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Chef Philippe Bischoff: Embracing the Challenge of Keto Cooking

by Jessica Apple

When Chef Philippe Bischoff was asked to prepare keto-friendly food for the Keto Live conference in St. Moritz, Switzerland, he didn't shy away from the challenge. With a background in catering to specific dietary needs from his time at Fairmont Hotels, Chef Bischoff approached this new task with curiosity and determination. "It was not the first time I was faced with a new diet," he recalls. "I knew that the first thing I had to do was really understand the diet and what it was about." The keto diet, which has been studied and used as a treatment for epilepsy for over 100 years, is backed by science. It drastically reduces carbohydrate intake, which in turn lowers insulin levels. Insulin is a hormone that signals the body to store fat, so by minimizing insulin, the body switches to burning stored fat for energy. This metabolic shift into a state called ketosis is what leads to weight loss and other health benefits on a keto diet. As he delved into the world of ketogenic cooking, Chef Bischoff found that "The cooking part was in fact no different than regular cooking."

The main challenge lay in identifying and sourcing ingredients that align with the keto diet restrictions. "The limitation was just that there was a list of ingredients we couldn't use," Chef Bischoff explains. "Some ingredients specific to keto cooking, such as almond flour or certain sweeteners, were challenging to find through our regular suppliers." Despite these initial hurdles, Chef Bischoff and his team managed to create a diverse, appealing, and delicious menu for the conference, showcasing the versatility of keto-friendly options. From keto breads to creatively crafted meat and fish dishes, Chef Bischoff proved that incorporating keto principles into culinary offerings can be both feasible and satisfying. One of the most surprising discoveries for Chef Bischoff was his own weight loss when he ate the keto meals he was preparing.

"I didn't realize that removing sugar would have such a rapid impact on weight loss," he reflects.

For chefs curious about incorporating keto-friendly options into their menus, Chef Bischoff offers practical advice. "The keto diet is easier than they may think," he says. "Many dishes on menus can become keto-friendly by simply removing a few ingredients, and there are plenty of ingredients that are keto-friendly." Addressing common misconceptions about keto cooking, Chef Bischoff emphasizes the evidence-based nature of the keto diet compared to other diets. "Many current diets are fads," he asserts. "The keto diet, on the other hand, is based on real facts."

While Chef Bischoff doesn't have immediate plans to extensively incorporate keto principles into his culinary career, he remains open to the possibility. As he continues to explore innovative culinary approaches, Chef Bischoff's experience with keto cooking serves as a testament to the health rewards that can come with embracing new challenges in the kitchen.

