

Chinese cookbook is the realization of a woman's dream

By SHIRLEE IDEN

In Doris Lang's case, it was a matter of west meets east, an accidental woman falling in love with oriental culture.

Even before she and her husband, Elmer, traveled to Japan the first time, 25 years ago, she was an admirer of the orient.

"After all," the Southfield homemaker says, "We're the upstarts, they're the ones with tradition."

On that trip to Japan so many years ago, the Langs, and the other couples with them, climbed Mount Fuji, shot rapids, and took Chinese cooking lessons.

"We fell in love with Chinese cooking immediately," she says. "After all, when you can enjoy it with your husband and friends, that's got to be what life is all about."

She remembers the adventure, the people, the excitement of the orient, and her home shows it. Japanese lamps, oriental clay pieces, a Chinese scroll are all part of the ambience.

But Chinese cooking has become a way of life at the Lang residence.

MRS. LANG dreamed of writing a cookbook. It would be a collection to show Americans that what they find in restaurants is not really what Chinese food can be. The idea was born long ago, and like many dreams, put off.

Then, more than two years ago, came the determination to write her cookbook, to adapt old Chinese recipes for use in American kitchens.

Confined to home following an illness, she received a visit from a dear friend, who became the spur for Doris Lang to finally write her book.

In the Acknowledgments on Page 4 of "The Art of Chinese Cooking — A Beginning" she writes of that friend, Marie Bates, who said to her: "Go Ahead, Doris, I know you can do it."

Marie Bates died of cancer before her friend's book was completed, but her contribution to the author is a special one. It was encouragement at a time of despair and it worked.

If she needed only to translate her collection of recipes into simple form and compile them, that would have been a credible accomplishment.

Mrs. Lang did more.

She learned to use a single-lens reflex camera, and, using her own carefully collected artifacts, she composed and photographed dozens of color pictures for the book.

MRS. LANG credits another friend, Jim Mills, with teaching her the basics of photography.

She thanks Lois and Ron Micic for their typesetting skills, friendship and enthusiasm. The Lathrup Village couple keep copies of the book in their place of business and are enthusiastic salespersons.

The author did her own keylining, learning the skill "because it would have been very costly to have it done."

The finished product is a sleek, 104-page volume, with simple, easy-to-read and reproduce recipes, and artfully done illustrations — a work of love and a work of art.

Born in Dearborn to a "Ford factory worker and a Polish immigrant," Mrs. Lang says her home was not particularly "arty" but she was always interested.

"I had two majors at Eastern Michi-

gan University, one in fine arts and one in natural sciences," she recalls.

Her husband was born in Pleasant Ridge and they have lived in Southfield 17 years. Their daughter, Julie, 16, is a swimmer on the Southfield-Lathrup High School team.

"I'M SO PROUD of the book," she says. "There's a great sense of accomplishment and I went first class with it all the way. I went from printer to printer. We used a four color Heidelberg Press. I wanted it to be beautiful and it is."

Now, there are 3,000 artfully done cookbooks to sell. "And that's a lot of cookbooks," she acknowledges. But she is confident that the book will sell.

"I've not tried to push this book from store to store, but am offering it to women's groups throughout the county and state as a means of raising funds. I know from activity in AAUW, Oakland County Dental Auxiliary, and Girl Scouts that raising funds for charitable projects is a hard task."

Her books are packaged in cartons of 25. They come in bright red envelopes for protection. They cost \$10 with a suggested selling price of \$13.95 for a profit of almost 40 percent.

"It's an excellent book for giving and receiving," she says. "My main thrust is that all women want to enjoy oriental cooking but we back off, thinking there's some mystery involved. Not so."

The book is written in the first person, anecdotal.

A CHINESE gourmet evaluates a dish by four main standards: color, aroma, taste and texture," she says. "The book offers recipes which meet the highest standards in all four categories."

A fledgling Chinese cook can find recipes for pork, chicken, shrimp, beef and vegetables dishes, for sauces and condiments, and can see, also, how the finished dishes should look.

Mrs. Lang's book is one to curl up with and enjoy as well as to use as a valuable resource. It has food for the thought provoking philosophical tidbits as well, like this one by Robert Schuller:

"By the yard, life is hard, by the inch, it's a cinch."

Historical societies join to give thanks

Detroit Historical Society and friends from the Farmington Historical Society join for a Thanksgiving at 5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 30 in Bostonford Inn. Member's price for dinner is \$12.50, non-members \$15, and a special price of \$6.25 for children under the age of 12.

Tickets may be picked up at the Detroit Historical Society office, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or send checks made payable to the society at 5401 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, 48202. Reservations must be in by Nov. 28.

Hope Nahlstoll of Farmington Players, a 40 year veteran of community theatre, will say grace and give holiday readings.

Glen and Judi Morningstar will share early American songs on the dulcimer, fiddle and banjo in the celebration of America's oldest holiday in the historic inn.

Built in 1836 as a private residence by Orrin Weston, Bostonford Inn was converted into a tavern in 1841 to accommodate the stagecoach trade.

The white, two-story, clapboard structure was purchased by Milton C. Botsford in 1860 and became the popular meeting place for drivers and travelers.

The inn fell into disuse with changing modes of transportation and in 1924 it was purchased and restored by Henry Ford. In 1951 the present owners purchased the inn and have faithfully maintained the grounds and many outbuildings in keeping with their historic past.

Flute-piano concert set

Two Eastern European musicians will perform in the second of the "Music at the Galeria" recital series at St. Mary's College, Orchard Lake, at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 30. Admission is \$5 at the door or \$2.50 for senior citizens and students.

Ginka Gerova Ortega, flutist, and Tibor Szasz, pianist, will combine their musicianship in works by Bach, Poulenc, Chopin and Beethoven.

Mrs. Ortega, Bulgarian born, appeared on the "Music at the Galeria" series last year as a guest performer.

She has been featured in many solo and chamber concerts in the U.S., Canada and Europe. This summer she played concerts in Spain.

Ms. Ortega is founder and music director of the chamber series, "Music at the Galeria," in which musicians and artists of international status perform and exhibit.

The campus of the Orchard Lake Schools is located at Commerce and Orchard Lake roads, Orchard Lake.

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