

ORANGE COUNTY EMPLOYERS

Spotlight on job opportunities and employment trends

Marjan Khoyi helps put Lilly's Pasta in a class by itself

While women make up the majority of the population in the United States, less than half of U.S. businesses are owned by women. In fact, only 38 percent of companies can say they have a female-headed business. But those somewhat dismal statistics didn't stop Marjan Khoyi, owner of Lilly's Pasta in Fullerton, from fulfilling her dreams 17 years ago, when she discovered that pasta can be sweet — when it's your business, that is.

The now-divorced single mother began Lilly's as a franchise with her then-husband in 1988. With the help of her loyal employees, Khoyi has whole-heartedly transformed a simple pasta factory into a gourmet fresh pasta company through the years.

"You are doing business in a man's world, really," Khoyi explains. "With my employees, I'm pretty fortunate — they're all guys, except for two. I am the boss, but I work right alongside them."

Khoi (right) takes pride in the fact that her company creates an endless amount of pasta options for its clients. From fettuccine to angel hair and penne to rotelle and creste di gallo, there are an infinite number and combinations of pasta flavors, stuffing and vegan options.



Fresh approach

A staple in Orange County, Lilly's Pasta creates fresh gourmet pasta for many of the top hotels and restaurants in the area. Khoyi's have-no-fear attitude and dedication to perfection has won her acclaim in the industry, receiving the "Purveyor of the Year" award by Les Torques Blanchés USA.

"Fresh pasta is one of the staple foods in this world — rice, pasta, bread," she adds. "You find it in every culture almost. You find it in far east Asia; you find it in the Middle East; you find it in Europe; America. All in different forms."

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rotelle and creste di gallo, there are an infinite number and combinations of pasta flavors, stuffing and vegan options.

A graduate of Parson's School of Design with a degree in painting and sculpture, Khoyi jokes that her artistic training has helped her in the creative process of growing her business.

"[My employees are] cooks, and they are machinists," she says. "We have very little

cooking here, except some of the filling for the raviolis, but we don't profess to be chefs or cooks, really. We work with chefs in the area, so we're pretty much pasta technicians or their sous chefs."

Next week's job focus:
**Westside/South Bay/
South East**

This advertising section did not involve the editorial staff of the Los Angeles Times.