



CHEF SHELLIE KARK



COMPANY: KitchenCUE, LLC

EDUCATION: Simmons College, Boston, Mass. B.A. finance and accounting; certified public accountant; California Culinary Academy, San Francisco, Calif., associates of occupational studies in culinary arts; International Wine Guild, Denver, Colo., certified sommelier.

HONORS: Nominated to the Rose Women's Organization board of directors and elected as a member of Les Dames D'Escoffier in 2010.

You'll never find Shellie Kark on the annual list of the world's wealthiest. But you will find her on the list of the richest.

"I'm lucky because I've found what I love," Shellie says. "I love cooking and food and have found that teaching is my true calling and gift."

True enough. She has nearly two decades of experience teaching people about food from all walks of life regardless of their level of experience. She says teaching is "a selfless career where you give of yourself to make others better. I'm loving the fact that I can combine my passion and my gift in a way that makes others better. That makes for a rich life."

Rich indeed. Today, Shellie owns *KitchenCUE*, an educational series that nurtures interest in healthy home cooking and makes students better cooks by teaching the techniques of cooking.

"I teach in a way that gives people the gift of a skill that they can take with them and use for the rest of their lives," she says. "It's like the parable, 'Show a man a fish and feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime.' This is what makes my teaching unique, powerful and empowering."

Before *KitchenCUE*, she studied at the California Culinary Academy and honed her skills at San Francisco's La Folie and Seattle's Dahlia Lounge. She then moved to help open Cook Street School of Fine Cooking in Denver (named one of the top cooking schools by *Smart Money Magazine*). She's appeared in Oprah's *O Magazine* and on television numerous times, and she's now a guest contributor for *Chefs Catalog* and *Wine Enthusiast*.

Despite all the notoriety and accolades, for Shellie, the richness of her life boils down to a philosophy she holds dear: making meaningful connections with family and friends around the table and inspiring cooks to nourish body and soul over a home cooked meal.

The basis of that philosophy took root early on for Shellie. She explains that when she visited her grandmother, a Russian immigrant who moved to Denver in 1915, she knew she was in for a treat.

"My grandmother was a great cook with a heavy Eastern European influence – stuffed cabbage, cabbage soup, meat and cheese kreplach and apple strudel – and she loved to make sure we were all well fed and nourished when we stayed with her," Shellie says. "You had to eat your half a grapefruit, your bowl of cream of wheat and drink your juice before you left the house. She'd present everything beautifully, and she'd sit with us at the table and talk with us ... it was one of the ways she showed us she loved us."

Shellie believes we all crave community. "We long to be with others and have things in common, to talk and to share and to be supported. We've lost so much of that in our current society, of never slowing down long enough to take a deep breath and evaluate how you are."

So in Shellie's class, you'll get much more than the basics, you'll get a sense of the values she holds dear, which includes honoring where the food comes from. "That's integral to being grateful for food," she says. "We have to be more in tune, in touch with what feeds and nourishes us. I want to draw attention to love and gratitude when I teach."

In her classes, Shellie says she wants to inspire students to be better – even in nominal ways. "Eat better, relate better, love one another better. Even if it's just a little bit better...you have to start somewhere."

She clearly means what she says. Once class is over and you're heading home, you can watch her drive away in her 1997 blue, Volkswagen Jetta and read her bumper sticker: "love people...cook them tasty food." 🍷



Website www.livewellcolorado.org

Facebook [LiveWellColo](https://www.facebook.com/LiveWellColo)

Twitter [@livewellco](https://twitter.com/livewellco)

Pinterest [livewellco](https://www.pinterest.com/livewellco)

©2013 Copyright LiveWell Colorado. All rights reserved.