



FROM OUR KITCHEN TO YOURS

# Pie Lady & Son

Nyack, NY

[pielady.com](http://pielady.com)

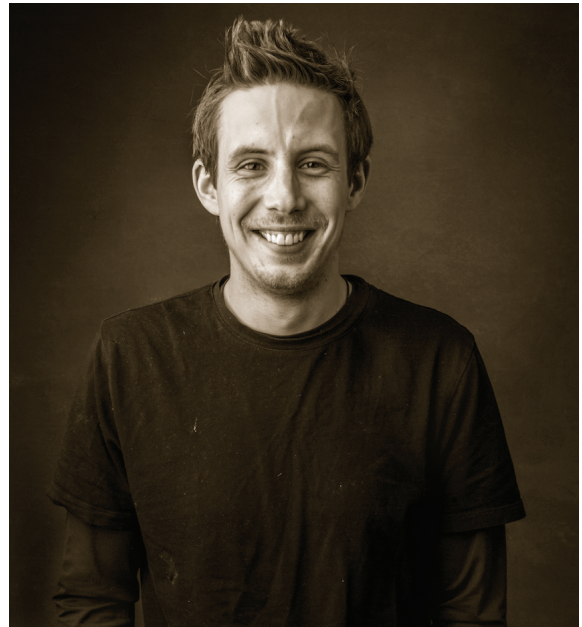
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**i**n the early 1990s, when Wil Tyler was a boy, his Mom, Deborah, started baking pies. She learned the art while studying in England and working in the college kitchen. There she had watched the lead baker, a woman who made huge batches of all-butter pie crust and who “didn’t even measure the water” for her recipes. “People have such trepidation about pie crusts, yet this lady was fearless. I didn’t come back with a recipe, but I came home inspired by her style – by her fearlessness,” Deborah explains.

Years later, when Deborah was a single mother of three kids all under age 10, this inspiration and her need for income led her to bake pies from home. She advertised them with a sign on the road and conducted her sales from the back porch. She also sold at a farmers market in Nyack and got a big break when a customer, who was also a The New York Times food writer, celebrated her pies in print. Before long, she was doing live cooking demonstrations on Good Morning America. Her brother helped her buy commercial baking equipment, and young Wil’s first floor bedroom was transformed into the main baking space. She called her business “The Nyack Pie Kitchen,” but her customers nicknamed her, “The Pie Lady.”

Yet the boom in sales proved to be too much at the time. Deborah had a household full of kids to manage, and no one to help guide the business. So she closed up shop in 2001. Years later, Wil says, “I always thought it was a shame that it had ended and I wanted to convince her to try it again.”

First he asked her to teach him how to bake the pies. She did, but she wouldn’t stick around the kitchen. Then he



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– Wil Tyler

asked her for her recipes. She shared them, but she wouldn’t linger over them. Then Wil started baking the pies himself and got some sales going at a local holiday craft fair. “A lot of people remembered my Mom, and they’d say, ‘Oh, the Pie Lady is back!’, even though it was really just me,” Wil says.

For Thanksgiving in 2009, he got orders for 30 pies. With no experience and a tiny oven, he begged his mother to come help him. When she saw what was coming out of the kitchen, she said, “There’s no way you’re going to sell these pies under my name.” And she came back.

Today farmers market shoppers get the fully-committed mother and son team of Deborah and Wil Tyler.



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