



Creating a Home Chef's Paradise in Brooklyn

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The Brooklyn Kitchen celebrates 10 years

Japanese knives, cast iron skillets, olive oils—crammed into every nook and cranny of Williamsburg's [Brooklyn Kitchen](#) are tools and tricks of the trade for both the serious home chef and the 20-something still trying to figure out exactly how long water takes to boil. It's a foodie treasure trove. One that in the age of the on-demand economy where you can have everything from your laundry to tonight's dinner delivered with the push of a button hasn't just survived but has thrived.

Taylor Erkkinen and Harry Rosenblum opened the Brooklyn Kitchen in 2006, focusing on tools and cooking ware for the at home chef with an

appreciation of how those tools make food better. Ten years later the Brooklyn Kitchen has become a bit of a foodie mecca. I spoke with Erkkinen about their success, what's next and how cooking at home has changed.



Long Island Pulse: Brooklyn Kitchen opened back in 2006. What do you attribute to the success of the business?

Taylor Erkkinen: We've always stayed really close to our customer base, what they're interested in cooking and learning more about. It was because of their interest in whole meat that we started teaching meat-butchering classes. We've expanded and grown in response to customers' needs.

Pulse: What were some of the challenges early on and how did you cope with them?

Erkkinen: It's not just an early challenge but trying to take on a lot. We are trying to run a business in the age of Amazon and pride ourselves

on excellent customer service, the expertise and experience that we bring, finding smaller brands that are not as well known and disturbed and offering better customer service than through a chat window.

Pulse: Talking about expertise, tell us a bit about your background.

Erkkinen: I came to cooking and retail in a sideways way. I'm not a cook, have never worked in a restaurant since graduating college. I come from a design background and when the store opened in 2006 I focused on tools for cooking at home with an appreciation for quality design and craftsmanship and how that helps make better food.



Pulse: You were your customer, the home chef. How has the home food scene changed in the past 10 years?

Erkkinen: Instagram offers the opportunity to enter the arena of cooking competitively. There's the self imposed or socially imposed challenge to cook more, people will post up the breakfast they're really proud of or the lunch they made for their kids, which no one probably

cared about years ago. I appreciate anything that gets people cooking more.

Pulse: What's something every home chef should have?

Erkkinen: We have a couple of secret tools we recommend: basic seasoning is going to take your cooking light years ahead, invest in olive oil and vinegar. A cast iron skillet if you need only one pan.

Pulse: Tell us about the cooking classes you offer?

Erkkinen: You'll learn a lot but you'll have fun. The cooking classes started out of us not seeing enough of a comfortable and easy appreciation for cooking in the city. We wanted to offer a casual, easy approach to cooking where it's not training anyone to be professionals but turning interested people into the obsessive.

Pulse: Ten years is a big achievement, what's next?

Erkkinen: We're trying to spread the word about online sales and the website. We want to be able to sell products to people beyond Brooklyn. I do think there are lots of opportunities for us to grow and teach more classes and help people cook.



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