

Chef Alina Z is working her way toward your kitchen, one platform at a time.

RAW AMBITION

For some, "Just do it" is a slogan that sells shoes. For others, like Alina Z, it's a way of life. For the past few years, this healthy-eating visionary has been building her own multi-platform empire. It started with raw food cooking, segued into wellness coaching and book publishing, and now includes her second television show.

"I grew up in Russia, and we were very poor, but my dad took a chance and became a successful entrepreneur," says the chef, whose full surname is Zhukovskaya. At fifteen, she moved on her own to the States, where she went to high school in Maryland and then to Parsons School of Design in New York.

She worked in fashion p.r., then earned a master's in communication at American University in Washington, D.C. A v.p. job in marketing and p.r. at a D.C.-area catering company followed, but her own struggles with an unhealthy diet led her to question her path.

She turned to television in 2009, launching a local D.C. show, *Entertaining A to Z*. "It was for people who like to eat but don't like to cook, and that pretty much sums up everyone," she says, laughing.

After six successful episodes, she moved to Boca Raton, where she became a detox specialist, raw food chef and wellness coach — while commuting to New York to attend the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. "I'm a believer in just starting," she explains. "You will miss 100 percent of the shots that you don't take, so you may as well just go for it."

In Florida she launched a national delivery detox food company, DL revAmp, which in 2015 was named the "number-one best diet" by *Harper's Bazaar*. She also helped a team in Kazakhstan open a restaurant, developing the menu and training them in juicing and raw vegan cuisine, all via Skype.

In 2016 she moved to California for more TV opportunities. "Fairly quickly I met someone from [community station] TV Santa Barbara who wanted to do my show."

That show is *What's New and Good with Chef Alina Z* (available for streaming on Roku). Says the host: "I go to traditional restaurants and show people how to make healthy choices without sacrificing taste."

She oversees the whole process, from scripting to final edits, while maintaining an active career as a chef and coach. And she just released a new book, *Single and Hungry: The Realistic Guide to Food and Self-Love*.

"I don't see the point in sitting around waiting for Food Network to offer me a show," she says. "I may as well start my own thing, and if it happens, that would be great!" —Maria Neuman



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