

Kitchen Shop's classes attract food fans of all skill levels

Cooking with flair

By Darraugh Dolron

BEAUMONT — A money's-no-object client enjoyed Molly Fowler's Scotch eggs enough to ask for them again. The professional Houston-area cook — known as The Dining Diva — told him no. They were just too much trouble. You have to boil the eggs just right, surround them with sausage and fry them into golden bundles before drizzling them with a Dijon sauce.

He asked again; was rejected again. Then he begged. She quoted him an outrageous price to dissuade him. It didn't work. He got his Scotch eggs. So did a room full of enthusiastic students who enjoyed the cooking class The Kitchen Shop presented at The Green Beanery. Fowler is a frequent guest at the Monday evening classes that draw regulars who are male and female, experienced and novice cooks. At the Kitchen Shop in Old Town Beaumont, Carolyn Wood sells trendy gourmet tools. Her brother, Glenn Waez, owns The Green Beanery restaurant, which is attached by a wooden walkway.

Fowler joked with the receptive crowd packed around cozy tables in the front room of the old home. They watched her assemble a meal of Scotch eggs and Dijon sauce with greens; herbed ricotta tart; asparagus with herbed crumb topping; and old-fashioned apple dumplings.

A collective "oooohhhh!" erupted as she presented each new creation. Her casual flair kept students confident they could repeat the process at home, but Fowler let them in on a



Molly Fowler of Houston is known as The Dining Diva and she's sharing her secrets of successful cooking at classes in Beaumont.

Chris Castillo/Triangle

secret about adapting to mess ups.

"Your guests do not know what it was supposed to have been," she said.

This night, it all went smoothly and diners chatted over a complete meal about why they love the cooking classes.

"I get to try new foods. The chefs are always so full of information. You can get all kinds of tips you can't get out of a cookbook," Carla Fertiitta said.

Debbie Norris described a bread pudding she'd enjoyed at a previous class. "I thought I'd died and gone to heaven," she said.



Here's a taste of what professional cook and teacher Molly Fowler prepared:

Asparagus with Herbed Crumb Topping

- 6 tablespoons butter
- 1 clove garlic, pressed
- 2 tablespoons flat leaf Italian parsley
- 2 tablespoons chives
- 1 3/4 cup soft, fresh bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- Salt and pepper
- 2 pounds asparagus, cooked tender crisp

In a skillet, melt the butter. Stir in garlic, parsley, chives, bread crumbs, lemon zest, salt and pepper. Cook over medium heat until the crumbs are crisp and golden. Spoon over hot cooked asparagus and serve at once.

THE KITCHEN SHOP is at The Green Beanery, 2121 McFaddin Ave. at Sixth Street in Beaumont's Old Town. Classes are from 7 to 9 p.m. Mondays and range in price from \$30 to \$50. Admission includes recipes, tastings and beverages. For information, call 832-9738.

- April 2 — Cooking with Herbs
- April 16 — Instructor Molly Fowler with special presentation
- April 30 — Amy Fuller, author of "Ways to a Man's Heart," with menu planning and recipes from the book
- May 7 — To be announced
- May 14 — Liz Sandell with Recipes Mommy Dearest Didn't Teach You: Basics for every beginning cook: chicken soup, mashed potatoes, fluffy rice, pie crust and desserts