

## **Q&A** with Abbey J. Steffen, Executive Chef at Republic Chophouse

Republic Chophouse opened on September 19, 2008 at 218 North Adams Street in Green Bay, WI. We sat down with Abbey, Executive Chef, to get some insight on this first-of-its-kind establishment in Green Bay.

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**QUESTION:** Tell us about how Republic Chophouse's menu differs from other area steakhouses?

**ABBEY:** For our menu, we took traditional dishes and added our own creative twists. I wanted guests to experience different blends of flavor in a way that is unexpected, yet pleasing. We have a lot of color incorporated into dishes as well as different cuts and sizes of premium steaks you won't be able to find in the area.

**Q:** What was your inspiration for the menu offerings?

**A:** I love to keep up on food trends. I go through phases and try to put an extraordinary twist on offerings. I like to fuse different tastes and ingredients together for a creative meal. Each cut of meat is seasoned with a secret spice recipe to give it our own flavor. We wanted to offer a mix of seafood, poultry and vegetable dishes to satisfy each and every guest.

**Q:** How did you fuse the menu with the overall dining experience?

**A:** The atmosphere at Republic is full of warm colors, rich dark woods and detailed lighting. Our contemporary setting will set the tone for a menu that is full of creative twists on traditional entrees, appetizers and sides.

**Q:** Tell us about some of your features.

**A:** We do offer signature dishes at Republic, which guests can only experience here. Being a chophouse, all of our steaks are Certified Angus Beef. Our Irish New York Strip (\$35), Republic's signature steak, is marinated in Guinness, whiskey, garlic, onion, oregano and sesame oil (and is also served with a shot of Jameson). We will also offer a signature, homemade Republic Velvet Cake (\$9), made up of four layers of red velvet cake with vanilla butter cream frosting and dark chocolate drizzle.

**Q:** There are numerous menu offerings at Republic. Why offer so many choices?

**A:** We do offer a full lounge, dinner, young adult and children's menu. We want diners to feel the flexibility in choices, whether they are looking to come in and order appetizers with drinks in the lounge or stay for an intimate dinner with family and friends.

**Q:** How long have you been working in the restaurant industry?

**A:** I have more than 12 years of experience in the restaurant and tourism industry. I have degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and the Fox Valley Technical College Culinary Arts School. Prior to being with Republic Chophouse, I served as executive chef for two other restaurants in the area.

**Q:** Are you able to host large parties?

**A:** At Republic, we offer exclusive seating for groups from 10 to 40 people. There are four rooms which offer a different setting for an exclusive private party.

**Q:** What inspired you to become a chef?

**A:** From a young age, I knew that I loved to cook. I would spend a lot of time in the kitchen with my Mother and Grandmother, as well as reading my Mom's cookbooks. As I got older I fell in love with art, so naturally I would combine the two and become a Chef. I feel very fortunate that I knew what I wanted to do for the rest of my life at such an early age.

**Q:** What is one thing about you want people to know about your kitchen?

**A:** I'm extremely meticulous in the kitchen. I think that having an organized kitchen is one of the most important aspects of a restaurant. I like to know exactly where things are and expect very sanitary conditions. I stress this on all the kitchen staff.

**Q:** Tell me about the red shoes you wear in the kitchen.

**A:** I wear bright, in-your-face, red clogs simply because I love shoes! In all honesty though, they reflect my personality. I am the type of person who is out-spoken, energetic, vibrant, and definitely not shy! They also help get people's attention.