

## FRESH DINING

Healthy gourmet meals  
delivered to your home



**Some foodies** — especially those who must eat gourmet and lighten up at the same time — have dreams of hiring a personal chef. But not everyone has the money it takes to afford an in-home cook who shops, chops and cooks three meals a day, seven days a week.

Fresh Dining, which acts as a private chef to hundreds of busy gourmets and even A-list celebrities, is actually an affordable way to have your own personal chef. Their delivered-fresh gourmet food service is as close as you can get to eating well, losing weight and *not having to cook*.



By Sheryll Alexander

I was skeptical the first morning I awoke to Fresh Dining's blue cooler on my Costa Mesa doorstep. As a persnickety food writer and restaurant critic, I was quite leery about the food's quality, flavors and innovation.

I took the bag inside and emptied out a day's worth of meals from the cold cooler, directly into my refrigerator. Happily, I noted, it all looked very appetizing through the plastic covers.

There were *tender veal medallions al forno with melted Gorgonzola and grilled squash* for dinner, a *hearty Portobello chicken cheese burger with barbeque sauce and terra chips* for lunch and a warming snack of *tasty roasted tomato and fennel soup with cilantro yogurt*.

Lastly, I pulled out steel cut oats with maple pecan butter for today's breakfast. So while I cooked up multi-grain oatmeal with golden raisins, Quebecoise maple syrup and whole milk for four-year-old Juliet, I put my oats on a plate and into the microwave.

"The microwave," I sighed, as I watched the plate going round and round inside what many gourmands consider a flavor-destroying appliance. But the *steel cut oats* tasted surprisingly good on this cold morning, especially with its *creamy sweet maple pecan butter and side salade of fresh pineapple slices and refreshing cottage cheese*.

All of the Fresh Dining dishes were full of extremely fresh, nutrition-packed, flavorful ingredients and the menus were rather innovative. Some of our other favorites included the *pot roast turkey with caramelized broccoli and cauliflower and the spicy breaded and baked cheese ravioli with marinara dipping sauce*.



Seared tuna tatake salad over organic field greens and Roasted garlic ponzu vinaigrette



Pecan Crusted Halibut with saffron basmati and long grain rice medley and roasted baby squash



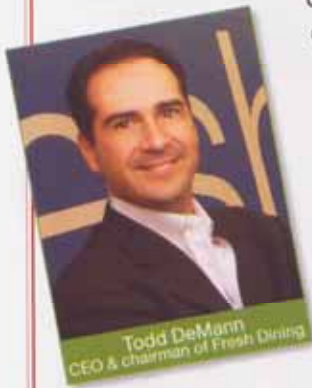
Cumin crusted Colorado lamb chops and sautéed cauliflower and baby eggplant



Trio of Fresh desserts- Fresh fruit tart in whole wheat filo cup with raspberry coulis, dark chocolate torte and strawberry cobbler

## Food For Thought

I wondered how Fresh Dining could put together such tasty meals and deliver them to your door overnight. So, I drove out their headquarters on the edge of the scenic Burbank Airport for a private tour.



Todd DeMann  
CEO & chairman of Fresh Dining

Laid back guy Todd DeMann, CEO and chairman of Fresh Dining, was more than happy to explain. He started the business in 2005 when this self-confessed foodie saw potential in providing unequalled service and truly innovative food for delivery to Southern California residents.

"We sought out real chefs with real pedigrees who know how to make dynamic menus with lots of variety to excite palates," says DeMann, who counts Ellen DeGeneres, Ricky Lake, and Ryan Phillippe as clients. (Denzel Washington is also rumored to be a Fresh Dining customer, but DeMann refused to confirm.)

DeMann says his devotees are ecstatic not only about the all natural ingredients and innovative flavors, but about what he calls "excessive customer service." He says he retains his core clients because the



company stays focused on true personalized service. Besides employing a fleet of customer service specialists, there's also two complete departments in the kitchen who fulfill each special order on a per-customer basis. "Our clients expect (our service) to be perfect every time," says DeMann.

One reason for the top notch service, says DeMann, is how he treats his staff of approximately 50 employees. "The people here care about what they do," he says smiling. They care, he explains, because Fresh Dining pays more than the average food service wage, has an inviting work environment, trains to take employees to the next level and promotes employees from within the company.

Fresh Dining is also adamant about their products. **They have selected the finest purveyors in the field and also buy direct from local farms and growers.** "We try to bypass any kind of processing," says DeMann.

I was very satisfied with my Fresh Dining experience and so I wasn't surprised to



hear that 60 percent of the company's clients get this service for health reasons or weight loss and 40 percent do it as a no-hassle lifestyle choice.



DeMann says his chefs create a **Mediterranean-style diet.**

From my own studies into food and wellness, I have found people of the Mediterranean Basin (*Spain, Southern France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, and North Africa*) live the longest on a diet filled with incredible flavors and textures. So, DeMann says his chefs stick to Mediterranean-inspired ingredients such as **lean proteins, healthy fish, low-gluten fruits and vegetables and no butter or cream.**

## Food For Thought

Wait! Did he say no butter and no cream? Yep. Fresh Dining uses a product called "**olivio**" as a zero trans fat and low calorie

olive oil substitute. I was shocked. I didn't know this before I sampled four days worth of Fresh Dining food and I'm a butter and olive oil aficionado. Olivio, as I



discovered, is a high-quality, spray-on butter substitute made from olive and canola oils.

Fresh Dining's other "**tricks of the palate**" that worked well on my critical taste buds are the "**tofutti**" (a liquid tofu) and an all-organic, zero-calorie sweetener called Zero Sugar for its creamy, crunchy and generally yummy (albeit small) desserts.

I also learned Fresh Dining caters special events such as corporate lunches with its highly healthful dishes. And, in the very near future,



## FRESH MOMMY

For pregnant women or brand-new mothers, there's now Fresh Mommy. This comprehensive service by Fresh Dining answers all of the new mother's needs (even babysitting!). First off, what new mother wouldn't appreciate three healthful meals delivered to her doorstep every morning? The organic meals are balanced with optimal nutrition for pregnancy, delivery and milk production. There's even dinner and dessert for the new dad every evening!

Personal training is also part of the package with a pre-post natal fitness program designed by fitness expert Heather Clay of Blue Clay Fitness. In San Diego,



the company is changing its name to Freshology as the company begins to offer more services such as corporate concierge specialists and its comprehensive **Fresh Mommy** package for pregnant and new mothers.

"We want to make permanent changes in people's lives," says the effervescent DeMann. As someone who loves foods and eschews crazy diets over natural eating,

I'm a believer.



Cindy Whitmarsh from Ultrafit Nutrition Systems brings her expertise. All moms are also appointed a professional

concierge. (How cool is that?!) Your personal concierge (who knows you by name and vice versa), coordinates your meal deliveries, fitness program and other necessities such as babysitting services, lactation consultations, dog walkers, baby food, personal shoppers and assistants.



With Fresh Mommy doing all the work, the company claims this service can do the following:

- Increase energy levels
- Decrease irritability
- Sharpen mental alertness
- Increase muscle recovery
- Improve cholesterol levels
- Aid in hormone balance
- Increase milk production
- Lower insulin levels
- Help lose body fat