

## taste buds

chef Larry  
JanesStuffed?  
Help the  
hungry

With Thanksgiving warmly tucked behind our belt buckles and buttons, the last of that turkey carcass picked clean and hopefully thrown into a stock pot for soup, did you ever stop to think what it would be like to stand in line, hoping and praying that the agency providing your only warm meal of the day wouldn't run out of turkey, gravy, stuffing and potatoes?

As you search through the cupboards looking for that can of cranberry sauce hidden behind the bulging shelves of soup, taco shells, canned vegetables and cereal boxes, were you aware that there are thousands of people, many in our own neatly landscaped backyards, who open their cupboards only to find a bag of USDA-packaged cornmeal and an occasional can of evaporated milk?

The facts are astounding. With many community agencies feeling budgets cuts, the rolls continually expand with families requesting assistance. Maybe it was a temporary layoff, a sudden turn of bad luck or even an unexpected medical emergency that tapped a family's food budget. Whatever the reasons, there are people going to bed hungry.

Fortunately, there are agencies like the folks from Gleaners Community Food Bank who assist folks with bare cupboards. It might be the mom (or dad) with two kids struggling on ADC who need their help. Maybe it's the senior citizen who lives down your street who purchases only day-old bread and past-prime produce from your local supermarket. It could even be that shelter for battered women and children who gathered around their Thanksgiving table wondering if they will ever get a chance to return to a normal lifestyle.

SOME FOLKS need help, and as a nation with bulging cupboards, it's up to us to lend a hand. The scenarios of people needing help are as long and varied as our income tax forms.

It becomes increasingly easy to sit back and say that it's not our problem. But it is. We write checks every week to our church. Heck, there's even a payroll deduction now for contributions to the United Fund. But these funds can only go so far.

At a recent visit to my city hall, I noticed a rather large display of brochures from the Gleaners Community Food Bank requesting that I buy a case of food to help feed the hungry. The brochure sat on my desk for a few days, and when it became time to do the weekly sorting, I found it and took a few minutes to see just what my donation would buy.

If you read this column and enjoyed a bountiful Thanksgiving table with your friends and family, why not take a few extra minutes right now to do something for those not so fortunate?

Please share your bounty this season with a gift of food for those in need. Send your tax-deductible check, payable to Gleaners Community Food Bank, and help provide the more than 155,000 meals that go to the needy every week in our area. Here's an idea of what your donation can provide:

\$8.76 for a case of Welch's fruit juice  
\$10.82 buys a case of Freshlike green beans  
\$11.60 gets a case of Campbell's chicken noodle soup  
\$14.83 stocks a cupboard with Campbell's beef stew  
\$17.69 opens a case of Velvet peanut butter  
\$20.44 spreads a case of Ragù spaghetti sauce.

Send your donation to: Gleaners Community Food Bank, 2131 Beaufort, Detroit 48207, or you can phone 923-3535.



Hors d'oeuvres prepared by Larry Janes include Dip in tomato, Artichoke Heart and 3-Cheese Puff and Nut Terrine. Platters courtesy of Williams-Sonoma, Laurel Park Place, Livonia

## Appetite- whetters

### Combine dunks, tops, forms and wraps

By Larry Janes  
special writer

WITH THE INFLUX of holiday parties, open houses and office get-togethers, today's busy cook is always in search of new ideas, suggestions and tips to make his or her holiday entertaining easy and enjoyable.

Unfortunately for most party-throws, this will be another season filled with the all-too-typical marinated meatballs, spinach dip in hollowed-out bread and the ever-present cheese balls.

Isn't it about time someone came up with some new holiday appetizers that will have your guests calling out for more? If you have ever found yourself still staving over the entire while your spouse passes the onion dip and crackers to your guests in the other room, you might want to nip out this story and utilize it for an upcoming holiday party.

Hors d'oeuvres are a versatile food category, representing pure luxury and indulgence as well as the opportunity for a tremendous variety of stimulating tastes. Almost any dish can be made into an appetizer simply by miniaturizing it. On the other hand, you also will find that many appetizer recipes can be turned into entrees

with the addition of a simple sauce and rice or pasta.

IN ORDER to plan a great hors d'oeuvres party, you need to remember a few minor categories. The best appetizer table is simply just that, an appetizer, something to enjoy before dining. Too many pre-dinner palate pleasers spell catastrophe to a dinner party.

If you are planning on serving dinner, keep the "apps" light and varied. If, on the other hand, you want to put out a spread Henry VIII would relish, remember there will be little need for exotic salads, heavy pasta dishes and exorbitantly priced meats and seafoods.

The best appetizer table has a mixture of dunks, tops, forms and wraps. The dunks should consist of a mixture of relish selections with appropriate dips. The tops can be an assortment of spreads, some hot, some cold, that can be piped onto crackers, spread onto party breads and then strategically placed on the tabletop.

The forms can be molds of pate, terrines concocted in simple breadpans and mousses adorned the most delicate molds. The wraps can be a mixture of stuffed vegetables, stuffed wrappers, croustades, phyllo and puff pastry.

And with everything we do in life, there

are a few rules that should always be followed, regardless of what our moms have preached for decades. First, try to remember that throwing a party should be fun. Mommas through the centuries have instilled in our minds that hosts and hostesses must constantly be running around like the proverbial chicken with its head cut off, making sure that everything is just right and that the old adage "What's the matter? Don't you like my food?" coupled with the "Eat. It will make me feel better." is the only way to throw a party.

CONTRARY TO what you and I have been taught, it's okay to enjoy your own party. The best host or hostess makes the best guest list, incorporating a melange of interesting folks who, by themselves, will keep the party going.

Suggestion number two has been practiced by the experienced partygiver for decades. Plan the hors d'oeuvres so that as much can be done in advance as possible. No one likes it when their host or hostess is secluded in a hot kitchen for hours on end. Remember, it's your party and you can enjoy it too.

If your culinary talents equal those of your car maintenance abilities, try to understand that your guests are not coming with rating cards tucked under their armchairs.

Here are recipes for one of each

## COLD BLT DIP

A great dunk

1 pound bacon, cooked until crisp  
3 tomatoes, peeled and seeded  
1 cup mayonnaise or salad dressing  
1 tablespoon Dijon-styled mustard  
1/4 cup green onions, chopped  
1/4 cup parsley, minced  
Dash hot pepper sauce

Drain bacon and cool. Combine remaining ingredients in a food processor and process until chunky. This can be prepared up to 2 days in advance and refrigerated. Serve with corn chips, tortillas, crackers or melba's. If there are any leftovers, hollow out a baked potato and heat throughout for a great side dish.

## ROASTED GARLIC DECADENCE

A superb top

6 large bulbs garlic  
4 tablespoons cream sherry  
8 ounces chevre (goat cheese)

Please turn to Page 2

## You'll be over the moon with La Luna Grancaffè



Most of the current crop of Italian restaurants are stiffer than uncooked spaghetti. Overdressed waitpeople serve overdressed pasta — often not as good as you could make at home — at overdressed prices.

Pasta is supposed to be fun, we've always thought. Attacking a dish of angel hair should be an unrefined sort of quest, stumpy and sloppy, embarked upon in the same spirit that one chows down on barbecued ribs. We have some soul mates at La Luna Grancaffè, a big-hearted place that is loud in atmosphere, emphatic in food and yet sentimental in style, a light opera sort of restaurant right in downtown Birmingham, which could stand a little Fellini-izing anyway.

La Luna's pizza comes in two sizes — the eight-inch "mezza luna" and the 14-inch "luna moon." Starting with a thin, crispy crust, the restaurant then adds genuine ingredients (real ricotta and mozzarella, not the reduced calorie, rubber versions). The moon pie pizza is great, topped as it is with cheese, a good marinara sauce, trendy but tasty sun-dried tomatoes, pine nuts and fresh basil.

Pasta dishes are the real thing too. What a difference pure olive oil and fresh ingredients make. The Capellini Rosellini featuring shrimp and scallops tossed with angel hair pasta, garlic, butter and white wine is outstanding.

ON THE MENU, the specialties include Tortellini di Jackolantini (pumpkin pasta) and another pasta dish, Penne from Heaven (chicken, shrimp and broccoli sautéed with olive oil, garlic, sun-dried tomatoes

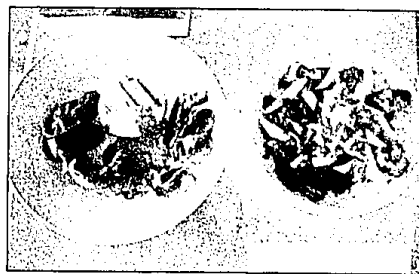
and crushed red pepper).

Wise cracks are a decor theme, like the legend, "She shot for the moon, but ended up with him" on the espresso list (sorry, no liquor license), the statement "When the moon hit their eye like a big pizza pie, it wasn't amore, but it was good" on the menu, and the immortal logo, "To La Luna. Allez," over the coffee bar.

It may take daring to open a restaurant without a liquor license these days, but La Luna undauntingly has substituted an international list of mineral waters, sparkling juices and no-alcohol beers and wines. Premium coffee abounds as well. Try the espresso with biscuits dipped in Gayle's chocolate.

Details: La Luna Grancaffè, 183 N. Woodward, Birmingham, 642-7070.

Hours: Monday-Thursday 5-9 p.m., Friday-Saturday 5-11 p.m.



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

La Luna offers Salsiccia e Polenta (sausage and polenta with roasted red pepper sauce) and Penne from Heaven (chicken, shrimp, broccoli, garlic, sun-dried tomatoes and penne noodles).

Lunch hours are planned. Carryout available. No reservations. Prices: \$4.75 for small pizza to \$13.50 for full meal. All major credit cards.

Value: Tremendous food in an appropriate price range. Rating: ★★★★★

RATING GUIDE  
★ Average (lots of places with similar quality)  
★★ Good  
★★★ Very good  
★★★★ Excellent  
★★★★★ Consistently superb — a rare honor.