

## Father's Know Best

# Fathers give children a tasty legacy seasoned with love

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Photo by Ellen Jaskol / The Rocky

Julie Balistreri and her dad, John, co-owners of J.A. Balistreri Winery, make fresh pasta.

One generation back, moms traditionally ruled the kitchen. When it came to warm, fuzzy food nostalgia, mothers came first.

Now, the culinary influence of fathers on their sons and daughters finally is being acknowledged.

Dads often have a significant impact on how their children eat, taste, cook and dine.

This paternal input is especially strong in offspring who pursue a career in food. In honor of Father's Day, we offer memories of Dad from four notable Denver-area foodies: a baker, a chef, a winemaker and a teacher.

### Ian Kleinman

**The current chef de cuisine at O's Steak and Seafood in Westminster has cooked a Father's Day meal with his dad at New York's famed James Beard House.**

**Father:** Stephen Kleinman, culinary instructor, Art Institute of Colorado, Denver. His father was a culinary instructor in Norway.

**Memories of Dad:** "As a young Kleinman, my dad would take me with him to his kitchen riding in a baby carrier on his back. He would set me on the counter as he would prep. He said that I would never cry - instead, I'd watch him as he created his menu. My favorite snack at the age of 2 was escargot. I remember him in a white chef's coat. 'Wow,' I thought. 'How cool!'

"He gave me a great palate. I'd come home and he'd have fresh pasta hanging in the kitchen. I started working in my parents' restaurant in Breckenridge when I was 9 years old. I wouldn't be where I am without him."

### Claudine Pepin

**Co-star of various public-television cooking series with her dad, she's married to Denver chef Rollie Wesen. The mother of a young daughter teaches classes at A Cook's Kitchen in Denver.**

**Father:** Jacques Pepin, noted French-born TV cooking-show host and cookbook author



Photo by Ellen Jaskol / The Rocky

Chef Ian Kleinman, left, and his father, Stephen, a culinary instructor.



Photo by Barry Gutierrez / The Rocky

Claudine Pepin, left, and her father, TV-cooking host and cookbook author Jacques Pepin.



Michael Bortz's father, Wayne, is a retired chocolate maker.



Photo by Ellen Jaskol / The Rocky

City Bakery owner Michael Bortz got his love of cooking from his father.

**Memories of Dad:** "Whether I am doing something correctly or incorrectly in the kitchen, there's not a moment when I'm cooking that I don't hear his voice in my head with a French accent. I can be cooking green beans and I'll hear him say, 'Turn the heat up.'  
"If my father was coming over for dinner tonight, I'd just keep it simple. I'd do a roast chicken, a green salad and some new potatoes with garlic. That's his favorite kind of meal."

### Julie Balistreri

**She is vice president and co-owner of J.A. Balistreri Winery in Denver and a mother of four.**

**Father:** John Balistreri, president, co-owner and winemaker, J.A. Balistreri, which produced 50,000 bottles of wine in 2007, sold primarily through their winery tasting room.

**Memories of Dad:** "Food is really a way of life in my family. Before we opened the winery, my father always made wine at home when I was growing up - mainly muscat. He has always liked to cook. He's the guy who makes roast chicken, red sauce and pasta from scratch every Sunday - no dried, boxed pasta!

"Our family actually has dinner together every night. One of my favorite things to cook is grilled eggplant with tomato mint salsa with Reggiano-Parmagiano cheese."

### Michael Bortz

**The baker owns City Bakery in Denver.**

**Father:** Wayne Bortz, retired chocolate maker and former owner of Bortz Chocolate Co., Reading, Pa.

**Memories of Dad:** "When I was young, I started working in the plant, molding chocolate and decorating Easter bunnies. . . . My dad always said, 'Good bread and good soup - you got a restaurant made.' He'd pull anything out of the pantry and make soup.

"His biggest influence on me was saying that all you need to make a home is a workshop and a garden. Every day in the summer he'd make a salad of tomato and red onions with oil and vinegar and salt and black pepper. I got a love of good cooking from him."