

Views & Voices

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Living Well

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Pictured from left to right: bruschetta, chicken and dumplings, Autumn salmon, and the Cocoa Puff dessert are just a few of the dishes available at Dr. McCarthy's Kitchen.

From lawyer to psychologist to restaurateur, one woman's professional journey leads her to become a *Guiltless Gourmet*

By Kathleen Ganster

First a Wall Street lawyer, then a psychologist – it may seem unusual that Roxanne McCarthy decided to become a restaurateur. But this job might be the one best suited to her personality. The owner of Dr. McCarthy's Kitchen in Hopwood, Pa. feels this new role allows her nurturing nature to shine.

"I've always sort of served as the 'mother' where I've worked, even when I was a lawyer," she said.

Growing up in northwestern Connecticut, Roxanne thought she wanted to be a doctor except for one small problem.

"I couldn't stand the sight of

blood," she said.

The next best thing would be a career in law, she thought.

"I was a blue-collar kid. I wanted to be rich one day and thought I could do that in one of two ways – be a doctor or a lawyer. Since medicine was out, I went to law school," she explained.

So law it was. Roxanne had a successful career, practicing on Wall Street until at the age of 35, she decided to take time off to raise her children.

"It wasn't a good career if you wanted to have kids. It just didn't work," she said. But it also wasn't an easy transition and the new stay-at-home mother, who in her own words, "almost lost my mind." It wasn't that she didn't love being a mom, but Roxanne also missed the career world. As she thought about a career where she could also be a mom, Roxanne was drawn to psychology.

"I was always counseling the young lawyers who had just graduated from law



The entrance to Dr. McCarthy's Kitchen

school when they would get scolded. They would always come to me for advice and support," she said.

Roxanne earned a Ph.D. in the field and practiced counseling before she decided to move closer to her sister, Sharon Klay, own-

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– Roxanne McCarthy

er of Christian Klay Winery in the Laurel Highlands, after her marriage ended four years ago. It was a move Roxanne never thought she would make.

"I would always ask Sharon how she could live here and what did she do for culture, but I soon fell in love with the area and the people. I was looking at the values of the people around here and knew this was where I wanted to be," she said.

Since she had long been a gourmet cook and interested in healthy food, the foodie and natural nurturer decided to create a career that combined both interests. After the initial idea of a "grab and go" restaurant, Roxanne spotted a loca-

tion for sale and the concept changed.

"I fell in love with the building – it wasn't my original vision, but I decided this would be my 'mother ship' and I would go from there," she said.

She ended up funding the building that was a former restaurant in Hopwood and opened the doors to Dr. McCarthy's Kitchen in July of 2015. Almost immediately, folks were drawn to the cozy atmosphere and what she labels as "guiltless gourmet."

"They are mostly my recipes that we have reworked. I work very closely with my chef and we come up with ideas and dishes that we think people will love, but are good for them," she said of her chef, Josh Diehl.

Roxanne and Josh feature a lot of local foods and often host specials such as tapas



Christian mixes a drink at the bar.

night. They also specialize in several "extras" such as a wide selection of teas, coffees, local beer and wines including some of her sister's offerings. In the warmer months, guests can sit outside and enjoy music.

For those with special diets or needs, all they have to do is ask and the creative chef comes up with a wonderful meal that fits the needs. With dishes like lobster risotto, Korean style barbecue short ribs and a homemade chocolate napoleon dessert, Roxanne and her team are providing exactly what they want – delicious food in a delightful atmosphere. ▼

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/drmccarthyskitchen.

Photos contributed by Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau and Dr. Roxanne McCarthy

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