

taste buds  
chef Larry  
James

## Bum rap given to anchovy

Anchovies are like ice cream or Stravinsky compositions. People either love them or hate them.

Shameless prejudice accounts for much of the anchovy's bum rap. Serve a well-seasoned Caesar salad without mentioning anchovies, and even the fish's detractors will pronounce the salad delicious. Mention anchovies, however, and the salad will languish on the table, barely unscathed. Steak tartar and Salad Nicoise, not to mention pizza, also would be sorry stuff without the anchovy.

The anchovy has a very distinguished culinary history. It was highly esteemed by the ancient Greeks and Romans, the latter of whom used it to make garum, a pungent sauce prepared by boiling anchovies and brine in the sun.

In Shakespeare's time the fish was consumed with a glass of sherry as a snack. Furthermore, the tiny fish has long been associated with drinking: a 17th century writer described it as, "The famous meat of the drunkards."

The saltiness of the fish does, indeed, prompt people to drink, which is why anchovy haters are so particular about their pizza. Anchovies also make great appetizers, as the English writer Thomas Flatman aptly observed: "To quicken appetite it will behove ye salte it feed courageously on good Anchovies."

THE SALTWATER FISH, a diminutive four to five inches long and silver in color, is caught on dark spring nights. Bright lights are shown from the boat into the water, attracting the fish by the millions.

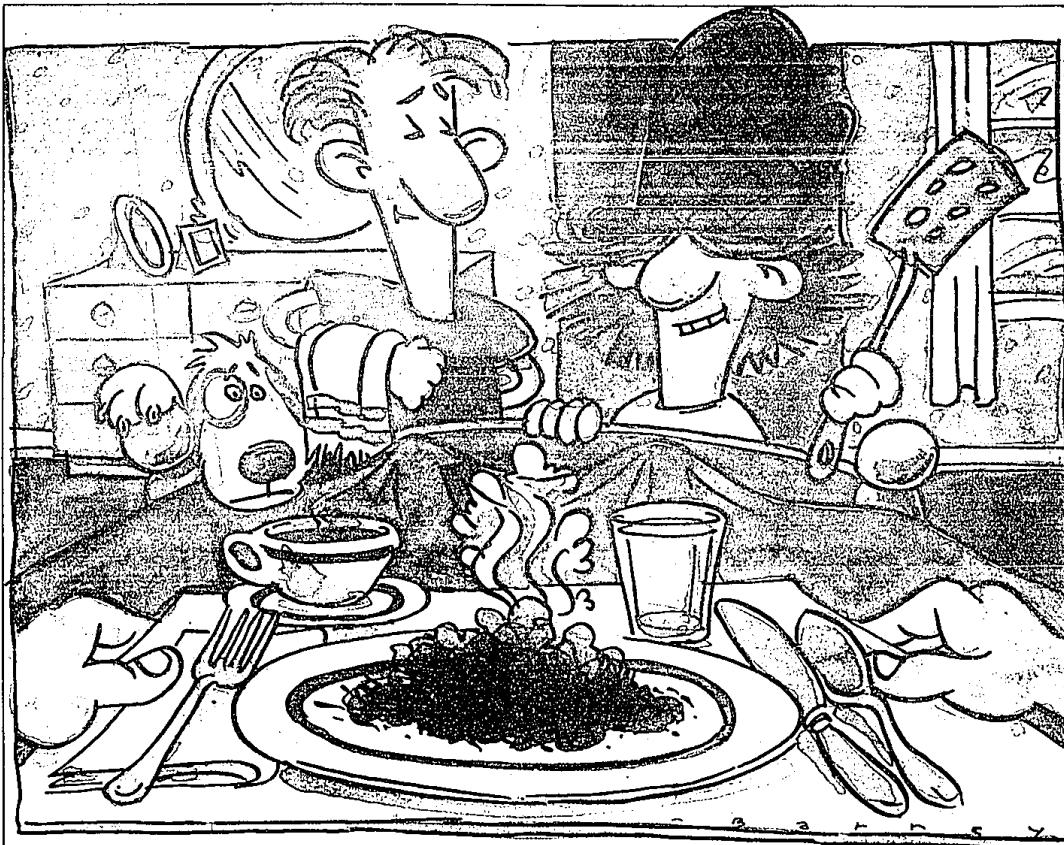
The bulk of the catch is destined to be cured. Mediterranean fishermen simply gut the fish, salt it and pack it in barrels. In this country, anchovies are most commonly consumed in canned form. The fillets are cured in salt for three to four months, which gives them a reddish hue, then packed in olive oil in tall cans. French anchovies, which are scarce in this area, are absolutely delectable when fried or cooked on the grill. They taste and resemble our smelt.

The fish appears in dishes as diverse as Italian antipasto, Scandinavian smorgasbord and German Weiner Schnitzel. The combination of anchovy and meat is not as odd as it sounds, for the tangy fish is one of the main ingredients in Worcestershire and steak sauce.

Anchovies should be drained and blotted on paper towels before using. To diminish the fishy flavor, you can soak the fillets in milk for 20 minutes. Fish steaks and even beef can be larded with anchovies to impart a wonderful flavor. This is accomplished by inserting the fillets in a larding needle and pulling them through the thick parts of the fish or steaks.

The strangest recipe I have ever come across for anchovy comes from the French novel:

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## Mom, plan breakfast in bed

By Larry James  
special writer

**I**F THE SOUND of kids in the kitchen send shivers down your spine, you're like many of the moms we interviewed. Seems that all the Kona coffee in Hawaii can't equal the pleasure derived from having breakfast prepared in bed.

The secret is expanding the basic job description. It's one thing being brought the morning paper, a fresh cup of coffee and a steaming slice of quiche, and quite another slipping on your robe and venturing into a kitchen with a sink full of dirty dishes and finding coffee grounds all over the floor. So if thoughts of a Mother's Day "breakfast in bed" sound appealing, you have to plan your strategy.

Whether the kids are 6 or 18, it probably wouldn't hurt leaving this article in a very conspicuous location. Not too conspicuous, mind you, but a place where you know it will be seen.

A good place for older kids would be stuffed into their sweats. Of course, you could always say the article "just happened to fall into their sneakers." If kids are temporarily not available and you're hoping to

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have your mate surprise you, a simple clipping strategically placed in the bathroom would give a subtle hint. Ditto for the place in the "to pay" file.

**I**F YOU ARE FACED with the task of getting the little ones to grab the hint, forget the above and attack the situation bluntly with the statement, "Mommy would love breakfast in bed," and then circle the date on a large May calendar.

Now that everyone in the family knows you would like a homemade Mother's Day breakfast, you can do one of two things: settle for burnt toast, a wilted flower and a crumpled paper by simply assuming they will shop and prepare, or you can propose a simple menu that would include everyone's help.

The secret is to like the taste of fresh-squeezed orange juice in the morning and, yes, it can be purchased from any good grocery store, but you can also pick up a very inexpensive plastic juicer and a bag of oranges. Anyone over the age of 4 can slice an orange in half and juice a few oranges.

Forget the ritualistic frying of a few pounds of bacon. Not only do you risk having to jump out of bed and nurse blisters, but the mess to be made on the stove top totally wipes out all the joy of the taste.

Even a kid cook can crack a few eggs and make a simple strata or egg-based casserole. Quiche would be a nice touch, but then you have to deal with making the crust, baking the crust, filling, measuring, baking, slicing and probably oven clean-up.

ON MOTHER'S DAY eve, you could politely set out a casserole dish conveniently sprayed with Pam or lightly greased. Have the eggs, bread and veggies sitting in separate bowls, easily spotted upon opening the fridge. In order to avoid the possibility of having your sleep interrupted, set out the whisk, ladle, measuring cup, measuring spoons and at least a dozen kitchen towels the night before.

If you are dealing with true novices, with the coffee premeasured, assure your crew of at least one good thing you won't have to do the next magical morning.

If the family members taking part in this exercise of fulfills have taken Home Ec. 101 and have some understanding of kitchen rituals, simply

remind them that in order to avoid egg drop soup and create a perfect casserole, for every egg used, you can use equal amounts of milk or cream and still end up with an edible product.

Beginners can rely on good old Bob Evans for a tasty, seasoned breakfast sausage, while those having little problems tying apron strings behind their backs can rely on the addition of green onions, pepper and a little sage that was left over from last Thanksgiving.

A final note: You would turn off the entire and, God forbid, the opening of a can of fruit cocktail could suffice. Add to that a toasty bagel or whole-wheat English muffin plucked from the toaster and it would warm the heart of Mother Theresa, let alone you.

**Y**OU COULD EVEN tolerate the slathering on of half a stick of butter or margarine knowing, of course, it can't be scraped off.

The secret, of course, should be a needless reminder that should something like this incredible feast be attempted so should some attempt at clean-up. Make sure the kitchen is well stocked with liquid detergent and Soft-Scrub cleanser for the non-stick skillet, stove and countertop.

Better yet, have an additional six kitchen towels strategically placed throughout the kitchen at arm's reach. A hint to drop, while the food is being delivered to your bedside, is, "I'm sure the kitchen was left exactly the way you found it this morning."

Now let's play the devil's advocate. What if your spouse is a do-it-who has no idea how to turn the oven on and the kids think that breakfast was contrived by a lady named Aunt Jenkins? Simply stock the freezer with an assortment of Great Starts microwave-ready breakfasts. Of course, since it's Mother's Day, you get to choose.

You might even wish to barricade yourself in the bedroom, at least until the folks from Molly Maid have finished.

Most of today's Renaissance kids (and men) would probably welcome the opportunity to pull off something like this. Give them the tools and appropriate measures, you might want to make a reservation at the local breakfast joint. But if they're willing and able, the recipes submitted for your approval are easy, delicious and all can be prepared by anyone with a little love in their hearts. Bon appetit!

## Box office hit

Homemade meals are just the ticket

By Ethel Simmons  
staff writer

Wedsdays are madine days at the Birmingham Theatre, but that's also a day the box office crew takes turns preparing a special lunch.

"The small office next to the box office is where the staff gathers to eat the meal that has only one requirement — everything must be homemade," said Chuck Schroder of Rochester Hills, the bar manager, loves to cook and frequently prepares some of the dishes. "One recent afternoon he brought in chicken enchiladas.

Other times, he has created such things as beef stroganoff — "an old recipe from my mom" — and a nine-layer blueberry torte — "it has about 8,000 calories," he said. "What did you make today?"

asked the theater's general manager, Charlotte Lally of Birmingham, who was passing through the lobby.

"The best chicken enchiladas you've ever had in your life," Schroder said with obvious pride.

Schroder said he learned to cook as a matter of self-survival.

"I picked up recipes from my mom and just over the years trained myself."

He cooks by smell instead of taste.

"The aroma is good, the flavor is good."

THAT AFTERNOON, the salad was made by Debbie Denson of Berkley, the box office manager, and Jo-Carroll Mullen of Birmingham, who does the box office and works as head usher for the Wednesday matinee and concession.

Joan Drocalle of Redford Town-

ship, a part-time box office employee, did the dessert, oatmeal cake.

"It's real simple to make," she said. "I don't use a box cake mix. I can't take it anywhere without everyone wanting the recipe."

The crew from the front of the house invites everyone working on the production to share the food.

"There's more than enough," Denson said.

Wednesday is a long day, from matinee to evening performance.

"We can feed people through all the way to 8 o'clock tonight," Denson said.

SCHRODER MADE enough enchiladas to feed 23 people. Sometimes his dishes can carry over from Wednesday.

"His stroganoff lasted for three days," Denson said.

Making enchiladas, Schroder gets help from his roommate.

"I can't roll an enchilada to beat the hand," he said. The roommate usually alternates rolling a few with reserving one for

himself throughout the process.

SCHRODER PACKS the tortillas and filling separately because the food is brought in the night before.

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Share recipes  
for party fare

Readers' special recipes on entertainment are wanted for a cookbook to be published by the Observer & Eccentric. If you've got a recipe for casual or elegant party fare, send it to the Recipe Book, The Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Scholastic, Livonia 48150. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number.

Recipes may include such categories as appetizers and hors d'oeuvres, soups, salads, main dishes, vegetables, breads and rolls, and desserts.

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Chuck Schroder, who made the chicken enchiladas, tops one with sauce heating in a crockpot at the Birmingham Theatre box office lunch Wednesday.

DAN DEAN/Star photographer

Making enchiladas, Schroder gets help from his roommate.

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