

taste buds
chef Larry
Janes



Juleps perfect outside

With this string of warm weather we've been experiencing, it kind of makes you forget what the temperature was like back on Jan. 18 when the thermometer barely hovered above zero for four days straight.

The nicest thing about spring in the metropolitan area?

A perfect temperature hovering just a tad above 70 degrees, no mosquitoes (yet) and slipping a mint julep out on the veranda while watching the sun go down.

Having just journeyed down and back to Charleston, S.C., I love Southern hospitality, Southern traditions and Southern cooking.

Any good Northerner with respect knows that in order to make an authentic mint julep you take a few fresh mint leaves and, with the back of a long-handled lead-tea spoon, crush them inside a chilled copper mug.

BY THE WAY, authentic mint juleps are meant to be sipped on the veranda, not chug-a-lugged at a go-go bar.

Pretty much the same goes for oysters. Now this Northerner isn't about to discount the flavorful Benoit oysters or those mouth-watering fruits de la mer from the Northern shores, but until you've downed a bucket of shucks — lightly doused with shots of Louisiana hot sauce — right from the shell, while cleansing your palate with a handful of boiled peanuts, you have yet to experience a tried-and-true Southern tradition.

If you're thinking about having a Memorial Day bash with a slight Southern accent, I might suggest buying a bushel or so of oysters from a fish retailer (get a better price) and fill up an old washtub with ice. Pick up a pair of those industrial-strength heavy black vinyl gloves and allow your guests to work up a sweat shucking their own.

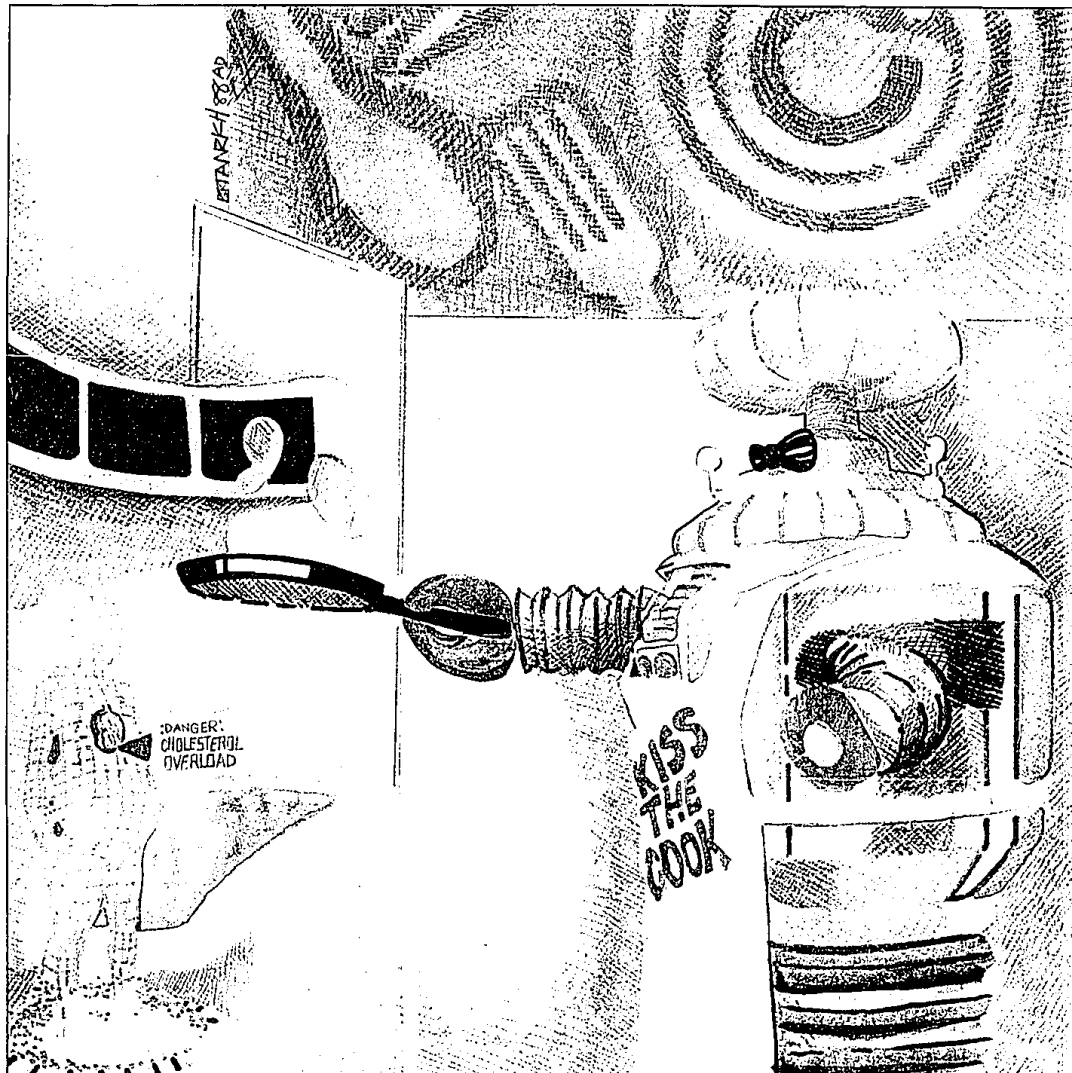
If some of your guests can't appreciate the taste sensation of downing a raw oyster, load up the barbecue and top off the oysters with splashes of champagne and some shredded Gruyere cheese. An herbaceous white sauce and a sprinkling of parmesan can top off just about any seafood creation, whether it be oysters, mussels, crab or shrimp.

Even if the shucking doesn't seem worth it, you can purchase great-quality oysters already shucked from reputable fishmongers. Skewer the oysters with alternate chunks of fresh pineapple or pick up a few packages of the scallop-shell appetizer holders, available at just about any gourmet shop, and after a mint julep your guests won't be able to tell the difference.

ANY VISIT down South wouldn't be complete without a bowl of fresh boiled peanuts. Don't even think about picking up a bag of raw peanuts and trying this recipe.

Unfortunately, you have to do a little scouting around to locate some unshelled raw green peanuts. Unlike the raw peanuts we can readily get at most stores, this recipe has us searching for the immature pods that can be found in specialty markets like the farmers markets in Detroit and Windsor.

Most folks think Southern cooking mainly consists of biscuits, grits and gravy. I think Miss Scarlet looked on the wilder side of life. I can just see Miss Scarlet out on the veranda sipping juleps, shucking oysters and boiling peanuts, watching the neighbors head off to Burger Heaven while saying, "Frankly, I just don't give a damn."
Bon Appetit!



What's cooking tomorrow

By Larry Janes
special writer

If I sit, gazing into my crystal bowl, reporting to you what will undoubtedly be major trends, now being formulated in the laboratories and test kitchens of leading corporations around the world.

When it comes to cooking, my astrological charts never seem to indicate when would be the perfect time to bake bread, remodel my kitchen or, for that matter, crack open a box of Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. As a matter of fact, the closest I ever got to cooking "with the stars" is when my barbecue coals fall to light and I find myself cooking a super-late dinner under the stars.

So here I sit, frantically rubbing the sides of a crystal bowl I pur-

Look for every kitchen to feature home computers that will do everything from manage checkbooks and order groceries to keep track of nutritional guidelines and daily-caloric intake.

chased at a garage sale for \$1.50 stamped with an official-looking "Waterford" moniker.

In addition to dried bits of last

Christmas' divinely fudge, I picked up some very interesting predictions regarding how we eat and what we eat in the future. Here's what tomorrow's Janeses will be enjoying come the year 2001.

LOOK FOR the 1991-model car year to introduce the first microwave-oven option. You just can't drive on I-75 anymore without noticing someone with a beer, pop, burger or pseudo-breakfast sandwich. With more and more of us traveling farther distances to work and play, watch for a glove-compartment-sized microwave oven to appear.

This will undoubtedly spur an entirely new cottage industry called "catch-alls." Similar to overalls, they will catch the dripping bacon fat and shreds of artificially fla-

vored lettuce on our "shelf bought, stay-fresh-for-100-years BLT."

You heard it here first — watch out McDonald's, Wendy's and Burger King, you are being stalked by a new, previously unheard of competition. Healthy food. No need to worry about tofu burgers or broccoli burritos, but we will see an emergence of "health fast food" operations giving us more nutritional choices such as fruit-on-a-stick, frozen yogurt, salad and vegetable combinations on a pita-type bun. Look for alternative burgers, notably turkey burgers and chicken burgers, and look for french fries not fried in oil but in a new calorie-free fat replacement called "olestra."

Speaking of "olestra," the Proctor and Gamble Co. has already submitted petitions requesting "olestra's"

approval. Olestra will provide the rich taste of full-calorie fats and oils but will be calorie-free because it will not be absorbed by the body. The secret here being that olestra is not digested by the body, so it passes right through, unabsorbed.

IMAGINE, FRENCH FRIES with half the calories, none of the fat and no cholesterol. Ditto for ice cream, Godiva chocolates, chocolate Easter bunnies, Sander's hot fudge and Amaretto.

Look for every kitchen to feature home computers that will do everything from manage checkbooks and order groceries to keep track of nutritional guidelines and daily-caloric intake. Skin monitors that connect

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Stay out of kitchen: caterers do the job

By Arlene Funke
special writer

Delicious food is an integral part of a memorable gathering.

But many people simply don't have the time — or talent — to cook and serve an elaborate or unusual array of food.

Caterers like Katherine Allinok and Detra Denay Davis are two local

businesswomen who bring their special talents right into the client's kitchen. They cook and serve custom meals "on location," rather than bringing food in already prepared.

"I just go into the kitchen and take over," said Allinok, 51, of Rochester. "The host and hostess don't have to go near the kitchen. The food is hot. It's freshly prepared."

Allinok, who works with her hus-

band, Gill, specializes in Armenian and Middle Eastern dishes. "There is something about the aroma of cooking food," said 32-year-old Davis, a Detroit native who caters mostly in the Oakland County suburbs. "It's enticing to people."

Davis, who likes to cook Louisiana Creole dishes, encourages her clients



Denay Davis, who specializes in Louisiana Creole dishes, recently catered a surprise birthday party in a Farmington Hills home.

THOMAS ARNETT

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