

**Anita Lo**  
**Owner & Executive Chef, Annisa**

Anita Lo, chef and owner of Annisa in New York City, is one of the most respected female chefs in the country, earning numerous accolades for her inventive contemporary American cuisine that reflects her multicultural upbringing and classic French training.

Lo, a second generation Chinese-American, grew up with her family in Birmingham, Michigan and fostered an interest in food at a young age. While earning a degree in French language at Columbia University, she studied at Reid Hall—Columbia's French language institute in Paris. She fell in love with the food culture and vowed to return. Back in the United States, Lo accepted her first kitchen job as garde-manger at Bouley, but after a year, she decided to move back to Paris and enroll in Ecole Ritz-Escoffier, a revered culinary institution. She received her degree, graduating first in her class with honors, while interning under Guy Savoy and Michel Rostang. Back in New York, Lo worked her way through all the stations at David Waltuck's Chanterelle. She defined her culinary style during her time at Mirezi, where she earned a two-star review from *The New York Times*. After two years at Mirezi, Lo left to travel the world, explore food in Southeast Asia and plan her own restaurant, a project that would eventually define her culinary career.

Lo opened Annisa, whose name means "women" in Arabic, in 2000, an intimate, upscale restaurant in Greenwich Village serving Contemporary American cuisine. It was an instant hit, earning a two-star review from *The New York Times*. *Food & Wine* magazine named her one of ten "Best New Chefs in America" in 2001, and the *Village Voice* proclaimed Lo as "Best New Restaurant Chef." In June 2009, after nearly ten years in business, Annisa suffered an unfortunate blow—a fire destroyed the restaurant entirely. Lo decided to take some time to travel as plans for rebuilding Annisa got underway. She scoured the globe—Mongolia and Egypt—for inspiration. Meanwhile, Lo appeared on the first season of *Top Chef Masters* where she battled her contemporaries on weekly challenges that tested their culinary prowess. She finished fourth out of 24 chefs.

In April 2010, after a complete renovation of the original Barrow Street location, Lo will reopen Annisa. She'll keep many of the same elements—clean design, welcoming atmosphere, small menu and a few signature dishes—but shake it up with new additions to the menu, inspired by her recent travels and a renewed perspective about cooking, eating and being a chef in New York City.

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