



Phoebe Terrace hosts healthy eating gathering for residents

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Phoebe Terrace Allentown Building Manager Daniella Bruno, master of ceremonies, holds the microphone as Chef Dennis Rivera describes how he prepared turmeric salmon almond cakes for residents. The event was held Oct. 15 in the lobby at Phoebe Terrace. PRESS PHOTOS BY LOU WHEELAND

Published December 02, 2020 12:48PM

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 Special to The Press

Chef Dennis Rivera, the sous chef at the Phoebe Terrace, Allentown, recently prepared turmeric salmon almond cakes for residents in the lobby as part of Cura Hospitality's BeWell program.

This was the first gathering of residents in the lobby since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Grace Hoyer, manager of public relations, Cura Hospitality, "Our BeWell approach is designed to help our residents choose well when they dine with us.

"By shaping our dining environment to influence the healthy choice and fashioning our BeWell options as convenient, attractive and normal, we make the healthy choice the easy choice."

The program is provided by Cura's parent company, Elior North America, which understands the influence of health and wellness.

A three-year employee at Phoebe Terrace, Chef Rivera is constantly creating healthful and delicious dishes for the residents of Phoebe Terrace, an independent living retirement community.

"My heritage is Puerto Rican. My favorite ingredients that are traditionally used in Puerto Rican cooking is sofrito," he said. "It is the main ingredient used in most our dishes. Sofrito is made with a mixture of white onions, assorted peppers which include yellow, green, and red peppers. Other ingredients include olive oil, garlic cloves, cilantro, salt and recao. Recao is a herb, similar to cilantro.

"Once all ingredients are all cut and chopped up, they are put into a food processor and blended until all ingredients are mixed well.

"Sofrito can be stored in the freezer as well as the refrigerator. You can add it in soups, stews, rice, sauces, and many more dishes that will bring them to life with an amazing flavorful taste."

Rivera said his favorite spice is also a Puerto Rican staple in many dishes called "Sazon."

"It is a mixture of coriander seeds, garlic powder, cumin, salt and annatto powder," he stated. "You may ask yourself what is annatto powder? It is an orange-red condiment and food coloring that comes from tropical regions in Mexico to Brazil.

"The seeds from the tree are called Achiote. It is typically prepared by grinding the seeds to a powder or to a paste. I love to use it in soups because it brings out the flavor and color in a dish."