

Chef G Biography

When Chef Benchawan Painter—known to friends and fans as G—first stepped out of Bush Intercontinental Airport, onto the sweltering Houston pavement, she knew she was home. Not just because of air thick enough to chew, as in Bangkok, but because the energy in Houston is palpable.

G grew up in the Central Thai city of Nakhon Sawan, where her grandmother had a neighborhood restaurant. From the age of 6, G learned basic fundamentals of various Thai food traditions from her grandma, sourcing everything from local farmers.

She later joined her mother in Bangkok and worked in various restaurants, both in the kitchen and as a server.

In 2013, she met her future husband Graham, who was an expat creative director working for ad agencies in Bangkok. In 2015, they made the move to Houston to be near Graham's family. The initial idea was to stay in Houston for a couple of years before returning back to Bangkok. But, the Bayou City had worked its voodoo on them. They were hooked.

After Chef G worked in some great Houston restaurants like the former seafood knockout SaltAir and Theodore Rex, she and Graham put their heads together and launched Street to Kitchen, an "unapologetically authentic Thai restaurant" in the East End in 2020. In 2023, Chef Benchawan was named Best Chef: Texas by the James Beard Foundation and she just keeps looking forward.

She and Graham have since moved Street to Kitchen to a bigger space on 3401 Harrisburg Blvd and also have another restaurant in Kemah called Th Prsrv, along with Chef David Skinner, which is a Native American/Thai tasting menu.

Chef G is "Mom" to a puppy named Kitty and six rescue cats.



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