

Chef with a Passion

Magpie Caterers

By Judith Linck, Co-op Reporter Staff Reporter

Magpie Caterers is unique among Sacramento caterers. Its owners, Ed Roehe and Janel Inouye, are committed to using local, in-season and organic products.

Magpie opened on April 1, 2005 (no joke!) and has enjoyed remarkable success catering for businesses and governmental entities in the Sacramento area. It also enjoys a brisk trade providing services for special events such as weddings and home celebrations. Magpie depends on people who are willing to trust them and who can be flexible.

Magpie has catered all-vegetarian events. Most menus from Magpie will be at least 20% vegetarian and will include vegan items if requested. (For example, they will substitute olive oil for butter.) Magpie has served very small groups and groups as large as 350.

Magpie is committed to promoting and using local, in-season and organic produce. In fact, this not only coincides with Ed and Janel's philosophy; it also makes Magpie more price-competitive. Dishes that use local and seasonal products are less expensive!

By offering catering services to government agencies and businesses Magpie is making consumers aware of the unique possibilities they can enjoy in this city. Some of its sources are Riverdog Farm, which raises produce all year long; Soil Born Farms; Del Rio Botanicals; Niman Ranch (beef and pork); and Bellwether Farms (cheese).

Both Ed and Janel have extensive experience in food service. Before beginning Magpie they worked for caterers in the Carmel Valley and Los Gatos.

Ed began his career at age 14 prepping food and scrubbing pots. Since then he has worked as a sous chef and a training chef. He says his experience working in a trattoria in Venice was an epiphany. The abundance of local produce in the markets was inspiring. His enjoyment of the local and seasonal produce in Italy helped form his commitment to using local produce and products here.

Janel is experienced in organizing and supervising catered events, including catering for a private sailboat.

Janel and Ed are both Co-op members and enjoy shopping here. Ed says he especially likes the Bulk Department, particularly the herbs.

When I interviewed Ed, he graciously served me a sample of Magpie's offerings. The white bean salad with herbs was delicious. I was surprised by the delicata and kabocha squash because they were roasted with the skin on. It is not necessary to remove the skins of these winter squashes. When roasted or braised the skins are edible and the squash is a wonderful starter or side course. I also enjoyed samples of local cheese and salami and a lovely salad from local greens.

If you are looking for a caterer for your celebration or if your organization or business requires a caterer for an event, contact Magpie Caterers. You can reach them at 916 452 7594 or www.magepiecaterers.com.