

Executive Chef Lisa Frantz
Cafe Deluxe Cleveland Park

What made you want to become a chef?

There are two things that probably had some influence on my career path. I have very fond memories of spending time with my grandmother making pies. Also, my Father is a butcher. We grilled nearly every single summer evening while I was growing up. Somewhere along the way, something clicked. I tried sitting at a computer in an office from 9-5, but it wasn't for me. I had never set foot in a "professional" kitchen until just out of culinary school. But something was in me, and it all came so naturally. I was sucked in and I've never looked back.



Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a small town in Northern California, north of San Francisco. It's a place with a great laid back, small town feel.

What's your favorite dish at Cafe Deluxe and why?

It's so simple, the Tomato Soup and the Roasted Red Pepper and Corn Soup. I'm a soup lover; I'd probably marry soup if I could. The Tomato Soup is comforting; it kind of wraps you up making you all warm and cozy. The Roasted Red Pepper Soup is unique, has a great texture, and is really simple but full of flavor. We also have this sweet corn cream sauce we use on some of our specials; my Sous Chef Daphne makes it the best. When it's cooking, it smells like popcorn (another love of mine).

What was your biggest success as a chef?

I've traveled through Thailand taking cooking classes; I've traveled through Europe, Mexico, the Caribbean, and all over the US exploring food. I've cooked for all kinds of people; movie stars, basketball players, singers, TV personalities, and international dignitaries. I've been on TV, I've written menus, I won the DC Burger Battle... The best feeling is probably when someone comes looking for me for a particular dish or recipe they know I've created. I've done and seen a lot in the past few years because of my career. I'd have to say overall, the entire ride has been my biggest success. I wouldn't trade it for anything, ever.