



Lampros: "You may be president, but you're also delivery person and clean-up crew."

Gunther Gourmet Groceries

Entrepreneur Michael Lampros, a 1988 graduate of the University of Richmond, majored in political science and sociology. Both subjects are far afield from the career he has followed. Or, maybe they're not.

After leaving U of R, he enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America in New York to pursue a life-long interest in food. He says his liberal arts education gave him a leg up at the Culinary Institute—and his college courses probably have helped him in dealing with clientele ever since.

After stints as a private chef for various corporations, he launched Gunther Gourmet Groceries, based in Henrico County, in 2001. The company specializes in salsas and marinades made from Lampros' original recipes.

The company is named after a good buddy, a boxer named Gunther. "I didn't want to use my name, so I used Gunther's—why not?"

Lampros' salsas and marinades are sold in Richmond at Ukrop's, Kroger, and Food Lion and at Ellwood Thompson's, Stonewall Market and other gourmet and specialty retailers. He also distributes to other retailers in the Mid-Atlantic, and hopes one day soon to see Gunther's label on the shelves

of gourmet eateries and grocers like Dean & DeLuca and Trader Joe's.

His salsas include crab (pour over cream cheese and serve with favorite crackers; also great over grilled meats and seafood), spicy Chipotle pepper and smoked corn, black and white bean, and lime mango. Vinaigrettes and marinades include lemon orango, orange balsamic and roasted garlic and sun-dried tomato.

Three salsas recently added are peach, tomatillo verde and salsa fresca. "I like to make what I enjoy eating," he says. "Prepared salsas and marinades are great for people who want instant gratification. They don't have to think about mixing up their own ingredients."

While Lampros finds being an entrepreneur challenging ("You may be president, but you're also delivery person and dean-up crew."), he likes the fast pace and the opportunity to give some of the profits back to the community. "I love Greater Richmond, and it's not difficult to find charities we like," he says. That's why you may find his products at school fund-raisers. Another ongoing beneficiary is the SPCA—maybe Gunther's idea.

Information on Gunther Gourmet Groceries may be found under the "food & drink" index on www.vabest.com.