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Mommy Tales: New store provides Tspoons' of tasty fun

Tspoons is Ladera's newest waterhole for food enthusiasts and chef wannabees.

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In true fashion of a parent, I arrived at our Date night in Paris cooking class a la carte after my son came down with a high fever in the last minute and my hubby had to stay home.

A night of French cooking was on the schedule at Tspoons – Ladera's newest waterhole for food enthusiasts and chef wannabees. The culinary school right in the heart of the Front Street District in Ladera is owned by personal chef Thanitra Pichedvanichok, who wanted to create a cozy, intimate and fun place where people could get together and learn to cook while making new friends.

"I have a little placard in the kitchen that says 'Love what you do' and I feel that this is so important to follow in life," she said. "I look forward to every class and being able to share my love for cooking with people that want to learn and have fun doing it."

I was joined by three other couples to practice cooking up some tasty French treats that most of us couldn't pronounce. Professional chef Katie Averill kicked off the instruction by making Pissaladiere, a kind of puff pastry appetizers with onions, olives and goat cheese. We then went straight for the dessert by slicing fruit to make Pear and Honey Clafoutis. Some managed to slice more than fruit – finger – but after a few band aids the incident was soon under control. The aromas of freshly baked appetizers now started to fill Tspoons and we all learned first hand that there is nothing wrong with the fire alarm, which went off as soon as the oven doors opened. This made me feel right at home since it happens almost every time I cook. It must be Ladera's way of announcing to the neighbors that the food is ready – come over and eat!

The main course was Salmon en Papillote and Pork Au Poivre. After much hard work – but mostly laughter and talking – it was time to taste our delicious creations. Chef Averill had proved to us that despite complicated names and iron-chef looking results, making a three-course French dinner doesn't have to take more than 1 1/2 hour and can be done by amateurs like myself. Sweat no more mothers.

For the ones who dare to leave the safety of Food TV behind to venture out for a night of cooking, Tspoons has the right ingredients. It offers hands-on workshops for up to eight people per class. Upcoming classes include cooking brunch with mom for mother's day, fabulous vegetarian delights, basics of Asian cuisine, romantic desserts for two and the perfect Italian meal to impress your friends.

Owner Pichedvanichok has even organized a cultural food day for April 12 when she will hop on the metrolink with a group of people to experience authentic Dim Sum in China Town and then Thai cuisine in Thai town. "I'm hoping that Tspoons will be a way for families, friends, and couples to learn something new while also sharing an experience that will bring them closer together," Pichedvanichok said.

