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Are Your Cooking Skills Good Enough?

One of the most common questions received at the Culinary Business institute deals with people who have self-doubts about their cooking abilities. First and foremost, know that you do NOT need a formal culinary arts degree to be a success. Does that help? Maybe. Will it stop or slow you if you don't have that background? No. Especially in the Personal Chef world, clients are using you to help put quality food (quality, not exotic or flaming) on the table. Let's assume you don't know the first thing about Asian cuisine. Don't be afraid to tell your potential client up front, if asked. Don't try to fake it – get good at what you do before offering it. A good example is seafood – a person who has been around seafood during their growing up and early adult life will have a better understanding of this compared to someone land locked and away from the fresh seafood environment. Does that mean the Personal Chef in Denver isn't as good as the one in San Francisco? No – but the chef on the coast with good interaction and knowledge of seafood may have the upper hand. Bottom line – you have strengths and weaknesses – almost nobody can cook anything and everything and have it the best in the world. But you know your strengths – so lead with that. A Personal Chef Service client list will have people who want more mainstream comfort food. Not exotic, no ice carvings, no super fancy plated presentation, etc. Let your good cooking be the acid test. If you have people honestly telling you that your creations are wonderful, feel at ease in knowing that you've got the skills required. If you burn water half the time – maybe rethink starting a service where great food is the expectation.

