

BJ's Market & Bakery

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Re: John Meyer Biography

John Meyer, Chef/Owner of BJ's Market & Bakery, graduated from Chicago State University in 1987 with a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing. He enrolled in the Culinary Arts Program at Washburne Trade School in Chicago where he was classically trained in French-American cuisine. While in chef's school, John volunteered his time and resources to a senior respite care facility. He purchased food and supplies and prepared meals for the facility's residents and families. After graduation, he worked at the prestigious University Club of Chicago to hone his culinary skills. After gaining invaluable experience at The University Club, Chef Meyer committed himself to opening a white tablecloth restaurant on Chicago's South Side. Established in 1992, The Retreat Restaurant was housed in a renovated Victorian mansion in the historical Pullman area. Its vast popularity was attributed to delicious fare (ranging from classical French to traditional American cuisine), fine service and elegant atmosphere. John operated The Retreat Restaurant for seven years.

In his continued quest to provide quality food service establishments to his community, John's second venture combined an upscale atmosphere, comfort food, and great customer service. The result was BJ's Market & Bakery. Opened in May 1997, BJ's Market has been acclaimed by several food critics and was named one of the "Top Ten Restaurants in Chicago" by WLS-TV food critic James Ward. Since opening, BJ's Market has increased its services to include catering and delivery. In December 2001, BJ's Market & Bakery opened a second location at 9645 South Western Avenue. A third location at 79th and Racine opened in July 2004.

In the summer of 2006, BJ's Market & Bakery participated in The Taste of Chicago (Chicago's preeminent summer festival) for the eighth time. John's future plans include opening BJ's Market & Bakeries throughout the Chicagoland area, providing franchising opportunities throughout the United States, and opening a food production facility to support satellite operations.

John's professional experience includes:

- Original Forty Club of Chicago Member
- Illinois Restaurant Association Board of Directors
- Illinois Restaurant Association Advisory Council
- Chicago State University Alumni Board of Directors
- YMCA Board of Directors
- Culinary Arts Project for Chicago Public Schools Mentor
- Culinary Arts for Chicago City Colleges Advisory Board

John enjoys serving his community, striving to improve his entrepreneurial ventures, and spending time with his wife, Hope and two children.