

taste buds
chef Larry
Janes

Homemade mustard is hard on the sinuses

Whoever came up with the old adage "You can't cut the mustard" never realized that someday, my pantry shelves would be about ready to collapse under the weight of several dozen different varieties.

Just once, I'd like to be aware of the movement and purchase all the mustard stocks before they turn into the latest culinary rage. I mean, remember when all you had to choose from was which brand of yellow prepared mustard you were to buy?

Nowadays, you are driven to choose between a musky flavored green peppercorn mustard from Brussels or a herb and spice loaded Mustard de Meaux from France. Even in jolly old England, the pubs are dispensing an infamous hot pub mustard made fresh everyday and served with the traditional fare of bangers, chops, meat pies and pickles (bangers being English sausages).

Probably one of the foremost and mildly respected of the imported flavorful mustards is the Dijon. Needless to say, this mustard is named after the famous French town that has been synonymous with fine mustard for centuries. Would you believe that there is an actual shop named the "Grey Poussin" that is now part museum and part retail establishments having mustard containers that date back to 1400 on display?

Being an apprentice in the homemade mustard department, I came across a few interesting mustard recipes that fared quite well when served as a base for salad dressings, enrichment of a hearty stew or just slathered on a thick slice of pumpernickel with some pastrami.

If you're thinking of venturing into the mustard market, the actual making of the recipe is quite simplified. Homemade mustards should be tightly sealed and stored in a cool, dark place. A fruit cellar is perfect! They will keep this way for months and will last indefinitely if stored in the refrigerator.

To alleviate the dryness that usually forms around the mouth and bottom of the cap, try storing your mustard upside down in the fridge. This will create an airtight seal that will prevent the blackening and drying of the rim.

If you want to be adventuresome and try a few of my homemade recipes, try using both the yellow and black variety of mustard seeds and powder. Each will impart its own interesting character to the finished product.

I have found that when bottling, those neat little bottles available at most cookware shops, hardware stores and chemical distributors work well. Small clamp-type wide mouth jars are preferred.

A word of advice from someone with delicate sinuses. If you endeavor to make your own mustards at home in a small, non-ventilated kitchen, keep a window open and if a exhaust fan is available, use them both. Yours truly tested the recipe for English pub mustard and when I took the top off the food processor, I almost was knocked off my feet with an overpowering whiff of the good stuff.

A long, long, time ago, I took a Chinese cooking class from a woman named Madame Loretta. While preparing the egg rolls, I was empowered with the making of the mustard sauce. In a small glass (non-metallic) bowl, about 1/2 of powdered yellow mustard was poured. To that, a few tablespoons of white vinegar was added and I was ordered to stir. Stir more was the order shouted as my arm began to make backward overtures from boredom. Faster! Faster!

When will I be done? Was the question of the evening, now even coming from the other students who noticed my arm beginning to flop and writhe with muscle spasms. When you can't tolerate the smell was the answer from the little lady who was on her second bottle of Sake.

How true. The more powdered mustard is processed, the stronger it becomes. So beware of those food processor blades traveling at 2500 rpm's. They make potent products! Let me know what you think. Drop me a line at this newspaper. Bon Appetit!

FENNEL SEED MUSTARD
(great with pate, ham, mentaif and pork)

6 tbsp. crushed fennel seed
3 cups dry mustard
1 1/2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
1 1/2 cups apple cider vinegar

Cook's toys make culinary joys



CAMILLE MCCOY/staff photographer

Kitchen gadgets come in all shapes, sizes and price ranges. The gadgets photographed on these pages were lent to the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers by Wells Freight and Cargo.

Kitchen stores carry gadgets for every use

By Sharon Dargoy
Staff writer

\$19.95!
Just \$19.95 and it's yours!
It's an easy-to-clean, stainless steel, jewel-handled, rustproof, tough-o-matic, amazing wonder of the universe that slices, chops, grinds, dices, grates, minces, fits into any silverware drawer. . .

It's called a knife.
And it's the most important kitchen gadget in your cupboard.

"I'm more of a hand gadget person than an electric appliance person. It's funny, because there are a lot of gadgets out there," says Amanda Duquette, cooking teacher and chef for a Southfield cafe.

"My basics are good knives. You can do anything with a good knife."

Echoes Gerry Goodman, owner of Wells Freight and Cargo. "You can make radish roses with a knife. You can do anything with a knife."

You can. And most chefs do. But that doesn't mean you have to throw the melon baller out with the rind.

Small electric appliances and manual gadgets sometimes speed up food preparation, cost less than a set of top notch cutting blades and are more fun to use.

"They're like brushes. You can't paint a landscape with all of the same brushes. I'm a cook and I consider it an art form," Goodman said. "Cooking is like any endeavor you're into. If you're going to give it the time you might as well have the tools."

OR THE toys — depending on your cooking skills.

Kitchen Glamour, a supply outlet with stores in Redford, Rochester

'Cooking is like any endeavor you're into. If you're going to give it the time you might as well have the tools.'

— Gerry Goodman,
Wells Freight
and Cargo owner

and West Bloomfield, lists more than 85 gadgets, including eight kinds of knives, on its "checklist of essential cooking and baking equipment," aimed at brides-to-be.

Goodman lists 25 essential gadgets and Duquette swears by less than a dozen.

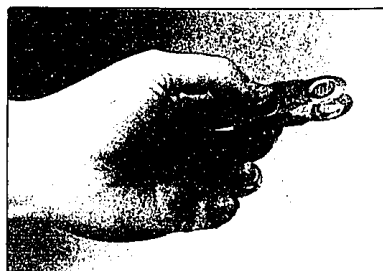
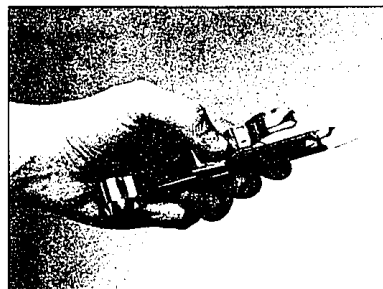
"Everyone looks at it a different way," noted Toulia Patsalis, Kitchen Glamour owner. "It's whatever fits into your lifestyle. Everyone wouldn't want an asparagus cleaner and a clam chucker, but everyone does need a couple of good paring knives."

"We have a rule when we buy merchandise. People's tastes are like ice cream flavors. There are chocolate, vanilla and strawberry out there. You have to buy what people want, not what you want."

What people want this year — and are buying — according to Patsalis are mini-choppers, (\$39.95) pressure cookers, ("popular again because of working women"), pasta machines, ("oooh they're the hottest!"), and meat grinders, ("where else can you get good kielbasa?")

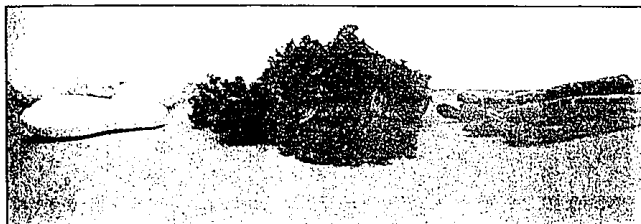
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Gadget guessing tests kitchen IQ

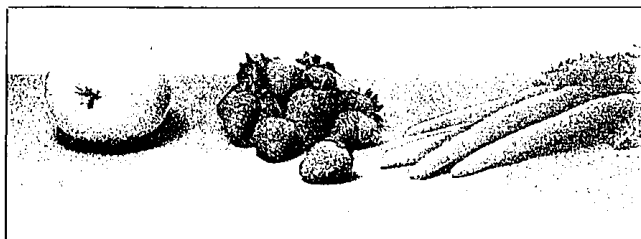


Photos by CAMILLE MCCOY/staff photographer

Take the kitchen gadget quiz. Can you guess the apple, lemon or peppers? Turn to page 2B if the gadget at the left is used most often on for the answer.



Squash, lettuce or asparagus — which is the gadget at the left used to prepare? See page 2B for the answer.



The gadget at the left is used in preparing either the orange, the strawberries or the carrots for eating. Can you guess correctly? See page 2B for the answer.

Please turn to Page 2