

Miles Table's Crispy Cauliflower

By [Joseph Myers](#) In [Food and Drink, Food & Drink Features](#) March 31, 2016

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Chef Michael Lynch Photos by Tina Garceau

As a “can’t-sit-still” individual, Michael Lynch never had to force himself to find a vocation, believing the culinary world chose him to provide an outlet for his high-energy identity. Desiring a deep connection with the South of South community, the inhabitant of the 1700 block of Kater Street opened Miles Table, 1620 South St., three years ago and has watched with wonder as the brainchild that he and wife Marybeth helm has lived up to its billing as the place “where the neighborhood eats.”

“I want to see these surroundings thrive, and a big part of that is having businesses that want to help the area to grow,” the 39-year-old said from his 40-seat site. “We’re thrilled to have a piece of that pie because we’re all about having customers expect something excellent at a good value.”

The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College alumnus opened the space as an extension of his catering enterprise, naming it after his now-seven-year-old son. The website for his labor of love notes that he and his bride, 12-year South Philly dwellers, “felt the area needed a casual spot for quick, pleasing, and fulfilling meals,” and they honor that belief through an all-day dining menu, with Lynch stating customers commend the variety among the dinner options.

“This has been a big step for me to see my passion evolve,” the proprietor said of his fascination with the fast-paced life of a restaurant owner. “I’ve been in this area for many years, including my time helping the Lombard Swim Club, so it’s definitely not just about making money for me.”

Lynch proves his altruistic side through fundraising endeavors for locations such as Center City’s Greenfield Elementary School, the beneficiary of this month’s Taco Tuesdays promotion, and Edwin M. Stanton School, 1700 Christian St. He can count himself as a preferred spot for repeat patrons, too, with brunch specials drawing particular praise. Going with a dinner delight for this week’s Food Feature entry, Lynch elected to share Miles Table’s Crispy Cauliflower recipe.

“It’s relatively new and definitely in line with our interest in experimenting with textures, tastes, and ingredients,” he said of the \$8 sweet chili sauce-topped vegetable powerhouse. “I’m pretty fond of what it says about us as a place where you can come and know you’re going to find something not only nutritious but also delicious.”

Ingredients:

Simple tempura

4 cups of chilled club soda

6 cups of rice flour

2 tablespoons of smoked paprika (Whisk all in a deep mixing bowl, and keep cold)

1/2 small onion diced

1 large bell pepper, diced

1 head of cauliflower

Sweet Chili Sauce:

2 cups of rice wine vinegar

2 cups of sugar

1/2 cup of honey

1 cup of water

1 cup of fish sauce (can substitute vegan Worcestershire.)

1-inch knob of fresh ginger, grated

3 cloves of garlic, grated or minced

1/2 cup of soy sauce

1 cup of sambal oelek

1/2 cup of sriracha (Whisk items in a small pot, and simmer until slightly thickened.)

Directions:

Preheat a countertop fryer to 365 degrees.

Dip the cauliflower in the tempura, and gently place in the fryer. Fry for two to three minutes until crispy and cooked, doing so in small batches. Keep warm in a 200-degree oven.

When you are ready to serve, place the pepper and onion slices in a skillet until slightly cooked. Add the hot cauliflower to the pan, and coat with the chili sauce. Plate, and sprinkle with toasted sesame. ■

Miles Table

Owners: Michael and Marybeth Lynch

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