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**Contact: Lola Honeybone**  
[lola@mwnashville.com](mailto:lola@mwnashville.com)

## **Supper Club Perfection – How to Prepare, Energize and Serve-Up the Ultimate Dinner Party**

**Renowned supper club instructor details the step by step in new book** (Brentwood, TN) Debi Shawcross, founder of Signature Menus of Richmond, VA, knows well the stresses, sudden disasters and vexing balance of the supper club. As the instructor of a wildly popular dinner club school and online contributor to the nation's most visited foodie stops, she has coached thousands through menu selection, tricky day-of preparations and the common pitfalls of supper club hosting. She knows the first misstep to the last and the all too typical classic supper-club overachievement. When the familiar is pitched aside for complicated mouthfuls of "emulsified" and "souffled" – it's culinary mayhem that never fails to crush a host serving up a mis-matched four course ensemble with the highest hopes that everything will miraculously settle. Shawcross, who adores the nostalgic version of the supper club, insists that preparations need never be a frantic toss-up of recipes, cookbooks, websites, blogs and last minute runs for forgotten spices, missed equipment and ingredients. "Supper club is a luxury," she says. "It can and should always be a night when friends come together to relax in a laughter-filled home. Amazing food is always the goal, but never served by a stressed and frantic host." Shawcross insists a host is separated from pedigreed chef status by an efficient, detailed plan. Her new book, *Friends at the Table: The Ultimate Supper Club Cookbook* (Franklin Green Publishing, April) provides the step-by-step for creative, dazzling dishes and the subtle entertainment details that make for a memorable night. Shawcross, whose California culinary roots combines with a classic Southern influence, breaks down day-of preparations into a manageable list of timetable tasks that will allow a host to lightly cook while entertaining, chatting, and laughing with guests. Menus such as Mesquite Grilled Steak with Chimichurri Sauce and Fresh Fruit Tartlets with Pistachio Coconut Crust trick guests with its seeming complexity while the always stress-wrought selection of appetizers is made simple. "I've written this book so that you can take one of my menus and bring it to life," says Shawcross. "I've included menus that are grand and elegant, some more casual and ethnic, and some a mix of all them all." Each menu is packed with nuances of flavor that will inspire and wow guests with its thoughtful and consistent pairings.

- With menus sectioned by Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer, hosts can grab seasonal dishes that promise fresh ingredients.
- The Shawcross Plan Ahead Countdown Schedule, for each menu, eliminates the frantic jostle for oven space and temperature. From 24 hours ahead to 6, 4, and 2, each step takes position.
- Table-scaping is made simple. From backyard green clippings to dollar store goodies, Shawcross can set the tone to compliment formal china or a mixed bag of patterns and styles.

- Detailed shopping lists for each menu are split into food type so grocery trips are made efficient; and wine pairing and equipment needs are made clear for each menu.

The Shawcross supper-club simplifies a grand event and transforms a normally frantic behind-the-scenes to a fine-tuned, low stress harmony of perfect timing and spectacular presentation. Guests are treated to extreme eating, paired wines and a play list that keeps the night moving. *Friends at the Table* is a cookbook at heart with the delicate Shawcross push to dazzle friends with something a bit different and flavors more refined.

**About the Author:**

Debi Shawcross is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy and Arizona State University. After completing a specialized study in wedding cakes from CCA, Shawcross launched the wildly successful Silver Spoon Desserts of San Francisco. With a move to Richmond, VA, in 2003 she opened Signature Menus, providing specialized cooking classes and dinner club instructional sessions that cater to private parties and corporate events. She is the author of the best-selling *Signature Salads*, now in a third printing, and author of the soon-to-publish *Friends at the Table: The Ultimate Supper Club Cookbook* (Franklin Green Publishing, April 2011). Shawcross is a regular guest on Virginia This Morning, a repeat guest on Martha Stewart Sirius Radio, and a contributor to Skirt! Magazine. Her blog "Table Talk" was named to Saveur Magazine's "Sites We Love: Best on the Web" and her food photography is regularly featured on Food Gawker and Tastepotting.