

The lodge in Braeburn, just outside Whitehorse, was the first checkpoint in the race.

A few months later, Bishop landed a contract with the Yukon government. Her job was to cook meals at a highway maintenance camp in a remote area located almost four hours from Whitehorse. Her clients were work crews who lived at the camp in shifts while maintaining the highways year-round.

In those three years, Bishop's reputation grew as a caterer and she was also asked to do special events for the RCMP and the native council.

"I really became a name in that area. You know how it is with food. One person likes it and they will tell 10 other people about it. And with only 37,000 people in the Yukon, it didn't take very long to establish a reputation."

When her government contract expired, Bishop accepted a job as an executive chef in a renowned fishing lodge catering mainly to European clientele who loved to fly fish. Over those next several months, she cooked and learned how to fly fish.

"In all my years cooking, that's where I got to do my exquisite cooking because they were high end vacationers who expected the best."

Bishop returned to Belleville last year and decided to introduce this area to a concept spreading across North America. She became a personal chef and is providing a home meal replacement service.

She will do all the grocery shopping for a client and then prepare meals for a 10-day period. Everything is then labelled and refrigerated in family portions; all the client has to do is choose what meal they want and then warm it up.

"I will even bag their salads and salad dressing. And, of course, everything is made from scratch. I even use my own equipment to make the meals."

Bishop acknowledged the personal chef service is one of the fastest-growing self-employment opportunities in North America.

"A lot of chefs are choosing this route and it's being embraced by people who can afford it...people are more health conscious now and are concerned about eating nutritionally, balanced meals and that's what they get when they have a personal chef," she said.

Her service enables her to continue doing something she loves but without the gruelling 14-hour days.

Bishop said she gets asked so many food-related questions "that I sometimes feel I should be teaching instead of just cooking."