



COMMUNITY

Lucia E. Robles: “The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do”

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By [Chef Vicky Colas](#), CHEF | NUTRITIONIST | ENTREPRENEUR | CONSULTANT at [chefvicky.com](#)



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As a part of our series about women who are shaking things up in their industry, I had the pleasure of interviewing Chef Lucia E. Robles.

Chef Lucia E. Robles is the president and co-founder of [Lucia & Co.](#), a high-end luxury gourmet business gift company. Her firm provides automated, done-for-you custom gift services along with concierge gift services to help business owners with consistent client appreciation marketing via gifts, team appreciation and consistent prospect outreach.

An honors graduate of the California School of Culinary Arts Le Cordon Bleu Program in Pasadena, California she says. “I love hearing about the successes and growth our clients experience, the visibility they receive and how happy their clients are, really feeling so deeply appreciated. It makes everything we do so worthwhile.”

Thank you so much for doing this with us! Can you tell us a story about what brought you to this specific career path?

I really wanted to do something different and I really wanted to enjoy the work that I was doing. I didn’t know what that would look like in the end so in essence what you see now is just an evolution of me and my career. My business started as a hobby, just trying to find my way, got into catering, and evolved into gift boxes. My clients were always businesses and sales reps. It started off with them. They started by asking me to put together gift baskets and I had fun with it. But I

saw the opportunity to do more than what a traditional gift basket offered and so it progressed, we evolved it to creating from there into gift boxes. We slowly phased out the catering and chef services part and solely just focused on the development of the gift boxes as part of the business instead, expanding that. I really enjoyed being in business, and I enjoyed the challenges of product development, especially the creative process and the creativity of it. I was determined to do whatever it took to stay in the game. I listened to what people were saying. I heard what their concerns and needs were, and wanted to do what I could to be a problem solver. It seemed so easy it was almost weird that no one else was doing what I wanted to do the way I wanted to do it.

Can you tell our readers what it is about the work you're doing that's disruptive?

We're turning the gift industry on its head by serving people in a different way. You see, the industry was originally set up to serve consumers and the companies that are out there now are doing a great job of this. People want to give great gifts, and the companies that are out there now are doing a great job of this. However, there is a huge difference between an individual's needs and a business' needs. There's also a big difference in how and when they buy. People want to give great gifts and they really want to stand out. There were so many holes in how the leaders in the industry were serving businesses that it made me think that if we focus on just that, serving businesses, we could do an amazing job and really pick up where the others leave off. It's what I call *The Service Behind the Chocolate Chip Cookie*. We offer automated, done-for-you gift services that are tailored to the business' actual needs. We also offer a lot of our treats a la carte, meaning outside the gift box, which also offers our clientele more choices.

This is perfect for someone who has regulations around spending and would potentially like to have more touch-points with their clients. The a la carte treats provide an option to clients with smaller budgets or needs that otherwise would be unmet via gift boxes that are especially necessary when someone has a smaller budget or smaller need. For example, a la carte gifts are perfect for someone who has regulations around spending and/or potentially would like to have more touch points with their clients that, otherwise, would be unable to via the limited gift box basket options that other companies only offer won't be met with the way the

other companies operate but can't with the way the other companies operate. They end up either over spending or under-spending, and in either direction feeling totally dissatisfied and defeated.

We all need a little help along the journey—who have been some of your mentors? Can you share a story about how they made an impact?

I have had the privilege of working and learning from some of the best people in the world, truly, and from different industries. They've all contributed so many different things. One taught me how to really think on my feet and read people. Another mentor taught me the art of cold calling and the One-Call-Close. Probably one of my favorite things from that particular mentor was sharing with me her love of sales with the idea that sales is just like an Easter egg hunt...fun! I probably love sales as much as I do because of her and our work together. The other two mentors have been essential in helping me get out of my own way, confidently forge my own path, and understand that the only limitation is in my own mind. We really are everything that we think we are.

Can you share 3 of the best words of advice you've gotten along your journey? Please give a story or example for each.

Someone once told me to hire and work with the best of the best. You really can't afford not to do it right the first time around. Big surprise, they were right! If you settle and hire the 8 out of 10 candidates, the candidate who's an 8 out of 10, or the mediocre, the 'okay' service provider you end up with mediocre or 8 out of 10 results. Is that what you really want? Do you want to be an 8 out of 10? Do you want your clients to see you as mediocre? If you choose to settle, it sends the message out to the world that this is who you also are. So it's also a way of letting everyone else know that you see yourself as 8 out of 10 or mediocre. Challenge yourself and find a way to always start with the best.

Delegate, delegate, delegate. The more you are able to take off your plate the more you can work in your brilliance. So many folks, myself included, have made the mistake of thinking, 'oh, I'll just do this myself.' And of course, we are brilliant at rationalizing this. But when you do something yourself that could and really should be done by someone else, you rob yourself of the opportunity to grow. You

won't even see the opportunities that are right in front of you because you're too busy being myopic.

Don't have a back up plan! Taking from Napoleon Hill's Think and Grow Rich, you really do need to burn your boats! It is scary but if you always allow yourself an out you will always find a way out. If you burn your boats, you really leave yourself no other option than to succeed. In a more relevant example, leaving my job was scary because it meant I had no safety net. Had I kept that safety net, I would never have been able to grow my company, in part for two reasons: 1. You can't approach success with a divided mind 2. Passion isn't a part time endeavor. It needs the time and dedication to flourish.

How are you going to shake things up next?

Honestly, it wasn't my intention to really shake things up although of course now looking back on it, I see it! It explains a lot! We'll keep rolling forward in the direction that we are going continually striving to better our best. We will continue to better our best in how we serve our clients, create great gifts for them and in the the done-for-you programs we offer.

Do you have a book/podcast/talk that's had a deep impact on your thinking?

Can you share a story with us?

Wow! It's so hard to pick my favorite child! When I wake up I will often do a meditation and then will listen to the Joel Osteen podcast. I like to mix things up, so there are several I listen to, to keep it fresh and relevant. I find that it really helps me start off my day in a great way and get my mindset right. There have been many books that have influenced me and my thinking. For now though, I'd say it's the book **Relentless**. I've read it four times and I have it on my iPod where I've listed to it multiple times. It's really the reason why I do things the way I do them; it's why I never give up. The other book that comes to mind is **Can't Hurt Me**. Both of these books really challenge you to think about how you think. Along with that, they also challenge you to ask yourself, "how badly do you really want it?"

You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what

would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. 😊

Champagne Friday! So many people just work themselves to the bone never truly appreciating their accomplishments, contributions, and most importantly, themselves. Even if it wasn't the greatest of weeks, take the time to toast all that did go well, all that you did do right.

Raise your standards. Wherever you are at, raise your standards for yourself and insist that those around you come up to your level. Don't waiver on this and just know that you are worth it.

Can you please give us your favorite "Life Lesson Quote"? Can you share how that was relevant to you in your life?

"The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do." It's funny that I would pick that up as a kid in a fortune cookie (I love fortune cookies!). At that time, I thought it was about rebellion. Now, I've come to think it's about doing what people say you can't do, not because it's not possible, but because they aren't willing to do whatever it takes to make it happen...for what it is that they truly want.

How can our readers follow you on social media?

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This was very inspiring. Thank you so much for joining us!

Thank you for having me!

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Chef Vicky Colas, **CHEF | NUTRITIONIST | ENTREPRENEUR | CONSULTANT at chefvicky.com**

[Chef Vicky](#) is an award-winning chef in the Caribbean food arena. In 2012, Chef Vicky was awarded a silver medal for Caribbean Chef of The Year at the Taste of the Islands completion hosted by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association. She was called to represent her country and be a part of the Culinary Team Haiti as a Culinary Chef Ambassador competing with 10 other Caribbean nations. The team was also awarded a silver medal for the Caribbean Team of the Year and received an Award for “Best Team for Taste of the Islands”. A published nutrition researcher, her study was selected in 2013 in the International Journal of Child Nutrition. Her recipe and interview have been featured in Essence Magazine online, Island Origin, and most recently the cookbook Toques in Black: A Celebration of 101 Black Chefs in America. In 2019, she was nominated in the “40 under 40” class of Legacy Magazine as one of South Florida’s “Black Leaders of Today and Tomorrow”.

Most recently, Chef Vicky was selected as one of twenty women candidates awarded for the 2019 James Beard Foundation Women Entrepreneurial Leadership (WEL) fellowship and is also part of a selective group of talented Chefs in the James Beard Foundation local food advocacy training programs. She is a wife, a proud mother of 3 boys, a business, and a food influencer in her community. Chef Vicky has been featured in her town local news stations such as WSVN CH 7, Deco Drive, WPLG Local 10 News, 6 on the mix CH 6 and Good Morning Miramar. Vicky is also is a subject matter expert in the Hospitality, Culinary Arts, Restaurant Management, and Public Health (Dietetics and Nutrition) arena. She is a graduate of Florida International University (FIU) and Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts.

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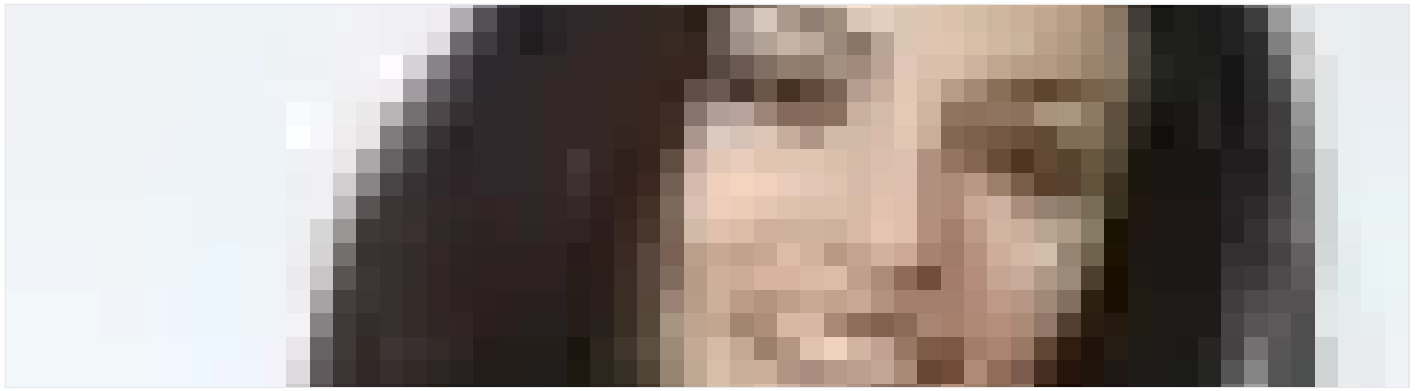
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