events where the diners number in the hundreds speaks to the level of organization Mark and Marnie bring to the job, as well as their attention to detail shown in the careful presentation of meals served on everything from fine china to paper plates. Mark and Marnie will create an atmosphere that's as formal or informal as their clients like, and they take the same care with every occasion.

Most of their business is concentrated between Toronto and Niagara, and through their marketing efforts, including appearing at festivals and other public events throughout the region as well as word-of-mouth recommendations, the amount of business The Catered Claw does has doubled each year that they've been in operation. Among their repeat customers are The Docks in Toronto where The Catered Claw is on the list of preferred caterers, and they are also one of only a handful of caterers used by Henley Island for their events.

For more information about booking a private dinner or an event with The Catered Claw, call (905) 937-9991 or visit the website www.thecateredclaw.com.

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