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ENTREPRENEUR

SMALL BIZ Snapshot



Photo by Tanya Lombard

Tom Galvin of Galvin Design Group

Tom Galvin gets inspired on theme park rides. It's an unusual place to do so, considering that Galvin, 45, runs the Galvin Design Group, a Winter Garden Restaurant design firm that just won two Gold Brick awards for the Orlando restaurants Concha Me Crazy and The Boheme.

"I have annual passes to all the theme parks," Galvin says. "When I'm not in creative mood, I go ride the rides and soak up the creative energy all around me." He takes that creative energy and channels it into back-of-the-house magic in kitchens worldwide. Dozens of prestigious restaurants have Galvin and his love for amusement parks to thank.

Galvin started out to be a sound & lighting technician for entertainers. But he ended up creating the predecessor for what is now the food court concept at the Kent State university cafeteria, known as The Circle, as well as a prototype buffet line for disabled students at Prentice Hall.

A classified ad from Red Lobster led Galvin to an 11-year kitchen design career with Darden Restaurants, followed by two more years traveling the world for Hard Rock Cafe.

The move into design apparently has paid off for Galvin. He's currently working on a variety of area restaurant projects as well as an Arizona-based chain called Thaifoons.

His secret for a successful restaurant kitchen? "Lay out your menu, and I'll build the kitchen around it."— Bob Mervine