

Fork in the Road

Cooking classes seem to be the thing these days.

Maybe it's because we eat out more often in restaurants, or perhaps it's all of those cooking shows we watch on tv. Cooking classes are just the easiest way to expand our repertoire. Obviously, we think this is a good thing. We've noticed restaurants and personal chefs offering classes. There are even cooking schools popping up in places off the beaten path, such as Nisku, Alberta, and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Here are a few that we've noticed.



Gail Hall's cooking class in her uptown loft/condo in Edmonton.

Edmonton

Our long-time friend Gail Hall spent 23 years building Gourmet Goodies Catering Company up from a one-woman operation to Western Canada's largest independent catering company. Now she runs a consulting business called Seasoned Solutions. She also teaches custom-designed cooking classes in her very-uptown downtown loft condo in Edmonton. Contact Gail at (780) 437-0761.

Cook like a chef! The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, with its new \$3.25 million Hokanson Centre for Culinary Arts, has cooking classes for the home chef covering the basics to breakfast pastries, to culinary tours of Tuscany. Courses are listed in NAIT's Continuing Education Calendar, or on-line at www.nait.ca/part-time. From that page, you'll need to click on Calendar Subject Areas and then select Hospitality from that menu. For Program information, call (780) 378-5000.

Want to have a chef come to your home and run a cooking class for you and your friends? There's *The Edible Prairie's* Free-Range Chef, consultant, and caterer, Brad Smoliak. Brad will customize a cooking class to suit your needs. He can be reached at (780) 893-1733 or bsmoliak@shaw.ca.

Another city caterer, Blake Mackay of Artful Eats, teaches cooking classes in clients' homes. Classes can be as small as 4 people, or more, depending on the location. Lessons cover the gamut from basic techniques to cooking, eating, and cleaning up. Call (780) 996-0925.



Lovoni demonstrates a chopping technique to students in her spacious Nisku test kitchen.

Nisku

Aussie-born foodie, Lovoni Walker, had an impressive food styling and food writing career Down Under before moving to Alberta. Here, she runs her company Fabulous Food Creations out of a gorgeous test kitchen and office in Nisku, south of Edmonton. She keeps busy writing the follow-up to her luscious cookbook *Simple, Fresh, Delicious*, food styling for clients and offering fun and informative cooking classes. Choose from any of the themed classes in the calendar on-line at www.fabulousfoodcreations.com or design your own class. 1506-7 Street, Nisku. Phone (780) 955-3841.

Red Deer

The Cooking Room opened its doors in the spring 2005. Guest chefs from across Alberta and touring cookbook authors rotate through the cooking class line-up. It accommodates 24 students for the demonstration-style classes, and a dozen or so for the hands-on classes. Class schedules can be found on-line at www.thecookingroom.com or by phoning (403) 872-2855. 510, 3020-22 Street, Red Deer



Brad Smoliak caught with a mouthful of truffle in Jennifer's kitchen.