

# Get out the grill soon for a Sunday supper

Ah, spring. Gentle breezes, the smell of freshly cut grass and the gradual unfolding of leaves all signify the renewal and regeneration that occurs each year at this time. Or does it? After all, this is Michigan and we all remember years when snow has fallen furiously up until May.

I can do is cross my fingers and hope that snow and wintry weather will be over for at least another eight or nine months.

As we shift our seasonal gears, there is much work to be done. Yards, gardens, garages and, of course, closets demand our attention and efforts. This week's Winner Dinner, submitted by Dr. Patricia Drake of Livonia, was selected with the thought in mind that here, indeed, is a meal that would be a delicious Sunday supper, easy to put together and a perfect way to inaugurate the outside grill after a tiring but productive day of cleaning and organizing.

The dinner features a cold pasta salad topped with herb-brushed grilled chicken breasts, toasted garlic bread, orange slices for dessert and iced tea to drink.

Drake is the busy wife and mother of a young son, and she knows all about preparing nutritious meals quickly. She has worked as a school psychologist for the Warren Consolidated Schools since 1978. Because Drake grew up in and attended the schools in this district, some of the teachers she works with are the ones who taught her.

Within the scope of her job she does a lot of diagnostic testing and evaluation of students and works with the teachers and students' parents in helping to plan services, programs and interventions as needed.

At home, Drake is kept busy with her young son and the family pets. She and her veterinarian husband have a dog, cat, two parakeets and a hamster. Drake is president-elect of the Macomb-St. Clair Psychological Association, an organization that helps design professional programs and provides a network for area school psychologists. She also is a member of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, and because her husband has Crohn's Disease she is very aware of diet and nutrition.



family-tested winner dinner

**Betsy Brethen**



Dr. Patricia Drake and her son Matthew, 18 months, with her Winner Dinner.

Thank you, Dr. Patricia Drake, for sharing your menu with us and congratulations on being selected this week's Winner Dinner Winner. Hopefully, the apron you most deservedly won will help squelch future comments and put to rest forever any family jokes about your cooking.

Speaking of jokes, it is no jest that I could really use some more Winner Dinners, so please, poll your family members, find out their favorite

meal, jot it down with recipes included and send it my way.

Submit your recipes, to be considered for publication in this column or elsewhere, to: Winner Dinner, P.O. Box 3503, Birmingham 48012. All submissions become the property of the publisher. Each week's winner receives an apron with the words Winner Dinner Winner on it.

## Observer & Eccentric

### Winner Dinner

#### Menu

**SPRING CHICKEN PASTA  
GARLIC TOAST  
ORANGE SLICES  
ICED TEA**

#### Recipes

##### SPRING CHICKEN PASTA SALAD

This recipe is a variation of a meal the Drakes had last summer at the Mission Pointe Resort Grill on Mackinac Island. Quick and easy to make, it tastes best when the pasta salad is made in advance, as the flavors of the vegetables and dressing have more time to absorb into the pasta. This recipe serves 4.

4 deboned chicken breasts  
12 ounces of your favorite shape of pasta  
1 bottle light Italian salad dressing, 16-ounce size  
3-4 carrots, diced  
1 green pepper, diced  
2 cups fresh or defrosted frozen peas  
1 cup fresh or defrosted broccoli flowerettes  
Anything else you would like to add, such as chick peas, black olives, cherry tomatoes or cheese chunks  
1/2 cup olive oil  
1/2 cup lemon juice  
1/2 teaspoon tarragon

Combine the olive oil, lemon juice and tarragon. Brush the mixture onto the chicken breasts. Grill or broil the chicken breasts, basting with the mixture.

Combine the cooked pasta with the vegetables and any

other ingredients you would like to add. Pour 1 cup of the salad dressing over the salad and add more as needed for the size of the salad. Refrigerate and allow enough time for the flavors to mix. Serve the cold pasta salad with the hot chicken breasts. Season to taste and garnish with Parmesan or Romano cheese.

##### GARLIC TOAST

Melt a half stick of butter or margarine in a small pan over a low flame. Watch the butter carefully so that it doesn't turn brown. Mince or use a garlic press to mash 3-4 fresh cloves of garlic. Stir them into the butter or margarine and heat on low for a minute or two, again watching carefully so that the butter doesn't brown.

Slice a loaf of French or Italian bread. Brush the butter mixture onto the slices of bread and place them on a cookie sheet. Sprinkle with a little Parmesan cheese. Place in the broiler until the cheese bubbles and the bread is lightly browned.

##### ORANGE WEDGES

Dessert doesn't get any easier than this. Simply cut up some oranges into wedges and place them in a pretty bowl. What a colorful and refreshing end to a tasty meal.

#### Shopping List

4 deboned chicken breasts  
12 ounces of your favorite shape of pasta  
1 bottle light Italian salad dressing, 16-ounce size  
3-4 carrots  
1 green pepper  
2 cups peas, fresh or frozen  
1 cup broccoli flowerettes, fresh or frozen  
Your choice of the following: chick peas, black olives, cherry tomatoes or cheese chunks  
Olive oil  
1 lemon  
Tarragon  
Parmesan or Romano cheese  
1 loaf of Italian or French bread  
Butter or margarine  
Fresh garlic  
Oranges  
Iced tea

#### Notes

## Understanding key ingredients makes a difference

Cooking success comes when you start with good recipe, measure accurately and use the right ingredients.

Be careful about substituting key ingredients unless the recipe suggests an alternate. We all enjoy food, however, that also tastes good, looks good and is good for you. A basic understanding of some of the key ingredients will help accomplish this by giving you a perfect product every time.

Baking powder is a leavening agent which makes food rise when baked in the oven, skillet or waffle iron. It is a combination of baking soda, a dry acid or acid salt, and starch or flour. When mixed and baked with the acid ingredient it reacts with the baking soda to produce gas bubbles that make the batter or dough rise. Store baking powder tightly covered in a cool, dry cupboard, not over the stove. It will keep for up to one and one-half years. Test the freshness of stored baking powder by testing a teaspoon in one-third cup of hot water. It should bubble quickly.

Baking soda used alone has no leavening power, but used in mixtures contains an acid ingredient such as buttermilk, sour milk, molasses, or fruit juice, it makes a tender product. Mixtures containing baking soda should be baked as soon



**Lois Thieleke**

home economist, Cooperative Extension Service

as mixed because the soda starts to react when it comes in contact with the liquid. Always mix the baking soda with the dry ingredients first.

EVAPORATED MILK is made from homogenized whole milk with about 60 percent of the water removed. This can be diluted with an equal amount of water and substituted for milk in a recipe. Evaporated milk can be used right from the can in a sauce or gravy or as a binder to replace egg in a meatloaf, a liquid in mashed potatoes, or for dipping when breading fish, chicken or chops.

It does have a slightly caramelized taste because of the processing. However, this will not affect the product. After opening the can, it should be treated and stored like fresh milk and used within three to five days.

Chilled evaporated milk makes a very acceptable whipped topping. Add about three tablespoons of lem-

on juice to a can of evaporated milk and whip stiff. For best results, chill the milk, bowl and beaters thoroughly before whipping.

When a recipe refers to flour, it generally means all-purpose wheat flour. Otherwise the type will be specified, and these are not necessarily interchangeable. All-purpose flour is a blend of hard and soft wheat flours and is the most common flour used for baking or as a thickening agent. Instant flour is an all-purpose flour which has been processed to make it fine and granular. Because of its blending ability it is used for a thickener. Cake flour is blended from only soft wheats and has a softer texture than all purpose. In an emergency you can substitute one cup minus two tablespoons sifted

all-purpose flour for one cup cake flour.

Self-rising flour is all-purpose flour to which leavening agents and salt have been added in amounts suitable for general baking. It does not make a very good yeast product, popovers, or egg-leavened cakes such as angel food or sponge cakes. Self-rising can be used in crusts where the fat in the recipe has been reduced.

BREAD FLOUR is sometimes available and highly desirable for bread making because it has a high proportion of gluten. This gluten gives elasticity to dough, helps it expand and hold to gas in the yeast. There are many other non-wheat flours available. They work best in a specific recipe, or follow the directions on the bag.

Molasses is a distinctively flavored syrup made from sugar cane sap. Light molasses and unsulfured have a golden color and mild flavor. Use light molasses in recipes where a delicate color and flavor are needed. Dark molasses is much darker

and stronger flavored and used in recipes where pronounced flavors and color are preferred.

Molasses is not as sweet as sugar so use one cup molasses to replace three-fourths cup granulated sugar. Reduce the other liquid in a recipe by five tablespoons for each cup of molasses used. Store tightly covered

at room temperature. After opening, refrigerate to help prevent mold. If crystals form, place the bottle in hot water to melt them.

There are many tricks to being a successful cook and/or baker. By understanding the basics, the chances of getting a perfect product improves every time.



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