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by Tina**, owner and
chef Tina Kelly serves
up flavorful, high-
quality food that's
always made
with love.

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by **Leigh Stuart**
photos by
Jody Robinson



Simply the Best

At **Simply Delicious by Tina**, owner and chef Tina Kelly serves up flavorful, high-quality food that's always made with love.

CHEF TINA KELLY HAS LOVED FOOD AS LONG AS SHE CAN REMEMBER. With her newest venture, Simply Delicious by Tina, she invites diners in to experience that joy firsthand.

"It makes my whole day to make somebody happy when I feed them," shares Kelly, a 20-year hospitality industry veteran and self-taught chef. "My style of food is comforting and delicious, and I try to do things that other people aren't doing."

Many familiar with the local dining scene will recognize Kelly's name from her previous venture Tapas on York, which she co-owned with fellow chef Ernie Pio. While fans of the previous establishment will recognize Simply Delicious by Tina's address, little else about the current space in Jamison resembles that of its predecessor.

This time, curated by Kelly alone, the menu features a wide array of breakfast and lunch options ranging from healthful to decadent, and from vegan to meaty.

"I like to eat healthy, and in general I think people have started to eat healthier," says Kelly, whose menu features a host of fruit smoothie bowls, salads, wraps, bowls, and more. "The

menu isn't 100 percent healthy, but we have options. We serve the kind of meals you'd make for yourself if you had time."

Quality is key in every dish, according to Kelly. This is evidenced in her choice to house-make all of her sausages—turkey, pork, and chorizo—because she was unsatisfied with the pre-made options available.

Such sausage is featured in the fan-favorite Southwest Bowl, which combines shredded potatoes with chorizo, peppers and onions, black beans, spinach, Monterey Jack cheese, pico de gallo, eggs, avocado, and sour cream.

"People also love the French Toast Casserole," she adds. "It tastes like a sticky bun with a pecan praline topping. Another favorite is the Crabby Morning omelet, which has brie and spinach, and is topped with a crabcake and house-made remoulade."

This comes with a choice of sides. One of them is called "Healthy Hash," a medley of sweet potatoes, mushrooms, peppers, onions, kale, and what Kelly describes as a "secret seasoning."

House-favorite beverages span smoothies to lattes and matcha, as well as fresh-pressed

juices such as the "Hurt be Gone," featuring apple, carrots, beets, ginger, and turmeric, and the "Eye Opener," a mix of kale, celery, apple, carrot, and lemon.

Besides offering dine-in and carryout, Kelly operates a thriving catering operation. Also, after the restaurant closes for the day at 6 p.m., Kelly offers use of the Simply Delicious by Tina venue for private parties and dinners, accommodating as few as two guests to as many as 40.

"Dinner is by appointment, and for those, the dishes are a little more upscale," she says. "It's a formal menu that comes out in four to six to eight courses, and customers can choose whether or not they would like dessert."

For these dinners, as well as for catered orders, Kelly bases menus around each client's preferences. Clients have the entire venue to themselves during their custom event.

"Whatever the client comes in for, I want people to feel at home," she says. "I want people to feel welcome. The space is in a soft industrial style, but it's not sterile. People have referred to it as charming and fun."

As if that roster of offerings weren't enough, Kelly also offers weekly prepared dinner options that people can select in advance. The following week, on one specific day, diners can pick up their prepared meal or meals, or choose to have them delivered.

"These meals are already cooked and put in BPA-free containers and come with reheating instructions," she says. "In the past I've made meatballs, chicken piccata, beef Bourguignon pot pies, and stuffed peppers. I always try to be creative and the menu changes week to week."

For Kelly, the whole venture circles back to one central thing—a love of high-quality food prepared with care.

"I absolutely love cooking," Kelly shares. "It's my true passion. It doesn't matter if I'm cooking in the restaurant or catering. This was my lifetime dream, to have my own place. I wanted to say, 'Hey, world. I can do this!' It's nice to be able to live out my dream and know that people are really enjoying the food." ■



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