



# OUTRIGGER®

ENTERPRISES GROUP

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## Chef's Corner

**Outrigger Reef Waikiki Executive Sous Chef Delia Romano**

*To develop her culinary career, in 2016 New Jersey native Delia Romano relocated to Hawaii where she was part of the opening team of Michael Mina's Stripsteak in Waikiki. In 2017, she joined the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort as executive sous chef. As a vegan, Delia is dedicated to creating innovative dishes for guests from all corners of the globe. Her mission is to show people how scrumptious food can be created without using animal products, but she can still cook a killer steak!.*

**What is your first childhood food memory?**

As far as I can remember, my first food memory is eating pizza every Friday night.

**When did you decide you wanted to be a chef?**

After working at Stripsteak and watching the Executive Chef in action—I realized that was something I wanted to pursue.

**Did you go to school to become a chef?**

No. I was in the automotive field since graduating from college, but when I moved here, I decided to try out a new career based on my love of food and cooking. I was hired at the first restaurant I applied to, part of an opening team of Stripsteak.

**Who would you consider your mentor?**

Chef Ben Jenkins from Stripsteak. I started as a prep cook, and he worked almost side by side with me most days. Taught me everything, even if it wasn't directly said to me, I watched him work and did it myself until it was perfect.

**I hear you are vegan. How does that work when creating dishes with meat and dairy?**

I only became vegan while working at Stripsteak, I went from eating steak and eggs every morning to a completely plant-based diet. I've only been vegan for a few years now, so I have years of experience of flavors of regular food items. Also, I taste every dish that is made in the kitchen. I just don't consume the non-vegan dishes.

**What are your responsibilities at the Outrigger**

I oversee all restaurant operations including Kani Ka Pila Grille and Reef Bar & Market Grill. I also ensure our banquet functions and VIP guest lounges, Voyager 47, on Outrigger's beachfront properties are operating smoothly. I do create the menus for all the above-mentioned outlets.

**So you must be behind Outrigger's new vegan-menu items. What else do you have planned?**

Yes, I am behind the push on vegan-friendly dishes. I'm planning to create some more dishes with ingredients that are from this island—but still

appealing to our global audience. Our current focus is on getting more local products within our operation. I've been working on getting local produce, proteins, brews, and liquor and making it a point to have local bites and brews at our outlets. An example of this is that we have our own Honolulu Beerworks Brew (Kai Nui) and a ton of products from Oahu and neighboring islands.

**What did you think of your first HFWF?**

It was a great event—awesome talent. It was great because I participated in the Naughty or Nice brunch event which featured one vegan (nice) dish and one gluttonous (naughty) dish. Highlight would have been impressing people with my non-vegan dish—the Cheek 'n Waffles.

**What's your favorite restaurant?**

I don't have a favorite restaurant—mostly due to the limited options for vegans on the island. But when I don't want to cook, my favorites would be Downbeat Diner, Yard House, or even Papa Johns (for a loaded veggie pizza without cheese.)

**What's your biggest pet peeve in the kitchen?**

Guests with fake allergies or dietary restrictions. This is not to combat real allergies or dietary restrictions. I completely understand the severity of allergies and other restrictions, but there are people who are allergic one moment and if we are not able to change a dish due to ingredients, they suddenly can have it. For instance, a guest says that they're allergic to gluten, but when they are told a certain dish cannot be made gluten free they still order it. I'd just like them to be honest.

**How did you make your way to Hawaii?**

I was invited on a vacation to Hawaii a few years ago. Stayed on Oahu for a few weeks and decided to move here. Flew back to Jersey and planned my move. It took about 6 months—mainly due to ensuring my dog didn't have to be quarantined.

**What do you like to do most on your days off?**

I usually head to the beach with my fiancée and my English bulldog.

**Outrigger Reef is home to Kani Ka Pila Grille and Reef Bar & Market Grill**  
Reef Bar & Market is open from 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. • Kani Ka Pila from 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. • Happy Hour 2 - 5 p.m.  
Web: [outriggerreef-onthebeach.com](http://outriggerreef-onthebeach.com) or [reefbarandmarketgrill.com](http://reefbarandmarketgrill.com) • Phone: 923-3111



**Cauliflowers Fritters**

**Ingredients**

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1 ea Cauliflower (cut into small florets) | 1 tsp Garlic Powder |
| ¾ cup AP Flour                            | ½ tsp Kosher Salt   |
| 1 tsp Onion Powder                        | ¼ tsp Paprika       |
|   | 1 cup Soy Milk      |

**Boom Boom Sauce**

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|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 quart Vegan Mayonnaise | 2 Tbsp Sesame Oil    |
| 3 cup Sweet Chili Sauce  | 2 Tbsp Garlic Powder |
| 1 cup Sriracha           | 2 Tbsp Tequila       |
|                          | 2 tsp Cayenne        |

Preheat oven to 450° degrees F. Whisk together all dry ingredients. Stir in the soy milk until fully combined, mixture should be almost as thick as pancake batter. Dip cauliflower florets in batter, let any excess batter drip off and then place on parchment lined sheet pan. Baked for 30-40 minutes, flipping florets halfway through. Combine all of the ingredients for the Boom Boom Sauce. Toss the baked florets in the sauce, garnish with green onions.