



# SHOW NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

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## EPISODE SHOW NOTES

**Episode Title:** Kitchentown

**Episode # & Date:** Episode #31 – May 28, 2020

**About this Episode:** Judy profiles San Mateo’s own food incubator who provides infrastructure and expert guidance to food entrepreneurs and innovators in order to create new sustainable food systems.

**Episode Web Page:** <https://sanmateofocus.com/kitchentown/>

## EPISODE SCRIPT

I’m Judy Gordon, and *this* is San Mateo Focus.

Before we begin, we’ve noticed that many of you are listening to San Mateo Focus episodes right on our website or social media posts—and that’s great—but there is no automatic notification method that tells you when a new episode has dropped. So, I am asking you—please—go to the Podcast App on your smartphone, or to iTunes on your Mac or PC...search for “San Mateo Focus” and click SUBSCRIBE. Now onto this week’s episode.

Not so long ago, for many people the word Incubator was considered either a controlled environment for the care and protection of immature babies, or in an agricultural setting, as an apparatus used to hatch eggs. Soon after the word startup became a normal part of our conversation in this area of the world, the word incubator evolved to mean a place, especially with support staff and equipment, made available to new small businesses. Companies are “hatched” and leave the incubator when they are strong enough to survive on their own.

On the edge of San Mateo, in a few buildings not far from the freeway, the Kitchentown campus is a food startup incubator and global innovation platform that helps develop, commercialize, and launch impact driven food products. Founder and CEO Rusty Schwartz opened Kitchentown in 2014. Formerly, the building was used to produce locally popular Anna’s Danish Cookies. He saw a huge need in infrastructure and support for food entrepreneurs. Tech company incubators were common, but that same model had not taken hold in the food world. He saw the opportunity to create that infrastructure at this location. Since they opened their doors, they’ve grown the number of food companies that they have supported. Typically, there are about 30 companies using the facility. The variety of programs and services that they offer to both the food entrepreneur community and the local community has also expanded.

The big difference between Kitchentown and commercial kitchens is that Kitchentown fosters community and provides support to the makers who rent space for the equipment. Kitchentown wants to work with companies that are actively scaling up their food business. Their specialization is in packaged food and bakeries. In general, they hope to support impact-driven companies making better-for-you-products or working towards a more sustainable food system. The consumer is more



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aware of the food chain now than ever before. There's a powerful food movement going on right now and Kitchentown is very involved in the thought leadership. Many makers producing at Kitchentown also benefit from the partnerships that Kitchentown forms with large legacy brands as well as ecosystem workshops and events, such as how to get your product into stores. In addition to the facilities and equipment for their food makers, Kitchentown has a food scientist on staff at their Innovation Lab which provides support for small scale product development projects like creating a nutritional label or making a product shelf stable. Kitchentown Berlin was opened recently as a partner and gives Kitchentown a global scale to supporting food innovators.

Wait, that café that I go get coffee and pastries at on weekends is doing all that behind the scenes? Kitchentown doesn't do a lot of advertising for the bright open café space that has become a popular spot for neighborhood locals and for people who stumble upon it, or those who head there to pick up bread from one of the incredible bakers who use the facility. The café has been a great way for Kitchentown employees to connect with local residents, talk about the work that they do, and share food and stories about their food makers.

When shelter-in-place was first announced, the Kitchentown facility and café temporarily shut down to determine if they could safely continue to operate. They discovered that there was a need to create a new sales outlet for their food makers who were selling to corporate cafés and other places that are now closed. "Kitchentown Curbside" was announced and launched to help keep the café staff working and provide that outlet for their makers. For residents who are lining up in their cars between 9 a.m. and noon on Tuesdays and Saturdays, it's a way to taste a variety of healthy innovative food, and to support the local small food makers. A Kitchentown employee greets you at your car and delivers the food to you. All food is either fresh, packaged, or fresh frozen. Grace Collery, who is the Research and Partnership manager at Kitchentown, says the support from the community has been overwhelming. The Kitchentown head of culinary develops a weekly menu and new items are being added for people to try. Kitchentown has learned a lot talking to customers about what they're looking for and found new ways to partner with people in the local food community. The mission of Curbside is the same as the Café - to get to know the local community and tell the Kitchentown story.

If your family can't decide on the type of food that they want for takeout, the Kitchentown Curbside menu is full of diverse options. For starters, there are all types of breads, bagels, and pastries from the bakeries who rent space at Kitchentown. From the Kitchentown classics menu, you can choose between chile verde, coq au vin, or Nepalese dumplings. Featured on the menu are taco Thai kits, pork sugo, Jamaican meat patties, and a berry crisp. When you click on an item from the menu, it will tell you how many it serves, any possible allergens, and how to prepare it.

Right now, Kitchentown Curbside is available on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until noon for pickup. More days might be added, and the menu can change so **Here's The Deal**: the Kitchentown website has a direct link to Curbside, and any notifications will be listed there before you order.



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Okay, that's all the time we have for this episode. Have a great week. Thanks to Jack Radsliff for the original music to this podcast. And please don't forget to Subscribe to San Mateo Focus on your favorite Podcast app or iTunes. As always, if you'd like more information about our sponsor or the topics in today's episode, visit [sanmateofocus.com](http://sanmateofocus.com).

## HELPFUL LINKS:

[Website: Kitchentown](#)

[Website: Kitchentown Curbside](#)

[Webpage: About Kitchentown](#)

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Podcast Name: San Mateo Focus

Logo:



Description: Whether you're new to San Mateo, California, or a long time resident, the San Mateo Focus Podcast is the place to learn about local history, good eats, and things to do.

Website: <http://www.sanmateofocus.com>

Email: [info@sanmateofocus.com](mailto:info@sanmateofocus.com)

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