

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 cooked like beefsteak. It 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 inositol, 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 gifted with 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

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

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.

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.



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

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

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

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.

Dugal's secret to a moist, chewy cookie is to avoid overbaking.

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.

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.

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

Chocolates star in coffee house setting

By Geri Rinecher
special writer

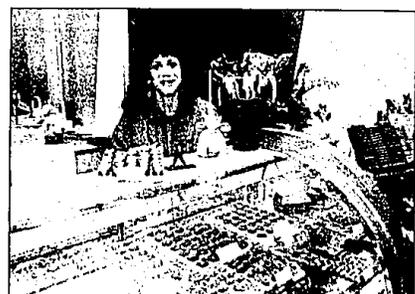
ALMOST ANY design can be custom made to suit your needs. One customer, not too long ago, asked Harte to duplicate Tiger Stadium, which she did in a variety of chocolates, including small truffes painted with faces sitting in the bleachers. The limits of her creativity are endless.

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

When Harte 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.

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 Harte 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.

HARTE'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 Peterchenre, Inc., to design both my shops. Designer Ron Rea did a fabulous job. The tapestry fabrics and the whimsical cherubs were all his



Gayle Harte 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, Harte 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.