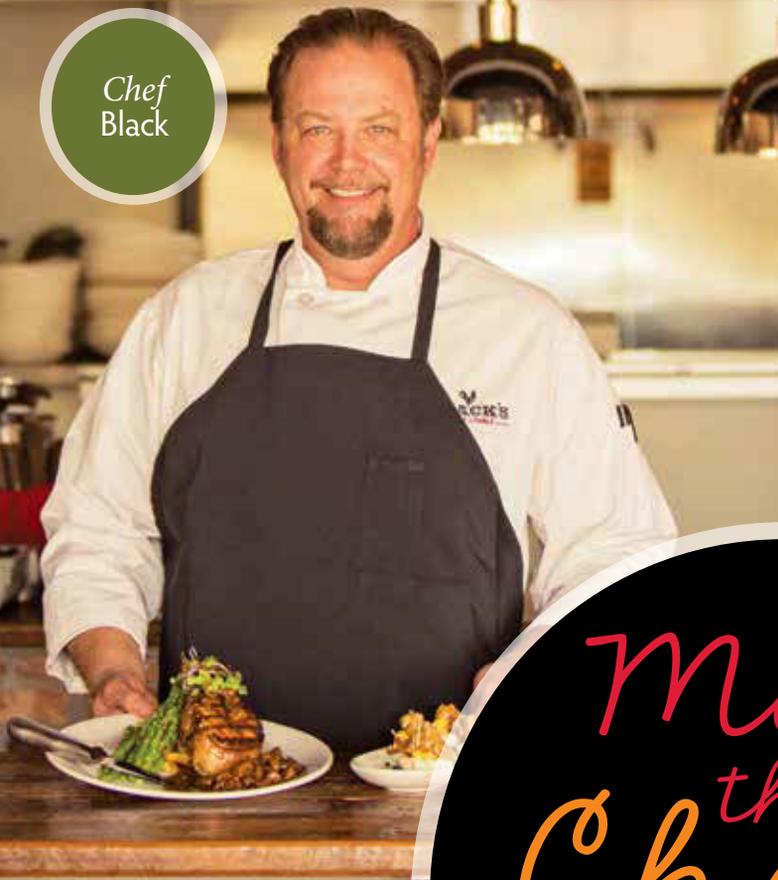


Chef Black



Chef Griffith



Meet the Chefs

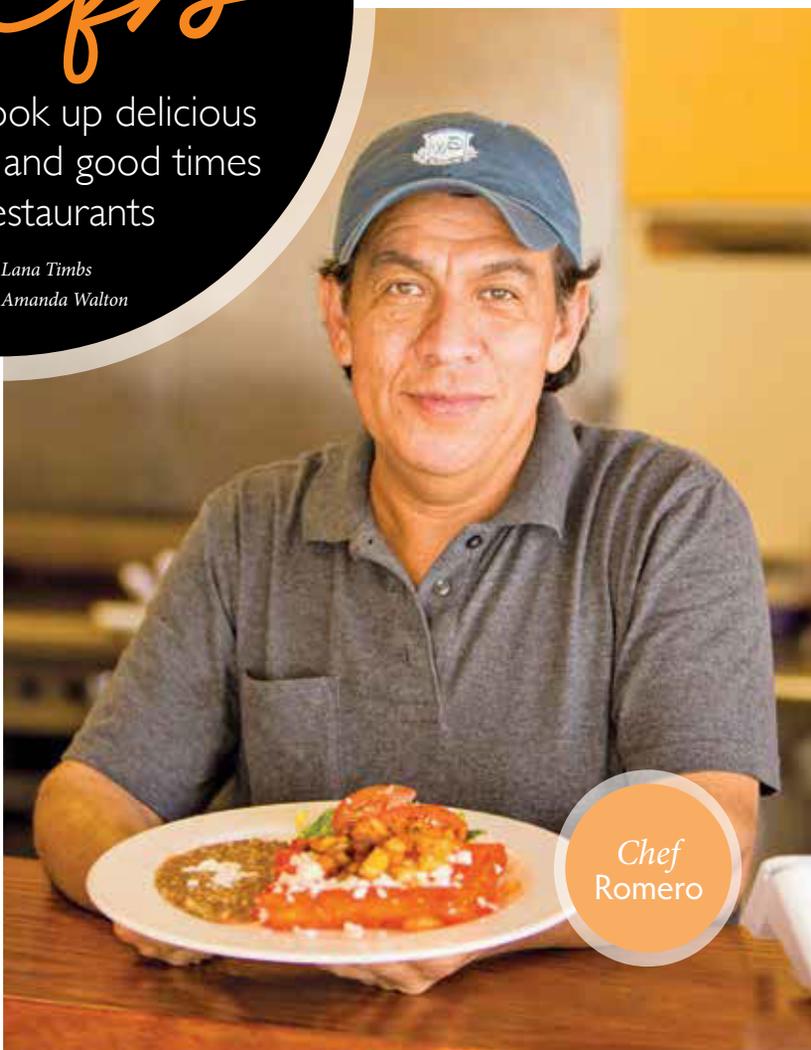
Cy-Fair chefs cook up delicious food, family fun, and good times at local restaurants

Written by Lana Timbs
Photography by Amanda Walton

Chef Friedman



Chef Romero





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*- Chef Sarmiento,
429 American Grill
and Mezzanotte*

**Chef
Sarmiento**

Some of the best family moments are spent around the table. Choosing where to create these memories outside of the home often varies on the occasion, atmosphere, and cravings. Five local Cy-Fair chefs share their stories, passions, and favorite dishes with *Cy-Fair Magazine* and offer a look inside of their diverse restaurants and lives.

Chef Bart Black

Black's Market Table

“Wholesome versus healthy” is a motto that Chef Bart Black of Black’s Market Table stands by. “We use whole, recognizable products,” he says. “I make things that are fresh and wholesome that I can serve with confidence.” Lately he is using a lot of fresh fish, such as skrei, an extraordinary Norwegian cod. Honing his craft for nearly 30 years, Black’s love for cooking began on the 500 acres of land in Pennsylvania where he and his family made maple syrup each fall. He attended culinary school in Providence, Rhode Island, but it was at The Houstonian Club and Spa where he perfected his practices doing everything from working in the butcher shop, bakery, and sauce kitchen to managing the property. Not only has Black served as the head of culinary activities for The Houstonian and Minute Maid Park, he has also participated in national culinary competitions. The Cy-Fair chef has also had the pleasure of serving well-known celebrities such as U2, Van Halen, Tim Robbins, and Shirley MacLaine during his career.

Chef Paul Friedman

Peli Peli

Born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa, Chef Paul Friedman learned from childhood how to cook with his nose. “When I cook, I don’t even want the recipe. I put my nose over the pot and smell if the food is right,” says Friedman. He started out working in his uncle’s restaurant and went on to manage and build 58 restaurants. Friedman now enjoys his time spent in the kitchen. Peli Peli means “bird’s eye chili pepper” and is a spice used in Friedman’s dishes. He also uses ingredients such as passion fruit, pineapple, mango, and guava. “My cuisine is unique and very special; when people eat my food, their faces light up,” Friedman says. He loves when people find joy in his dishes. He has won several awards, such as the 2013 Waterford Crystal Chef of the Chefs Award. He has also been featured on *Restaurant Startup* and *Cutthroat Kitchen*. Peli Peli is located in Vintage Park and is the only South African fusion restaurant in Texas.

Chef Joanne Griffith

Season's Harvest Café

As a mother and teacher of five children, Joanne Griffith evolved into a chef as she started to make healthier food choices for herself and her family. Stumbling upon a great idea, the Griffith family now offers the Cy-Fair community an opportunity to “recline at their table.” Season’s Harvest Café is a family-owned, farm-to-table restaurant. The land

surrounding the café is home to gardens that provide produce for the dishes, and the additional meats and produce are purchased locally. Griffith says, “The palate is the most essential and indispensable tool in any kitchen because it governs quality control and expresses the heart and vision of any chef.” Griffith has a strong belief that hospitality is the key to a successful restaurant. When finding her path in becoming a chef, she realized that the skills came naturally to her, as hospitality is what defines her personality. Seasonal salads, house vinaigrettes, wild game burgers, and coconut red lentil curry soup are among the dishes that Griffith recommends. Season’s Harvest Café also caters to special dietary needs, such as vegan, gluten-free, vegetarian, paleo, and other food allergies. They see these types of dishes as an opportunity to be imaginative and inventive and invite all people to come to their table.

Chef Emilio Romero

Sierra Madre Taco Co.

Chef Emilio Romero, owner of Sierra Madre Taco Co., has been a chef for 16 years. Starting out in New York as the owner of a small steakhouse, Romero has since been a chef at Perry’s Steakhouse and a sous chef at a country club in The Woodlands. “I was always looking for new opportunities and wanting my own place here in Cypress,” says Romero. He was the owner of a taco food truck before taking ownership of Sierra Madre. Over one and a half years, his family has made changes to the restaurant and menu and serves authentic Mexican food in a friendly atmosphere. “My 16-year-old waits tables on the weekends, my 14-year-old helps with dishes in the kitchen, and my 7-year-old helps greet and seat families,” says Romero. “We are able to spend time together as a family while running our business.” He makes unique salsas fresh daily

to compliment new dishes. His favorite dish is the Tapado (called Alambre in Mexico), which consists of chopped bacon and steak, onions, bell pepper, and cheeses. He serves it with fresh salad, avocado, and beans. “I always believe that when you like to eat good food, you have to serve good food,” says Romero.

Chef Gerry Sarmiento

429 American Grill and Mezzanotte

After an early retirement from many years in corporate America, Chef Gerry Sarmiento and his wife Adrianna decided to begin a new journey by making an investment in the restaurant industry. They opened their first Cy-Fair restaurant, Mezzanotte, in 2005. “After a few months, Mezzanotte was not doing well,” says Sarmiento. “I went into the kitchen and discovered that the problem was the food.” Sarmiento had never been a chef, but he calls it a blessing that he entered the kitchen and started to create dishes that tasted great. “I can imagine flavors and aromas. I can think of a dish in my head, visualize a piece of beef with certain spices, and know how well it will go when I make it,” Sarmiento says. The Sarmiento’s second restaurant, 429 American Grill, has been open since February 29, 2016. The restaurant was previously Piqueo, and the Sarmientos decided to drastically redesign the restaurant and give it more of an All-American vibe. They changed everything from the décor to the menu, and reopened in three days. Sarmiento’s most popular dishes are the fileto au povre at Mezzanotte, and so far, the flatiron steaks and shrimp and grits at 429. The 429 American Grill gets its name from the Cypress zip code, 77429. CFM

LANA TIMBS is a proud Aggie that loves spending time with her family and friends and learning through new adventures each and every day.

Chef Bart Black’s motto is “wholesome versus healthy”

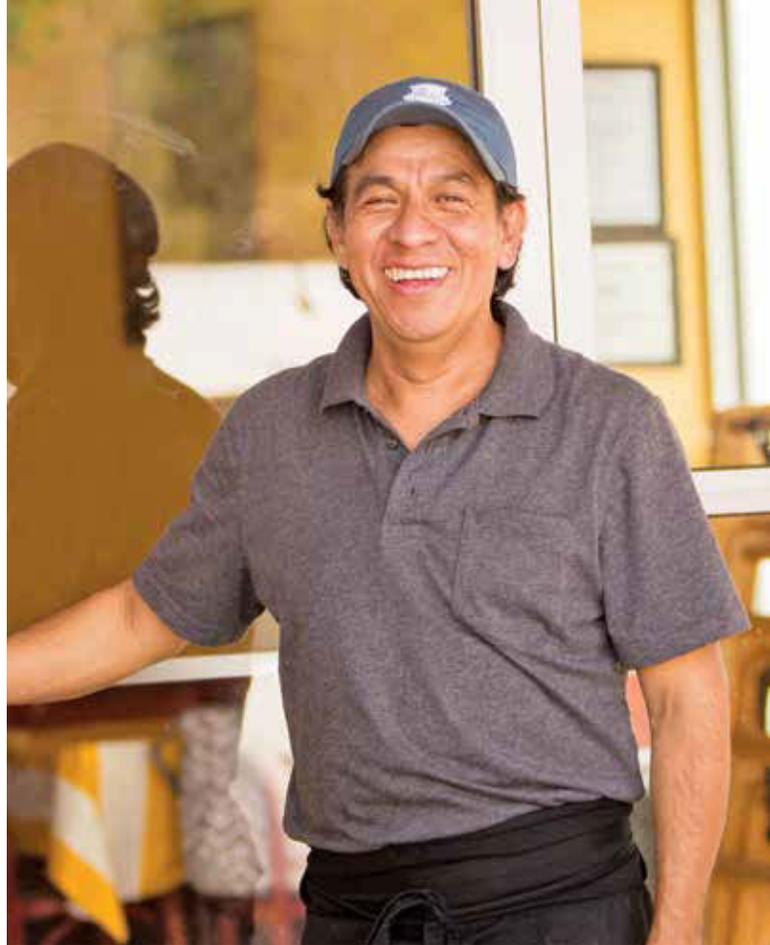


Chef Paul Friedman’s cuisine lights up his customers’ faces





Chef Joanne Griffith invites you to "recline at their table"



Chef Emilio Romero's favorite dish to prepare is tapado with fresh salsa, avocado, and beans



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