**Lita-Luise Chappell**

**Food Industry / Cookbook Writer Bio**

[www.litachappell.com](http://www.litachappell.com/)

**Short**

25-words:

Lita-Luise Chappell is an accomplished chef with a degree in Restaurant Management, Continental trained - specializing in French, Italian, and vegetarian, and a cookbook writer.

**Medium**

120-words:

Lita-Luise Chappell began a career in food service, working in San Diego restaurants as a waitress and food preparer. Her father had been a baker while serving in the Merchant Marines, and her Italian mother and grandmother were excellent cooks, thus she took up an early appreciation of the art with collecting recipes and creating her own. Food Service was her first focus in college, and in 1976, she received an Associate of Science Degree in Food Service Management at Grossmont College in San Diego. She went on to work in many different restaurants in Southern California, ranging from being a line-cook to sous chef, to restaurant manager, and then as an owner of her own catering company, Great Goodness.

150-words:

Beginning at twelve years old, Lita began cooking under the direction of her Italian mother and grandmother, and her father who loved to bake. At eighteen she began to work in local San Diego restaurants, as a waitress, food preparer, and a line cook. At twenty-three she received an A.S. in food service management, with direct training under Chef Hilfiger, executive chef of Black Angus Continental Foods. She was trained in European Continental cuisine, and received additional training working for a French chef, and a chef specializing in vegetarian cooking. For several years she was a chef of Piret’s Restaurant in San Diego, a catering sales representative and chef with Tony Kopas & Associates Catering, a garnishee and sous chef at the Morgan Run Resort & Club in Rancho Santa Fe, and ran her own catering business, called Great Goodness. In 2015, she published *The Thelemic Cookbook: Cooking with Correspondences.*

**Long**

1,236-words:

Lita-Luise Chappell began experimenting with food, early. At age twelve, she was allowed to use the stove under the direction of her mother and grandmother. Grandma Vicki was from Turin, Italy, and specialized in that country’s cooking. Lita’s mother was able to meld her Italian heritage of flavors with the American palate that her American father preferred. He had been a baker in the Merchant Marines, so the smell of baked bread was a familiar aroma in their kitchen. Her father didn’t work from a written recipe, so she had to observe, ask questions, and then write down what he was doing. Over the years, she got in the habit of noting and testing recipes for herself in this same way. Her appreciation of food grew from then on.

In San Diego, in 1971 at eighteen, Lita’s first job in the restaurant business was as a food waitress at Coco’s in La Mesa, a very popular burger and steak house. She learned a lot about how the front of a restaurant works, which induced her to continue working in the food business. In 1972 she moved to Idaho and got a job working for the Cookhouse Restaurant, which was owned by the Sizzler Corporation. She began doing food prep, then as a line cook, and ended up as an assistant manager. This sparked further interest in the culinary industry, which brought her back to California to pursue that goal and get a degree in food service.

Lita worked in many restaurants when she returned, while attending school. She was a short order cook at the House of Ice and a waitress at the Iron Horse Restaurant in La Mesa. Then she did food prep at Future Foods, San Diego’s first fast food, health food, drive-through eatery. At this time, Lita put together a small cookbook with recipes for tofu, which was gaining popularity in the health food industry. Next, she worked for Canteen Food Services and was the morning chef in the cafeteria of Teledyn Technologies. She also worked at the Top Shelf Restaurant in La Mesa, at San Diego’s Hilton Inn, and then at the Town and Country Hotel.

In 1976 Lita received her first higher education degree, with an Associate of Science in Food Service Management at Grossmont College. The director of the program was Mr. William Cheeseman, who sparked in her a passion for food and showed her how to translate that passion by cooking for others. She was trained for two years in American and Continental preparation, under Chef Raymond Hilfiger, the executive chef of Black Angus Continental Foods. Her final project was the 1976 Fourth of July Bicentennial dinner for 200 guests. It was a great experience, but the American burger and steak were not the foods she wanted to dish out.

With a move to San Diego’s north county in 1979, her training continued with French cuisine, working as a prep and sous chef at La Mediteraneé Restaurant. Her knowledge increased with French sauce bases, she garnered some sublime French recipes, and learned what the French palate demanded. The head chef was strict, but instilled in her the desire for perfection with every bite.

In 1978 she found a restaurant that served food more in tune to the way she was eating, which was primarily vegetarian, at The Gatekeeper Restaurant. Located in Del Mar, it was unique, due to it being one of the first large, upscale vegetarian restaurants in the county, and it had a grass roof. The amazing team of people that ran the restaurant introduced her to the use of directing spiritual blessing into the food while preparing and cooking it. The magic of food came to life for her in that kitchen. In 1980, Lita got a job working as a chef and kitchen manager for a French bistro called Piret’s, in San Diego’s banking district. It offered the added advantage of several deli cases full of French imported foods and shelves of imported French wine that she took advantage of to be innovative and create specialties.

It was sometime during that first year at Piret’s that she was approached to do a private catering job. After doing one, it was easy to accept another. For the next three years, she did double duty working for the French bistro and her own catering company, called Great Goodness. Although there were some chicken and fish offerings on her menu, it primarily consisted of vegetarian foods with vegetable sauce bases that she specially created, and the catering work ranged from two to 200 guests for private and corporate events. The income was good with both jobs, but after three years she needed a break. Lita then travelled with her partner through western Europe and northern Africa for eighteen months, exploring the fresh food markets and learning about unusual foods, collecting recipes, and discovering new styles of cooking and food specialties of each country when dining at restaurants.

When Lita returned to the U.S., she worked for one of San Diego’s top catering business, Tony Kopas & Associates, as a catering sales representative and chef. She also attended the California School of Herbal Studies to learn more about herbs specifically, and took a Nutrition and Wellness course to better understand the relationship of food with wellness. In 1985, sensing that a holistic approach to health with the body through food and the mind were an upcoming trend, she went back to school and got her bachelor and master degrees in psychology with an emphasis in health education, from the University for Humanistic Studies in Del Mar. While in school, she worked as a Diet Counselor for The Diet Center, and as a Garnishee Chef and then Sous Chef at the Morgan Run Resort & Club in Rancho Santa Fe.

Then, she switched occupations and began to learn electronics. It had nothing to do with food, although she did some catering for them, but the company was producing TENS machines (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) devices for pain. This fit into her approach with holism and natural medicine, and it helped pay for school. To add to this approach to healing, she attended the School for Healing Arts and became a certified clinical Hypnotherapist, and took additional training as a practitioner in Neuro-Linguistics. Both of which, transitioned her into opening her own business, The Balance Within, counseling clients on the balance of body and mind.

In 1999, Lita became a local leader of Ordo Templi Orientis, a world-wide fraternal organization dedicated to supporting personal freedoms. As master of her local body, her cooking experience came in handy, because she found herself catering for just about every event that the local organization produced. This continued on for fifteen years, by which time, she had culled from her many years as a chef and caterer, hundreds of recipes and reproduced them. With the organization having many special days throughout the year called “feast” days, yet no foods were recommended for these events, she saw a need. Over a span of two years, Lita drew on her knowledge of foods, magic, and herbs, along with her many experiences of international foods, to write and publish in 2015, *The Thelemic Cookbook: Cooking with Correspondences.*

Since then, Lita has continued to create feast foods when needed for special events, prepares special dinners for friends and family, and perpetually delights her husband with international gourmet meals.