

Helen Chen discovered a love for Chinese cooking at a very young age. She grew up in a culinary wonderland, spending much time at her family's Chinese restaurant in Boston, MA, learning everything she could about Chinese cooking. At 11 years old Helen began working at the restaurant. It was a family business and everyone pitched in. Her first job there was to pack take-out orders.

During this time she also helped out at home. While her mother was busy cooking at the restaurant, Helen often took care of dinner for herself and her two younger brothers. The Chen children made many a meal of delivery food from Chicken Delight (a local fried chicken place) and Tower of Pizza – they also enjoyed frozen TV dinners (Salisbury Steak was Helen's favorite.) Sometimes Helen would also try to bake for her brothers. This was a special challenge for her because generally speaking the Chinese don't bake (they do not use ovens in China) so there was little example to pattern her baking after. Helen learned everything she could about it from the only cookbook in the Chen house – "The Joy of Cooking".

But pizza deliveries, frozen dinners and baking experiments aside, Helen can name over 100 favorite home-cooked dishes – when her mother was not at the restaurant, much cooking and entertaining was done in the Chen home.

Helen Chen's work combines a devotion to authentic Chinese cuisine with a knack for ingenuity. Her goal is to make Asian cooking more accessible and convenient to all. She also believes, wherever possible, in making it healthier by lowering fat content and using heart-healthy cooking oils while still keeping the taste authentic and pure. She travels regularly to the Far East to develop new recipes and products while visiting family there.

Helen finds Asian cooking exciting because of its variety of flavors, textures and tastes. She believes that the essence of a Chinese kitchen is the right knife. Chinese food is bite-sized and Chinese knives are designed to multi-task - they crush, chop and slice, and are an indispensable tool. Beyond the knife, a Chinese kitchen is so scaled down that it is almost all essence – in a typical Chinese kitchen only one person can fit, along with a knife, a pan, a steamer and a few accessories. The Helen's Asian Kitchen line represents the kind of efficiency, simplicity and practicality that is the Chinese kitchen.

If not a chef, Helen would likely have a singing career. She is a trained soprano and met her husband, Keith (a tenor), in a vocal quartet.

Helen is very excited about the launching of the Helen's Asian Kitchen cookware line. She has known Robert & Harold Import Company for many years (as long as she's been in the food business) and is pleased to join forces with HIC in this venture. HIC & Helen share many business principles in common – integrity, value and customer satisfaction are among them. Helen's Asian Kitchen is the result of people getting together and creating something better than what is out there. Like HIC, Helen welcomes feedback and ideas from her customers, and like her mother she plans to carry on the tradition of culinary pioneer.