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**Too busy to cook? Let personal chef Barbara Schroeder into your kitchen**

**By** [**SUE GLEITER, The Patriot-News**](http://connect.pennlive.com/user/sgleiter/index.html)

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If you’re too busy to cook dinner, let alone do the grocery shopping, Barbara Schroeder is at your service. For a fee, the Lower Paxton Twp. woman will plan meals, shop for groceries and cook enough meals like teriyaki chicken thighs, balsamic glazed salmon and veggie lasagna to fill your refrigerator or freezer for up to one month.

[**Barb’s Tailored Tastes**](http://www.barbstailoredtastes.com/), a personal chef business, grew out of Schroeder’s love of cooking. Last March she lost her job in Harrisburg due to economic cutbacks. “I was looking and looking and thought ‘What do I like to do?’ I like to cook and started researching,” she said.

Schroeder, who describes herself as self-taught like celebrity cook Rachael Ray, had previously worn many hats in the food service industry having worked as a waitress, cook, bartender, wedding planner for a hotel and meeting/banquet coordinator for a large association.

Friends often suggested she open a restaurant but the idea of working 24/7 didn’t appeal to Schroeder. She looked into the [**American Personal Chef Association**](http://www.personalchef.com/), an organization of personal chefs based in California, enrolled in a seminar and took a food safety management course.

She’s hoping to attract clients ranging from busy professionals to retired people and new parents. “Basically what I do is make people’s lives easier,” she said.

Before she even sets foot in the grocery store, Schroeder will meet with clients, review their food likes and dislikes and find out if they have any dietary needs. Clients can request custom meals or pick meals off of a pre-set menu.

Schroeder then sets up a day to come to the client’s home to prepare the meals on site which can take about four to six hours. She shops the day she cooks and brings her own kitchen equipment including pots, pans, knives and cutting boards.

Pricing starts at $250 plus the cost of groceries and she is offering a 20 percent off discount for new customers. The meals are packaged and labeled with heating instructions.
“I always try and tell people if you are going out to eat or getting a lot of takeout, it’s bad, it’s not healthy, and in the long run, this can save you money. I can control the portion size ,” she said.

Schroeder also will do small dinner parties for between two and six guests as well as cooking classes and demonstrations. For more information, call 717-919-7492 or [**www.barbstailoredtastes.com**](http://www.barbstailoredtastes.com/).