

TASTE

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1993

TASTE BUDDS



CHEF LARRY JANES

'93 trends, memories are food for thought

Depending on which side of the fence you were sitting on, 1993 was the "year of opposites" for foodies. Vegetarians claim an 8-10 percent increase while the beef industry claims to be enjoying a renaissance.

Bistro fare again tops the charts, and while the folks at "Bon Appetit" magazine claim the French top the bistro trend in 1993, my desk is littered with Trattoria cookbooks from Italy.

The trend toward comfort food has opened a door to new cuisine I dubbed "country American." Momma's chicken casserole of the 1950s is now trendily being monickered as "chicken fried steak." Plain old mashed potatoes have fallen from grace. To be in tune with the 1990s, you have to add roasted garlic and a touch of dill. It's actually easier to find jicama at the vegetable market than it is to find a rutabaga.

The goodness all these trendy greens have wilted into oblivion not just because they were so expensive and tasted about as exciting as they sounded (i.e. mache), but how many folks do you know who could actually discern the arugula from the frisee?

Memories
Looking back at 1993 brought fond memories of food. Remember my trip to New Orleans and the subsequent column on those crazy Cajuns and their desire to eat crayfish for breakfast, lunch and dinner? You told me in no uncertain terms that my tastes could be shoved where the sun didn't shine... I didn't know whom to believe when a reader with the last name MacDonald claimed my recipe for Scottish shortbread was the best she had ever tasted while the next call came from a MacDonnell who swore at me in Gaelic because I wasted his time and money making "the worst shortbread on earth."

A tear came to your eye as well as mine when I wrote my Mother's Day column sharing the secrets of Momma's kitchen, and then we laughed together when I mentioned Aunt Vicky's "homemade" jam.

This year the Janes Gang switched from slurping down "yuppie chardonnay" to experiencing a whole new taste sensation with red wine. The best part about switching from white to red was that the government actually approved!

Chef's favorites
The big question I continue to be asked in line at the grocery store or while teaching a cooking class is "what's my favorite restaurant?" to which I always respond "what type, how much do you want to spend and when are you taking me?"

For the record, my favorites are Giovanni's in southwest Detroit for regional Italian followed by Bruschetta in Novi, Opus One in downtown Detroit or The Lark in West Bloomfield when money and time is of little object, Chez Pierre New Orleans in Rochester (for when I choose to eat crayfish) and Dos Pesos in Belleville or Evie's Tamales in Mexican town for something south of the border and not in a bag.

The best places to grocery shop are the Shopping Center markets, Papa Joe's in Rochester, the Koyama Shoten for Oriental and Chimento's Italian Grocery (both in Livonia), La Colomera/Honey Bee Market in Mexicantown, and Hirt's and Raphael Spices in the Eastern Market area.

For really trendy foodstuffs you can spend a paycheck at any of the Merchant of Vins stores and not even venture near the beer and wine. When it comes to bakeries and bread you can't hold a candle to the folks at the Little Prince in Birmingham (their croissants are to die for), the baguettes at Baking by the Avenue in Southfield, the bagels from the Dutch Bagel Factory, especially when they're hot from the oven, and the cheesy-whole wheat bread my Panasonic Bread Maker churns out on demand. Warning, if you're contemplating the purchase of a bread maker you better invest in a treadmill! Tool Technology has made it just too darn easy, and too darn good!

Last, but certainly not least, when it comes to keeping my kitchen up to par with all the necessary equipment, tools, gadgets and cookware, the folks at Williams-Sonoma and Crate and Barrel have the West Coast trends locked up, but when it comes to the best stocked, most knowledgeable you name-it-and-they-have-it kind of store, the folks at Kitchen Glamour should take a well deserved bow. Hope you have a prosperous, happy and healthy New Year! Bon Appetit!

See Larry Janes' family-tested recipes inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1886.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Registered dietician Gail Posner explains how to make healthy choices when you eat out.
- E&J Gallo Winery challenges the ultra-premium market.



Eye-openers: Ginger Orange Muffins will sparkle at a special holiday brunch or breakfast. Their spicy, citrusy flavor is complemented by the nutty crunch of wheat germ.

Wake up to
1994
with easy
brunch



BY GERRI RINSCHLER
SPECIAL WRITER

By the time Jan. 1 rolls around most of us have had it with holiday entertaining. After nearly a month of splurging on party foods, it can be frustrating to create a menu which is appropriate for one last holiday fling.

If you consult a culinary professional, they'll surely tell you the easiest way to entertain on New Year's Day is to host a festive holiday brunch. Not only is it the easiest, but it's also the most versatile because of the time of day, generally 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. With a little help from friends, you'll be

amazed at how simple planning a New Year's Day brunch can be.

Annabel Cohen, owner of Annabel's Catering in Southfield, recommends a light menu.

"We're just getting over a few weeks of heavy eating and there are many wonderful dishes that can be made with fruits and vegetables, and made ahead of time for a holiday brunch," she said.

Cohen describes her food style as "American gourmet with a Mediterranean twist," and it

See WAKEUP, 2B

Busy mom likes quick, one-pot meals



LAURA LETOBAR

Between work, shopping for gifts and visiting with friends and family, it is a wonder that anyone can properly eat all during the holiday season. Lisa Rice of Bloomfield seems to have everything under control, which is incredible since she gave birth to her second child in October.

Lisa's biggest problem is trying to prepare something quick for her 2-year-old son Andrew.

She wanted something she could throw in a pot, and not have to worry too much about like her clam chowder.

Since it is a one-pot recipe, she really likes it, but is concerned about all the fat. Our make over reduced the amount of fat from a whopping 16.4 grams of fat per serving to a much more reasonable 1.0 grams of fat per serving.

Chef Boyardee has some great canned macaroni and cheese. It has only four grams of fat per 16-ounce can, and is very cheesy. I take it for lunch when I don't have time to cook. It's also great for camping trips. Chef Boyardee also has cheese tortellini in a can. This is also wonderful because it has only two grams of fat per 16-ounce can.

Lois Hausman of Bloomfield Hills wanted to know where she could purchase the Pillsbury instant powdered gravy mix mentioned in the November column. I have always found it at Meijer's. It is usually right next to the section that has all the powdered gravy and sauce mixes. Look for a small white box.

If you can't find it, try the bottled gravy by Pillsbury. It contains zero grams of fat per two ounces of brown gravy, and one gram of fat per two ounces for the chicken flavor. It is the same gravy, it just has the water already added.

For a complimentary issue of the "Laura's Fat Free Kitchen" newsletter, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to H.W. Publications, P.O. Box 9324, Livonia 48161-1324. Subscription price is \$12 a year.



Clam Chowder Original Recipe

- 2 cans (6.5 ounces each) minced clams
- 6 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 6 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 2 cans (10 3/4 ounces each) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 2 cans (12 ounces each) evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

Drain clams, reserving liquid. Set the clams aside. In a large kettle, combine clam juice, potatoes, carrots, onion, butter and water. Cook over medium heat for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Stir in soup, milk, salt and pepper; simmer until heated through. Stir in clams. Makes 10 servings.

RECIPE MAKE OVER



Clam Chowder Reduced-Fat Recipe

- 2 cans (6.5 ounces each) minced clams
- 6 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 6 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons Molly McButter imitation powdered butter
- 2 cans (10 3/4 ounces each) Campbell's 99 percent fat free cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 2 cans (12 ounces each) evaporated skim milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

Drain clams, reserving liquid. Set the clams aside. In a large non-stick pot, combine clam juice, potatoes, carrots, onion, powdered butter and water. Cook over medium heat for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Stir in soup, milk, salt and pepper; simmer until heated through. Stir in clams. Makes 10 servings.