

# VoyageLA

## Hidden Gems: Meet Megan Walker of Made by Meg Catering



Today we'd like to introduce you to Megan Walker. Them and their team share their story with us below:

Chef Meg Walker's professional life began in a completely different field than she currently finds herself in. While working as a Financial Advisor with Merrill Lynch and Smith Barney for five years, Meg's passion for cooking became undeniable and led her to attend culinary school at Le Cordon Bleu in Pasadena, CA. During her final semester of culinary school, Meg secured an externship at Michelin starred restaurant, Ortolan in Los Angeles, working with famed Chef Owner, Christophe Émé. While working in Chef Émé's inspiring, fine-dining kitchen, Meg made the daring decision to quit her financial advising

job and pursue her passion for cooking full-time.

While Meg was working at Ortolan, she graciously accepted an offer from a friend asking her to cater a small dinner, and after that fateful night in 2007, the private catering event requests never stopped. Meg quickly decided to turn these requests into a business and the same year she received her first catering request, she started her company, Made by Meg. Specializing in seasonal cuisine and an unprecedented caliber of service, Made by Meg has grown to become the premiere chef-driven catering company in Southern California, catering over 600 events each year and employing over 250 people. Meg has recently expanded her business to become the operator of La Venta Inn in Palos Verdes, CA. In this role, Meg will be refreshing the interior of the historic venue, as well as preserving the iconic look of the property. As an operator, not only will made by Meg be the exclusive caterer at the Inn, but she plans to continue its 60+ year legacy of hosting exquisite seaside events.



Meg is a Manhattan Beach native and currently resides in the South Bay with her husband and two young daughters. Through community outreach, she is an integral and active member of the South Bay community.

**Alright, so let's dig a little deeper into the story – has it been an easy path overall and if not, what were the challenges you've had to overcome?**

First and foremost, I started catering because I love cooking and hospitality, then the company came next. Running a catering company or any business really means learning to be an effective leader, an amateur lawyer (in several areas of law), an endurance athlete, and spiritually effervescent. Some days I succeed at those things and other days, I don't, but the challenge is always how to get yourself to the next day without feeling like you've bitten off more than you can chew. You have to effectively understand the difference between a speed bump (just a little delay) and an obstacle (ain't no going around that one). All that said, if I didn't love a challenge or pushing myself, I would have hung up my apron a long time ago. If you want to talk about specific obstacles, bring on over a bottle of nice Pinot Noir and two glasses!

**Thanks – so what else should our readers know about Made by Meg Catering?**

I started my company, Made by Meg, back in 2007 after catering a small corporate dinner as a favor to a friend. I had just finished up culinary school and quit my financial advisor position to pursue my passion for cooking and new business venture... and it was one of the best decisions I have ever made! Since then, I'm proud to say that Made by Meg has grown to become one of the most sought-after, chef-driven catering companies in SoCal, catering over 600 events each year, employing over 250 people, and now exclusively operating and catering La Venta Inn. What sets us apart from other catering companies, in addition to our exclusive operation of La Venta Inn, is our level of service and the seasonality of our dishes. Made by Meg offers a service ratio of 1 staff member per 15 guests, in contrast to other catering companies which usually operate at a ratio of 1 server to 30 guests. Additionally, we take pride in offering seasonally focused dishes, making use of the freshest, quality local ingredients to create bespoke menus for a memorable culinary experience.

**If we knew you growing up, how would we have described you?**

I always say I've been 40 since I was four. For as long as I can remember, I have been more interested in growth than in play, which has served me well in business. I was 13 the first time that I decided to cook a holiday meal for my entire family, with little to no experience, and have been in love with entertaining ever since. These days, I keep a tight, small circle of close friends and am not really one for small talk, but I remain driven by my passion for hospitality and helping infuse happiness into every occasion!





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