

Stacy Keibler and Michael Chiarello Are Looking For the Next 'Supermarket Superstar'



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Lifetime welcomed a new reality show to its ranks this summer with the July 22nd premiere of *Supermarket Superstar*. The show has been described as *Shark Tank* with food, giving undiscovered food entrepreneurs a chance to stand out among the big brands in the highly competitive food industry. Stacy Keibler, who made a name for herself as a World Wrestling Entertainment Diva, hosts the program. The blonde bombshell was known as "The Legs of WWE" due to her tall stature, but she rose to even greater prominence during her relationship with A-list actor George Clooney, which ended

earlier this year.

On *Supermarket Superstar*, aspiring foodie entrepreneurs pitch their products to three mentors: Debbi Fields, the founder of Mrs. Fields Cookies; Chris Cronyn, the president of Dine Marketing; and Michael Chiarello, megastar chef and retail visionary. These recognizable faces help contestants tweak their edibles so that they can win over Tom Dahlen, the buyer for A&P supermarkets. The *Supermarket Superstar* who Dahlen chooses in each episode wins \$10,000 in cash and \$100,000 in product development as well as a chance to compete for their product to be sold in A&P supermarkets and their affiliates across the country.

When she was first approached about the show, Keibler was already developing her own healthy food line. The former *Dancing with the Stars* contestant has “always had a love of food and cooking, so it just seemed like the stars were aligned, and it was a perfect fit.” It’s clear that the actress enjoys being a part of the program, even though she has a hard time guessing the winner each week. “I want everyone to win! I just love seeing their journey and watching them evolve through the whole process.”

Food titan and main mentor for the competitors, Chef Chiarello, would agree. He explains, “I think all of their stories are so extraordinary, and you fall in love as you learn more about each competitor.”

Supermarket Superstar gives some people the big break they’ve been searching for but denies others of their dream. Both Keibler and Chiarello are familiar with the nature of competition – as a WWE Diva and *DWTS* contestant and a *Top Chef Master’s* contestant respectively. In the end, they want to see the contestants do well, and Chiarello expresses his hopes that “as the series grows, we’d like to see a regional launch of each week’s winner because they all deserve a regional

spot.”

Keibler echos Chiarello’s sentiments, saying, “We have people who have a great idea, people who have put their soul into trying to fulfill this goal, so I think the show is such a perfect platform for people to try to make their dreams a reality.”

The model hopes that the show will be renewed for a second season. She believes that it’s captured viewers because it shows “an inside process that most of us are a part of but know very little about. We’re all consumers of food; we all go to the supermarket; and we all eat. We don’t necessarily know the story behind how the products got onto the shelves.”

Speaking of being a consumer of food, Chiarello has some tips for cooking a meal for your special someone. The chef has been married since 2003 to his wife Eileen and shares, “When I’m trying to do something romantic, it’s not so much about lobster and caviar, but instead, it’s about threading a story through the couple of dishes that you have.” For example, you could make a delicious poached peach desert because the scent of peach reminds me of you of your partner.

Chiarello warns against taking your partner out for a swanky four-hour, six-course meal though. “It’s not going to end like you hoped!” he jokes. “Keep things fresh and light and build stories with it. After all, it’s the stories that create the flavor memories.”

You can catch Supermarket Superstar on Lifetime on Thursdays at 10:30/9:30c. For more on Keibler and Chiarello, be sure to follow them on Twitter.