

Please share this newsletter with others!



Dear Friends,

“Whatever you do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius and power and magic in it,” said Goethe.

And ever since taking the bold first step to opening the restaurant so many unforeseen forces and incidences that you could never have imagined have come forward. I think about this now as we are in our third year of ZenKitchen.

Three years ago we took the first step with the idea of a monthly gourmet vegan dinner with beautiful, delicious and healthful food and presented the food to a group of colleagues, friends and friends of friends, and look how far we’ve come! Last May, we bought the restaurant and started transforming it into what you see today. July 1 was our official opening date last year so we are starting to think about ways we can celebrate and we will sure to let you know.

For now, there are many reasons to celebrate with great special events like China Town Remixed and the opening of an exciting art exhibition by Andrea Stokes in our space on May 8, a special Mother’s Day Brunch, the second annual VegFest on May 30, and new ventures like opening for lunch on May 13 with a simple fresh menu and with the warm weather we’ve already had the patio open a few days and are crossing our fingers for a long patio season.

It’s been quite the crazy ride the last while in particular and I’d like to share some highlights. I recently had the honour of being invited by Ottawa Tourism to represent Ottawa/Ontario and serve a sample of ZenKitchen hors d’oeuvres at a major Canadian Tourism event with key US travel media in San Francisco. I was shocked and honoured to be invited as one of the 8 chefs in the region to the prestigious Gold Medal Plates competition in November. [Gold Medal Plates](#) We were delighted to be a part of Taste for Life on April 28 with 25% of our sales from that evening going to vital HIV/AIDs programs in our region.

A progressive food and nutrition teacher showed her grade 10 class “The Restaurant Adventures of Caroline and Dave” to help spark their interest in eating healthful food and buying local, and they came to ZenKitchen recently for lunch and a discussion with Just Food and us as their final class. We did this event, even when we’re super busy, because I believe we need to awaken everyone to the crisis situation with our food and the health of this and future generations. It’s shocking that our children are expected to have a shorter life span than their own parents because of the landscape of food that we have built around them. I’ll get off of my soap box, at least for now, and provide a link to an inspiring talk that Jamie Oliver gave on this that says it all and I hope you’ll take the time to watch it. [Jamie Oliver](#)

One of the highlights of the spring season is the reopening of the Lansdowne Farmers Market and I am excited to announce that it is opening on Mother’s Day May 9. A highlight of running the business for us is meeting new and many returning customers. This is our nourishment and keeps us going even on the

most exhausting and trying days, and we provide our heartfelt thanks to you for continuing to “feed” us. Happy spring, Caroline

Lunch

The ZenKitchen team is about to embark on an exciting new venture: opening for lunch! As of May 13, we’ll open for lunch Wednesday to Saturday, 11:30-2:30. We’ve designed a simple, delicious and balanced menu to allow diners to feel satisfied and still make it back to work on time.

Reservations are open now, so visit the ZenKitchen website to book. While reservations are recommended, we also realize that you might get the last minute Zen urge, so give us a call (613-233-6404) so we can save you a seat or feel free to drop by to see if there is space.

Chinatown Remixed - A Celebration of Art in Ottawa

We’re excited about participating in this year’s Chinatown Remixed!

Chinatown Remixed is collaboration between Somerset Street shops & restaurants and artists & musicians. At ZenKitchen, we’re fortunate to be offering the vernissage for Andrea Stokes’ new show, as well as hosting musician Glenn Nuotio on our patio.

With over 40 venues exhibiting over 50 artists, Chinatown will be the hip place to be.

Saturday, May 8, 2010, 2 pm - 5pm

[Chinatown Remixed on Facebook](#)



Mother's Day

We still have space for our 10 a.m. seating on Mother's Day, May 9th. If you're interested, please call the restaurant at 613-233-6404 to book your table.

The Lansdowne Farmer's Market opens on Mother's Day so why not take a stroll before or after brunch and speak to the farmers about what they are growing and what's coming up. Let's hope for a great growing season! [Ottawa Farmers' Market](#)

On Tap

We've added two more draught taps to our bar, meaning that we now have the beautiful Waupoos Cider on tap. Gluten-free, dry and apple-y, it's a lovely addition to our beer line-up. Waupoos (it's an Aboriginal word meaning "rabbit") is from nearby Prince Edward County.

VegFest May 30

We're major sponsors of the National Capital Vegetarian Association's VegFest on Sunday, May 30, and we'll have a table handing out free goodies all day. It's a great opportunity to sample the wares of a variety of restaurants and bakeries, and pick up some cool items and ideas. Even better, Chef Caroline will be offering a food demonstration during the day. And it's all free!

[VegFest](#) for a list of exhibitors and the chance to volunteer.

May 30th (10am-5pm) at the Glebe Community Centre, 175 Third St., Ottawa. Parking is available on nearby streets.

Taste for Justice

We're very proud to support Taste for Justice, a fundraiser for Amnesty International's programs for violence against women. Taste for Justice kicks off with a news conference at ZenKitchen at the end of May. Then, on Wednesday June 9th, we'll donate 20% of our sales to Amnesty International. [Taste for Justice](#)

Cooking Classes

LCBO Rideau Cooking Demonstration Class, Tuesday, June 1 | 6:00 – 8:00 pm

EDGY VEG | \$50

Whether you are a vegetarian or simply interested in introducing some vegetarian meals into your diet, join Chef Caroline Ishii, of ZenKitchen, for an evening that will open your mind and palate to the exciting world of vegan, whole foods cuisine using global flavours and local ingredients. Sample Moroccan Harira Soup; Jewelled Salad with Spiced Almonds and Orange Blossom Vinaigrette; Shepherd's Pie; and Chocolate-Ginger Truffles. The food samples will be paired with alcohol samples from the LCBO Product Consultant.

To register, please visit the Customer Service Desk at the LCBO Rideau at 275 Rideau at King Edward. (613) 789-5226. All participants must be 19 years or older.

Staff news

It's with heavy hearts that we say farewell to Kelsey, our line cook since before ZenKitchen even opened. Kelsey bravely allowed herself to be filmed during her interview last year – as well as during a stressful practical test – and we were so impressed with her spunky attitude and love of food we knew she was right for us. Kelsey has become the pickle-master at ZenKitchen, maintaining large batches of kimchee and sauerkraut between her shifts on the hot line, and has helped in the creation of menu items. She is leaving us to follow her life-long dream of travelling through Europe, then she'll go back to school to complete her graduate degree. Needless to say, she will be missed and we wish her the very best!

Joining the kitchen is Ashley, a vegetarian who recently graduated from Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts Institute in Ottawa. Ashley has brought a fresh energy to ZenKitchen, along with an enthusiastic attitude and top notch culinary skills.

Finally, Dave just completed his Sommelier certification at Algonquin College and will be unveiling our new wine list soon. Look forward to some great summer sippers on our patio!