

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE:

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Breaking Bread with Culture Can Mend the World in Unexpected Ways.

*In a world that separates us into tribes, how do we look beyond our differences
to celebrate what unites us?*

*In It Begins at the Table, blogger and author, Lisa Soldo-Johnson shares her deep conviction
that food, family, friendship and love connect us as human beings - and given a chance, can
mend the world in unexpected ways.*

(Prior Lake, Minnesota. October __, 2019) A global cookbook that inspires readers to bridge the gaps between cultures, discover the beauty and goodness of others, open their hearts and tables, and prepare delicious authentic dishes from around the globe. Lisa's new book, *It Begins at the Table*, includes personal stories and recipes of contributors from countries around the world, including Assyria, Iran, Israel, China, Russia, Mexico, and the United States. Lisa teaches you to make over 140 delicious international recipes, host a cultural dinner gathering using custom-designed menus, maintain a well-stocked pantry with essential ingredients, and experience new flavors and special traditions. Lisa has written a cookbook that is so much more than delicious recipes and distinctive foods; *It Begins at the Table* is a tale of seeing life through the eyes of love.

The book has been endorsed by —Riaz Patel, 2-Time Emmy-Nominated Executive Producer, David Fhima, Chef & Owner of Fhimas' Minneapolis Restaurants Nutritional Curators for the Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx, WNBA World Champions, and Jeff Tow Arnett, Former Professional Football Player Owner / President of Golden Gate Equestrian Center

Lisa is the founder of culinarybutterfly.com, a global food and lifestyle blog where she inspires everyday cooks to prepare authentic dishes from around the world and introduces her readers to the traditions and lifestyles of other cultures. Lisa's work on healthy eating, recipe ideas, and restaurant reviews has been featured in over 20 publications of N2 Publishing's *Living in the Wilds Magazine*; a monthly publication for members of exclusive communities.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Website: www.culinarybutterfly.com

Digital Media Kit with excerpts

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CulinaryButterflyBlog/>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/culinary.butterfly/>

October 2019

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IT BEGINS AT THE TABLE

140 recipes to inspire love for every nation, tribe and tongue

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AUTHORS BIO

Lisa Soldo-Johnson is the founder of CulinaryButterfly.com, a global food, and lifestyle blog where she inspires her readers to make recipes with international flavors while introducing them to traditions, lifestyles, and people from around the world. Her blog, <http://www.culinarybutterfly.com> has become a popular gathering spot for home cooks and foodies who want a fresh, easy approach to preparing food with an international influence.

Lisa is the author of the new cookbook, *It Begins at the Table: 140 recipes to inspire love for every nation, tribe, and tongue*. A cookbook that talks about the power of food and the power of love - how gathering at the table over a good meal can bridge the gap between cultures and open the door to understanding.

Lisa's work on healthy eating, recipe ideas, and restaurant reviews has been featured in over 20 publications of N2 Publishing's *Living in the Wilds Magazine*; a monthly publication for members of exclusive communities.

You can find out more by visiting her blog at

www.CulinaryButterfly.com



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ENDORSEMENTS

In a world that sometimes feels irrevocably divided, Lisa shows us a connecting path forward. Hard conversations become easy when sitting down to experience one another in our truest form – as just one human sharing and receiving food from another. Hope never tasted so good.

—**RIAZ PATEL** 2-Time Emmy-Nominated Executive Producer

Lisa has managed to write a cookbook that is so much more; that has addressed so many experiential touch points where most others have missed. Her love for people shines through her inspiring words and reflects a genuine intent to put all else aside and to gather over the love of a great meal.

—**DAVID FHIMA** Chef & Owner of Fhimas' Minneapolis Restaurants

Nutritional Curators for the Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx, WNBA World Champions

As a former professional athlete, nutritious food has always been important to me. I often look back and remember the really great meals and comradery my teammates and I shared. Food is a way for people of all backgrounds to connect and come together. Lisa shows that eating is about more than just good food. It is the experience of preparing, sharing, and spending time with friends and family that matters most. “It Begins at the Table” clearly places value on the pleasures that come with eating great food.

—**JEFF TOW ARNETT** Former Professional Football Player

Owner / President of Golden Gate Equestrian Center



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SAMPLE INTERVIEW

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Sample Interview with Lisa Soldo-Johnson, founder of CulinaryButterfly.com and author of It Begins at the Table: 140 recipes to inspire love for every nation, tribe, and tongue.

In a world that separates us into tribes, how do we look beyond our differences to celebrate what makes us the same? It Begins at the Table is a global cookbook that introduces the idea that food, family, friendships, and love are the great connectors of humanity that can bridge the gap between cultures and has the power to erase distance and difference.

Lisa Soldo-Johnson is the founder of CulinaryButterfly.com, a global food, and lifestyle blog where she teaches her readers easy to make recipes with international flavors while introducing them to traditions, lifestyles, and people from around the world. Her blog, <http://www.culinarybutterfly.com> has become a popular gathering spot for home cooks and foodies who want a fresh, easy approach to preparing food with an international influence. Lisa is the author of the new cookbook, *It Begins at the Table: 140 recipes to inspire love for every nation, tribe, and tongue*. A cookbook that talks about the power of food and the power of love.

How gathering at the table over a good meal can bridge the gap between cultures and open the door to understanding.

Q: Welcome Lisa, and thanks for taking the time to sit down for this interview. Let's get right into it. Tell me, what is your book about?

LSJ: *It Begins at the Table* is my love letter to my children, my family, my friends, and the world. I wrote this book to inspire an awakening - for everyone who reads it - to open their heart and their mind to the goodness of others; especially those of other cultures. And, of course, to make some pretty fantastic international food too!

The cookbook includes over 140 recipes and cultural stories of friends whose families migrated to the United States from seven countries including Assyria, Iran, Israel, China, Russia, Mexico, including recipes from the United States. Each recipe was taught to me in the kitchens of friends from these areas of the world - and infused with a collection of my own creations.

An important chapter in my book is, "Cultural Gatherings" where I teach you to host a successful gathering with menu options and a countdown schedule to ensure your meal is a success. Each chapter includes "Cultural Pantries" which is a list of the most widely used ingredients from each country, so you always have the ingredients on hand when preparing a dish.

It Begins at the Table connects the reader and the cook to the beauty of other cultures. It encourages you to look beyond our differences and celebrate what makes us the same and to open your heart and your table to someone from another culture. Food, family, friendship, and love connect us as human beings, and given a chance, can mend the world in unexpected ways. This is a much-needed message that resonates with excitement or interest with most everyone who hears it.

Q: What inspired you to write this book?

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LSJ: It began with my mother. It wasn't until the doctor diagnosed her with dementia that I felt an urgency to capture on paper the recipes she had stored in her memory and had yet to teach me. It was then that I began to record her recipes. At the same time, I was intrigued by the sincere love and passion I had experienced over the years from friends of different cultures. No matter the differences in ethnicity, language, tradition, food, or religion; the same thing happened. Each time we gathered over a meal, distance and difference disappeared while love and acceptance grew.

That's when I discovered that food, family, friendship, and love are the great connectors that can erase distance and difference and change how we see each other. These two experiences were the inspiration for my book.

Q: Did you attend culinary school to learn to cook?

LSJ: No. I am a self-taught cook - always in the process of learning. Like most of us, my training comes from trial and error. I am always on a journey of discovery in the kitchen — never arriving at a place where there is little left to learn. I like it this way. It keeps me humble and makes life interesting. It's when we stop evolving that we stop learning. I hope to inspire cooks of all levels including the person with little to no experience in the kitchen, that preparing delicious food from around the world is not only doable, but it's also a delight waiting to be experienced.

Q: What attracts you to other cultures?

LSJ: Growing up in the inner city of Minneapolis, I almost always felt more at home with a culture that is not my own. They have something to teach me. Something I need to know to become a wiser person. I hope to pass the wisdom and passion for others on to my children, and I hope they teach their children the truth about the goodness of individuals different from themselves.

Q: What inspired you to use the butterfly analogy throughout the book?

LSJ: Butterflies teach us so much about our own lives. Like metamorphosis, life is an ever-changing experience, and it is often the friends and strangers who come in and out of our lives that can transform our world into something new. Just as there are over seventeen thousand different species of butterflies including variations in colors, markings, and shapes; every culture has a rich heritage of ideas and traditions that breathe life into the human experience. Butterflies are a gentle reminder that we were all created different yet equally beautiful.

Q: How does the butterfly effect connect to your book?

LSJ: The butterfly effect is an analogy that one insignificant moment - like the gentle flap of a butterfly's wings - can alter history and change the course of human life and our destinies. I use the butterfly effect analogy because the simple act of sharing a meal with someone new and inquiring about their culture, with an open desire to learn, can create a cause and effect that can change the course of your life and maybe even your destiny. The butterfly effect does exist, and it begins at the table.

Q: What are some of your favorite recipes in the book?

LSJ: When I wrote, *It Begins at the Table*, I decided to only include recipes that inspired me to want to make them again and again. Recipes that move the person cooking it and their guests to say, "This is really good." I have yet to choose a single favorite recipe from my book because each is uniquely delicious.

Q: Many home cooks are not used to preparing dishes they are unfamiliar with. How difficult is it for the everyday cook to make your recipes and are they complicated or time-consuming?

LSJ: That's a great question. Before writing this book, I often approached an unfamiliar recipe with a bit of skepticism because I didn't know what to expect from the taste, texture, and the final result of the dish. And, not every recipe in a book or on the internet is good. However, I have spent over two years testing, developing, and refining each recipe to ensure I wrote the recipe simple and clear so the final taste of the dish is worth making it. Of course, everyone has

a different palate or sense of taste. I always say, when the dish is done, give it a taste, and if needed, adjust the seasoning as desired.

Q: Tell us about the chapter “Cultural Gatherings” and how it plays a roll in bringing people together.

LSJ: I love to entertain. I typically host at least 4 to 6 gatherings a year in my home. They range from large holiday celebrations to an intimate evening with friends. Many of these gatherings include guests with diverse cultural backgrounds. But when we come together at the table, often surrounded by new foods and unique flavors, the room fills with laughter, conversations become easy, new friendships are formed, guarded hearts soften, and we learn something about each other we had not known before. Food has a way of breaking down walls and opening up hearts when we break bread together at the table. But for many, entertaining any size group can be intimidating. To make it easy, I have created an entire chapter filled with custom-designed menus that include a selection of easy to make courses and a handy countdown schedule that tells you exactly how and when to prepare for your gathering with success.

Q. What do you want people to know by reading your book?

LSJ: In this world, we are surrounded by people of different cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions. Yet, when it comes to food, family, friendship and love; at the heart of it, we are all the same. My dream is that my reader will step out of their comfort zone in the kitchen and in life to discover new flavors and new friends from around the world. That they will open up their heart, their home, and their tables to discover and embrace the beauty of other cultures so we can begin to mend the world in unexpected ways.

Q. Do you have plans for a second book?

LSJ: Thanks for asking. Right now I am planning to launch a series of cooking and food tours through Culinary Butterfly. The “Cultural Cooking Tours” will feature cooking classes focusing on authentic dishes from countries around the world. The “At the Table Tours” will partner with some of the top restaurants in Minnesota for an evening to gather at the table where you will

sample mouthwatering foods from a featured country and learn entertaining and memorable history about the culture. Each tour offers an opportunity to taste foods and meet people from around the world.

Q: Well, this has been very informative. Thanks for your time, today Lisa. How can people find out more if they are interested in your blog or your book?

LSJ: You can follow my blog @CulinaryButterfly.com for my latest recipes including global food and lifestyle trends. And you can purchase my book, It Begins at the Table, on the blog or on Amazon.com



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For more information on "**It Begins at the Table**" visit the website at:
<http://culinarybutterfly.com/video-trailer/>

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LISA SOLDI-JOHNSON

