



## D'Zaar Catering Behind the Scenes with brother/sister team Victor and Viola Azar.



The Azar's have been associated with exquisite Lebanese and Greek Cuisine and have been in business in the Spokane area since 1973. Many retail establishments, including restaurants, have been successfully owned and operated by the Azar's. Victor and Viola Azar, a brother/sister team, acquired a cafeteria contract with Triumph Composite Systems (formerly, Boeing) in 2003 and with AVISTA Corp in July of 2004. Since Azar's Food Service entered the

Cafeteria business in 2003, they had to expand their menu offerings to provide a huge rotation menu to satisfy all of their customers' tastes.

In 2007 they acquired the contract for Café Mac located inside the Northwest Museum's Art and Culture. The old brand "Azar's" became limiting, because it was synonymous with Greek food. This is when the idea for "D'Zaar, Food Fit for Royalty" came about. At D'Zaar, food preparation is not only about taste, but about health as well. Utilizing top quality fresh ingredients and inspired by special family recipes handed down for generations from Nazareth; dishes are made from scratch using ultra lean cut meats and fresh vegetables producing a healthy culinary style with very rich and robust flavors.

### Northwest Woman:

How did you get into cooking and what inspired you to start a catering company?

### D'Zaar Catering:

What got us in the food business a long time ago is that we found a need for food just like mother's cooking. We thought

that everyone in Spokane needs to taste the wow that we grew up on. The catering business was a natural extension to our business because people kept requesting access to our foods. Until recently, catering was the only way for us to provide our foods to the general public because the cafeterias are not available to the general public. Only the employees of our client companies, Avista and Triumph Composites can enjoy our creations on a daily basis. Just recently we acquired a contract to run Café MAC at the Museum of Art & Culture where anyone can enjoy our food and visit the museum's galleries. The nice thing about going to lunch at the MAC is that you don't have to pay admissions to come to the café and there is lots of free covered parking. Also the wide-open view as you sit in the café is awesome. We have a very successful light Mediterranean menu at the MAC with very reasonable prices.

**NW:** What influences your cooking style?

**DC:** Being in the Cafeteria business, we have to be creative and provide a huge variety. We have daily customers who would get very tired of being served the same food. This forced us to become innovative. We now find recipes from everywhere in the world and customize them for the American palate. However, our main style of cooking is Nazarene. Our mother was a Palestinian whose mother comes from Nazareth in Northern Israel. Nazarene cooking is well known in the

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Middle East as being the best. We use the methods of Nazarene cooking in all of our dishes even when we prepare chicken satay for example which is an Asian dish.

**NW:** What is the best part of your job?

**DC:** We have fun in the kitchen. We are always brainstorming about how to make a dish even better, even if we had cooked it a hundred times before. We also experiment to insure that we always have something new. However, the big payoff is when the catering is laid out and people are enjoying the various flavors from our dishes. We have an awesome team that we have makes it so easy to accomplish our successes time and time again. In addition to the partners, the core of our company also includes Angie and Shanez, Viola's Daughters. Angie is an amazing artist and a very accomplished manager with strong communications skills. Not only is she an amazing chef but she also runs her own photography business called Farashe Media. Shanez is also a very accomplished chef. She is one of Spokane's youngest entrepreneurs as she opened her own restaurant at age 21 and sold it a couple of years later to her father. Now Shanez is part of the very strong D'Zaar team.

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**Café Mac**

2316 W 1st Ave. (509) 456-3931

Hours: Tues. - Fri. 8:00 am to 3:00 pm

Sat. 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

**D'Zaar's Catering**

(509) 495-8036 [www.dzaar.com](http://www.dzaar.com)

