

## taste buds

**chef Larry Janes**

## It's easy to cook wild game

With the fall hunting season right around the corner, many households will be the recipients of deer, elk, bear and a host of smaller game.

If you find yourself in possession of a piece of venison or perhaps a brace of quail, even a mallard duck, don't panic. Cooking wild game is as simple as preparing beef, pork or poultry.

The problem facing most game cooks is that they must correct the mistakes made by the hunters.

FAR MORE meat is ruined in the field than will ever be ruined in the kitchen. If hunters had to buy beef and pork in the same condition as the game they kill, we would be a nation of vegetarians.

While most hunters are men — with women entering the field this year in record numbers — a basic knowledge of cooking, even more in meat preparation, should be tantamount before entering the field.

Ask any hunter what makes a good steak and he or she usually answers, "aged beef."

Too often, venison is "aged" by improper care in the field. But it is also by far the most mistreated by hunters who fail to remove the hide in time or who do a poor job dressing the carcass.

The result is soured meat, a condition most hunters wrongfully explain by saying the meat has a "gamey taste." In truth, the meat is not gamey, it is spoiled.

IF A COOK comes upon meat that has been treated improperly to begin with, there are few things short of massive doses of spices, marinades and herbs that will disguise the flavor.

Let's take a closer look at venison. A venison steak or chop can be broiled, barbecued or pan-fried. It is best medium rare.

Venison is not necessarily tough. It can be tough if cut against the grain. It also can be tough if all the moisture is cooked out.

VENISON IS by far the most healthful red meat you can eat. It is low in cholesterol, has mostly lean, fat-free tissue and, of course, has no chemical additives that ranchers usually administer to cattle, sheep and pigs.

The meat itself is not marbled the way beef is.

All visible fat should be trimmed from venison because it is generally tallowy and unpalatable. A venison roast or haunch can be roasted with strips of bacon laid over the top to compensate for lack of fat and marbling.

Game birds such as quail, dove or duck, like big game, are best when properly cared for in the field.

This means dressing and plucking as soon as possible. Improper drainage of blood and lack of plucking, coupled with a too-soon toss into a plastic unbreathable bag, can spell disaster in the kitchen.

BUT WHAT CAN a hunter do to prepare for the upcoming season?

If every hunter spent an equal amount of time cleaning his or her equipment, as well as visiting a friendly neighborhood butcher or poultry expert, there would be little cause for chalking up a dinner that tastes "gamey."

At the Eastern Market, Capitol Poultry will allow you to choose a live hen, turkey or duck and then you can easily observe the preparation of the carcass.

IF BUTCHERS in your area are reluctant to have strangers in the cutting room, visit your local library and read up on field dressing.

A good primer is the "Wildlife Chef" published by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, P.O. Box 30235, Lansing 48909.

If your household will soon be gifting wild game from the family hunters, now is a good time to begin learning what (and what not) to do.



Evelyn Dugal of Troy, who loves baking bread and cookies, earned honors for her onion bread, Jewish sour rye bread, whole wheat bread and molasses crinkles cookies at the Michigan State Fair.

## Prizeworthy recipes to share

By Arlene Funks  
staff writer

Good cooks know that food tastes better when shared with friends

and family.

Evelyn Dugal, a clerk-typist with the city of Troy, bakes old-fashioned white bread and takes the loaves to eager co-workers.

Judy Bossio of Livonia cans huge batches of tomatoes, cucumbers and beets. These veggies are the mainstay of hearty soups and side dishes enjoyed by her family.

"Even as a kid I was interested in food," said Bossio, a homemaker and mother of five.

Dugal, whose forte is breads and cookies, won several ribbons at this year's Michigan State Fair. Bossio also won a handful of State Fair ribbons for her home-canned vegetables, sauces and relishes.

"MY HUSBAND always liked homemade bread," said Dugal, who currently is assigned to the Troy Police Department.

"He hated the soft bread — the stuff you could make into a ball. When the kids were little they didn't like store-bought bread."

Dugal's onion bread placed second in the specialty bread category. Her Jewish sour rye bread placed second in the rye breads and her whole wheat bread captured an honorable mention.

She won a third place ribbon for her molasses crinkles, thick, chewy cookies with cracked, sugary tops.

DUGAL, A longtime Troy resident, has been baking breads for more than three decades. She and her husband, Chuck, a manager at Ameritech, have four grown children.

"There are tons of other things I could do, but I find myself baking bread when I should be cleaning closets," she said with a laugh.

Dugal's favorite is a Jewish rye with caraway seeds, although she bakes mostly white varieties. She prefers using unbleached flour and dry yeast packets.

A Kitchen Aid mixer equipped with special hooks makes kneading the dough easier. Her double-oven stove can bake up to eight loaves at a time.

"I give away a lot," she said. "There is something about making your own bread. I'm not artistic in other ways but I do enjoy making bread."

DUGAL HAS collected "zillions" of recipes for both breads and cookies. She doesn't bake too many rich desserts because her husband is on a low-cholesterol regimen.

Her prize-winning molasses cookie recipe came from an old Betty Crocker cookbook.

Dugal's secret to a moist, chewy cookie is to avoid overbaking. "Cookies continue to bake after they're removed from the oven," she said. "If you bake them until they look done, the cookie is probably overbaked."

BOSSIO ALSO ENJOYS baking, but she is earning kudos for her home-canned vegetables and fruits. This was her first set of entries in State Fair competition, and she captured eight ribbons.

She finds it especially satisfying to preserve the fresh harvest bounty for enjoyment throughout the year.

"As a homemaker there is so much you do that is temporary," she said.

Bossio won first place ribbons for her dill pickles and beet relish, second place for taco sauce, chili sauce and pineapple chunks in brown-sugar syrup.

She also won third or fourth place for pickle relish, bread and butter pickles and beets.

Much of the produce used comes from the family garden, she said.

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Judy Bossio of Livonia shows the home-canned vegetables and fruits which brought her eight ribbons at the fair.

## Chocolates star in coffee house setting

By Geri Rinechler  
special writer

What an unbeatable combination — elegant, handmade truffles and chocolates, freshly brewed exotic coffee and tea, frothy cappuccino and full-bodied espresso, all in a romantic European setting. Fortunately, you no longer need to travel to Paris or Vienna to enjoy such luxury. It's here, now, in downtown Birmingham at Gayle's Chocolates.

When Gayle Harle first began making truffles and chocolates "for fun," as she says, in the early 1980s, she never dreamed she would someday own a chocolate candy factory and two retail shops. As a working mother, over the last 10 years or so, Harle has gained a prestigious standing as a high-quality "chocolatier" or chocolate confectioner. Her distinctive chocolate designs can be found behind the best in retail shops, such as all Silver's in the Detroit area and Nordstrom's in California, as well as for corporate use by the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn.

Her retail line has grown from her signature chocolate, long-stem roses and truffles to include designer chocolate ties, molded marbled chocolate serving bowls filled with chocolate-covered potato chips and round chocolate pinatas wrapped in ribbons accompanied by a small mallet.

*"I feel the same way about coffee as I do about chocolate. It has to be fresh, clean taste, and be absolutely satisfying."*

— Gayle Harle  
Gayle's Chocolates

ALMOST ANY design can be custom made to suit your needs. One customer, not too long ago, asked Harle to duplicate Tiger Stadium, which she did in a variety of chocolates, including small truffles pointed with faces sitting in the bleachers. The limits of her creativity are endless.

When Harle decided to open her first retail shop in Royal Oak in 1984, she said, "I wanted more of a European coffee house atmosphere than a typical chocolate shop." So, she decided to combine the two.

"I feel the same way about coffee as I do about chocolate. It has to be fresh, clean taste, and be absolutely satisfying." In searching for the perfect cup of coffee, she came upon Tom Isiah, a coffee roaster in Ann Arbor. "Tom treats his coffee beans

with the same care I treat my chocolates," Harle said. To ensure that perfect cup, Isiah only roasts the beans for Harle's shop when she places her order.

At both the Royal Oak shop and the new Birmingham shop, the menu includes filter-brewed, cafe au lait, espresso, cappuccino and French-press coffee and tea. The hot chocolate is made with steamed milk and the same chocolate Harle uses for making her chocolates. A unique and luscious beverage on the menu is the hot raspberry truffle. To make one, hot chocolate is blended with a raspberry truffle, topped with freshly whipped vanilla whipped cream. It's then dusted with cocoa and cinnamon powder and topped with an Austrian wafer cookie.

HARLE'S PHILOSOPHICAL approach to her retail shops is to provide a comfortable place to relax and enjoy an honest cup of coffee. When she opened Gayle's Chocolates, in Birmingham, in April, the decor of the shop certainly met with her expectations. As a self-taught chocolate designer, she admits she knows nothing about interior design or decorating. "So, that's why I hired Peterhansra, Inc., to design both my shops. Designer Ron Rea did a fabulous job. The tapestry fabrics and the whimsical cherubs were all his



Gayle Harle is shown in her newest shop, Gayle's Chocolates in Birmingham.

idea," she said. Since chocolate has long been associated with love, the cherubs are certainly appropriate.

To complement the beverage menu, Harle offers homemade muffins, scones and cookies. Her favor-

ite muffin is a recipe which blends Michigan dried cherries, chocolate pieces and nuts sweetened with a little bit of maple syrup.

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