

The easel, the loom, the potters' wheel. The camera, the kiln, the chisel. The Vineyard is rich in artisans with eyes and hands of fine artists. Whether for the collector, homeowner or discriminating designer or architect, Made-on-Island is a gallery for new possibilities.

The Pie Piper Phantom Chef Dee Smith

Dee Smith, owner of *Tea Lane Caterers* and *The Phantom Chef*, a gourmet meal drop-off service, is up to her elbows in new ideas. Deep in the heart of her Chilmark commercial kitchen, she's



created a concept for fresh-baked pies that may just make the sandwich obsolete.

"Pie isn't just for apples," Dee asserts, pointing out some of the delectable concoctions that she and her staff have

been perfecting for the past year. Just in time for the holidays, *The Phantom Chef* has launched a new line of what Dee calls "savory pies," meals filled with wholesome homemade ingredients like roasted chicken, eggplant parmigiana, Julia Child's own beef bourguignon, roasted winter vegetables, quahogs, seafood, mac & cheese and, what may be most mouth-watering of all, turkey dinner pie.

"Our Gobbler Pie is perfect for people who don't want to fuss in the kitchen but want a wonderful holiday meal," says Dee. Layers of fresh-roasted turkey, vegetables, gravy, stuffing and cranberry sauce nestle between two crusts in a custom-designed, reusable pie tin. "And we deliver!" Dee adds.

The idea for hearty pies was born in 2004, she explains, but it took until recently to find the time to perfect the concept. "The crust is my mother's recipe," Dee explains. "She used it to feed six kids dirt poor. She'd mix up all



the ingredients, put them in a pie shell, and we thought we'd died and gone to heaven. I'm sure it was just all the scraps left in the refrigerator."

Dee's thriving 15-year-old Island businesses and young son kept her so busy that it wasn't until this year that she carved out time in her busy schedule to

hone the savory pie recipes.

All are two-crust and feature as many local ingredients as possible. Up to three inches thick, each pie feeds six to eight at a cost of \$3.75 to \$4.75 per serving. "That's cheaper than a sandwich," Dee exclaims.

"Grab a slice or a whole pie, warm it up, bang it on a plate with soup or a salad, and you have a meal. We can even create the whole dinner and deliver it to you."

Dee credits her baker, Jeanette Nelson, with crafting the perfect crusts. "We had to refine them to hold a variety of ingredients," Dee says. "Our crusts are never soggy."

Apparently Dee's not alone in her passion for pies. Nationally known restaurant consultants *Andrew Freeman & Co.* predicts that pies of all types will be the cupcakes of 2011. "Move over cupcake, make way for pie," the company's website exhorts, insisting that pies in every form, including savory, sweet and bite-sized

minis, will be this year's hottest food trend.

Just back from a course on gluten free baking for professionals at *The Culinary Institute of America* in Hyde Park, New York, Dee is now obsessed with yet another new venture: "Gluten Free on MV."

"I'm gluten-intolerant myself," she says. "I gave up products that contain gluten, lost 48 pounds and feel like a different person. Now I'm working on developing a line of gluten free savory and dessert pies. I think there's a growing demand for these kinds of products and I learned how to make them taste great." She says she's testing a gluten-free mac & cheese pie and hopes to have some dessert pies ready for the holidays.

Long known for her delicious quiches (a favorite for brides who order them for casual post-wedding gatherings) and classic dessert pies, Dee will also provide *Cronig's Markets* with a line of fruit cobblers and crisps for the holidays.

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To order *The Phantom Chef* savory pies, quiches, fruit pies or gluten free pies, call 508-645-3663 or visit www.tealanecaterers.com.

Dee Smith (top left) creates savory pies, including Roasted Chicken, Eggplant Parmigiana, Seafood, Mac & Cheese and the Turkey Dinner Pie (top right).