

TASTE

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TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JONES

Soaking up sun, ideas at culinary convention

There's something about Miami, Fla. that helps turn a person's mind into a culinary revolution.

Having just returned from a week in the sunny south, yours truly attended his third International Association of Culinary Professionals annual convention. About 600 of us convened upon Miami and she showed us some pretty exotic culinary treasures.

Maybe it was the caramels, known north of the Mason-Dixon line as fruit, sweet and delicious and made into everything from chocolate to a syrupy sweet dessert sauce. It might have been the aroma of the guavas that were sliced, diced, pureed and poached and then made into a tea cake that melted in your mouth with a sampling of pure Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee. Then again, maybe it was the slightly chewy taste of the local treasure, conch, that was frittered and fried into every known shape and size. Whatever it was, I soaked it in faster than the noon day sun can blister your skin.

In addition to working sessions that featured the likes of Julia Child, Joe Baum from the Rainbow Room and Chuck Williams of Williams-Sonoma and many more of the folks who mold the foundation for the cooking industry, I took it upon myself to test for what the IACP claims to be, a Certified Culinary Professional (CCP).

Chef passes test

After a three-hour written exam featuring questions on nutrition, sanitation, food chemistry and general culinary knowledge, my months of study and review of all the major cookbooks and study guides paid off with a passing grade and a new title. My peers questioned my reasoning for taking the test, many of whom retake two or three times before receiving a passing grade. Did I really think the new title will bring me more money? Hardly. Fame and adulation also had little to do with it as most people could really care less. I took the test, as I explained to Joanne Sarra, Certified Home Economist, to test my own knowledge of food, where it comes from, how to keep it and where it goes. Testes are not given a grade, only a designation as whether or not they passed, and thank the dear lord, I passed!

In addition to meeting the movers and shakers of the food world, the conference also afforded me an opportunity to learn more about the exotic foods from the Caribbean. Miami is home to a diverse array of ethnic groups. Even though pork is pork, when slathered with a mango chutney or seasoned with Jamaican jerk seasoning, new flavors and tastes resurrected. A personal favorite was the wise army of plantain preparations I discovered. Plantain is a quasi vegetable-banana that can be served unripe, ripe, raw, cooked, fried or baked. Available locally in many vegetable markets, the plantain's Cuban heritage excelled in diversity of preparation and you can bet that it will become a popular dish on the James Gang table.

Area well represented

You can rest assured that metro Detroit was well represented at the conference. In addition to Nell Benedict, longtime Oakland County food demonstrator, Mary Rebeck and Kathleen O'Neill, co-owners of the chic Canope Cart catering company in Royal Oak, there was Paula Patsalis, co-owner of Kitchen Glamour.

Patsalis also received an award for placing as one of the top three finalists in the Nelly-Pat Vermont international recipe contest with her recipe for Veal Oscar using sweet vermouth. We dined together on Saturday night for the IACP Cookbook Awards and shared various workshop experiences. Patsalis, who is fast gaining notoriety for her work with chocolate, moved about the pre-conference Master Class on chocolate preparations that will undoubtedly end up shared with her customers at Kitchen Glamour.

There were a few surprises emanating from the conference. One was Julia Child's admittance that she wanted to still learn more about the art of meat cutting, which was music to my roommate's ears (Dave Brown, also known as the "Canadian Butcher"). The conference also acknowledged that the trend for "Bite will include "coming back to the kitchen," with cooking again becoming an integral part of home living. Look for new cookbooks on getting the family involved, particularly on emphasis on kids cooking. The children today are our future cooks of tomorrow and with school budgets being slashed during tough economic times, new roads must be laid to teach our children that there's more to cooking than fast food, simply opening cans and pressing microwave buttons.

See Patsalis' winning recipe inside.

FIRE up the GRILL with perfect PORK

Versatile pork is one of America's favorite grilling meats. Fire up the grill, and learn the secrets to melt-in-your-mouth ribs.

BY KEELY WYGNIE
STAFF WRITER



Fire up the grill, Memorial Day weekend heralds the start of another barbecuing season. Pork, from hot dogs to ribs, is one of America's favorite grilling meats.

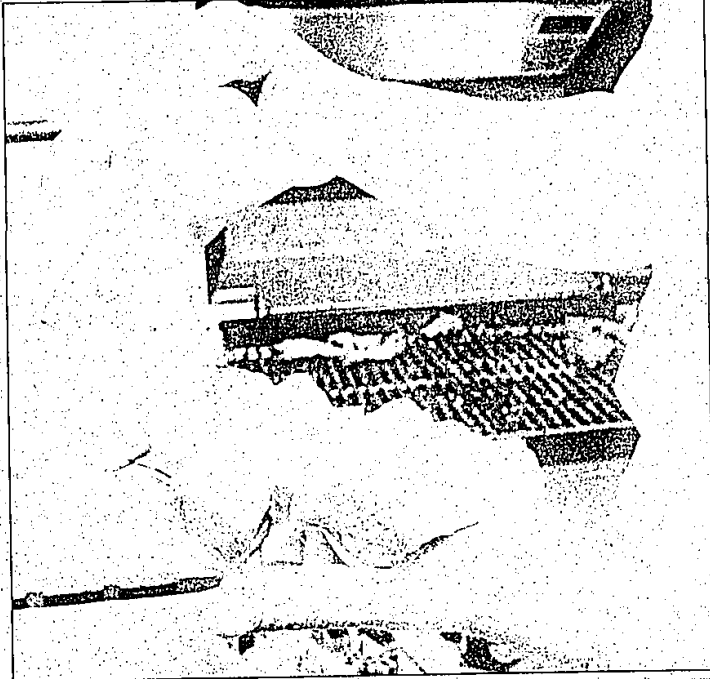
"Firing up the grill in styling style is easy to do once you decide to expand your grilling horizons," said Robin Kline of the National Pork Producers Council. "If you're ready to go beyond the wienies-and-burgers grilling experience, there are a variety of simple ways to spice up your grilling routine."

If you're concerned about calories, think of pork as the other white meat. For example, a lean cut of pork tenderloin weighs in at 41 grams of fat and 130 calories per three-ounce cooked and trimmed serving.

Depending which you choose, hot dogs can be a low fat choice too. "Currently two brands of turkey hot dogs—Hormel Light and Lean and Healthy Choice—have only 1-2 grams of fat per hot dog versus most others at 9-13 grams," said Zanya Fago, a nutritionist from Catherine McAuley Health Systems' Nutri-Care Nutrition Services.

If you're short on time, pork's a quick meat option, said Kline. "We like to say 'think pork' when grilling pork. Pork is best cooked to an internal temperature of 160 F, for medium doneness, 170 F, for well done. When the juices run clear and there's a slight hint of pink in the center, pork is perfect. Use a meat thermometer just to be sure."

Jack Trabue, who owns The Porter-



Perfect pork: Kristin Trabue of Porterhouse Meats and Word of Mouth Foods in Plymouth seasons pork tenderloin for the grill. Pork tenderloin is a flavorful, low fat choice for calorie conscious grillers.

house Meats and Word of Mouth Foods, Inc., 1658 S. Main, Plymouth with his wife, Kristin, said the mistake most people make with pork is they overcook it.

"There's nothing tastier than ribs grilled to perfection on the grill," he said. "Season and parboil them, but not in a big pot. I put mine in a frying pan with the water half up to the ribs. They'll hang over the sides a little. Cover the frying pan with aluminum foil, but let a little steam seep out. You've got to watch them to make sure the water doesn't boil away. Cook the ribs about an hour until they're fork tender."

"Then grill them on low heat, and baste with barbecue sauce. You've got

to be patient with this. It will take about another 45 minutes. I cook mine until the sauce gets gooey."

If you're planning to serve ribs at a party, Trabue suggests parboiling them the day before. "They don't have to be hot when you grill them," he said.

"Be gentle when you barbecue," said nutritionist Gail Posner of Southfield. "Don't char food, we believe it's related to the risk of cancer. Enhance the flavor of meat and vegetables with marinades. An easy one is no-fat Italian salad dressing."

Make enough marinade to cover all surfaces of meat. Usually 1/4 cup to one cup is enough for one pound of meat. Put the meat in a plastic bag or glass,

steel, plastic or enamel container. Never use aluminum because of the acid content in marinade.

Ideally, use a container that will hold the meat in a single layer. Sealable plastic bags are ideal, because you can turn the bag occasionally so that the meat is evenly exposed to marinade. Pour marinade over the meat, and refrigerate two to 24 hours before grilling.

The National Pork Producers Council offers a free recipe brochure. Send a self-addressed, stamped, business-sized envelope to Grill Crazy, c/o NPPC, P.O. Box 10383, Des Moines, Iowa, 50306. For low-fat picnic tips and recipes from Nutri-Care, call Ask-A-Nurse at 572-9096.

See recipes inside

Make ahead meal perfect for families



BETSY BRETHEN

Mothers of school-aged children have been served notice and know that the party is almost over. For even though summer is officially still weeks away, that yearly harbinger of summer, Memorial Day, has now come and gone, indicating one sure thing... in a matter of weeks, or in some cases, mere days, school will be out for the summer.

As adults, we can look back and remember the sheer joy we felt when the final school bell of the year would ring. Now we are literally in the driver's seat, doing our part to ensure that our children will have those same carefree memories.

Meanwhile, all angst aside, I, too, have been doing my part to ensure that you have set another delicious meal to prepare for your family. Thanks to this week's Winner Dinner Winner, Bonnie Goodrich of Livonia, you will have more tasty recipes, most of which can be made ahead, to add to your repertoire.

Goodrich is married to Bill and the mother of two young children. A middle school teacher in the Plymouth-Canton Community schools, Goodrich is currently on temporary child-care leave and is planning to return to the classroom in the fall of 1993. She is enjoying being home with her children and loves to cook and, in whatever spare time she has, does cross-stitch. She has been a member of the Plymouth Community Chorus for six years. Goodrich is also a



JAN JACOBSEN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Winning combination: David Goodrich, 4 1/2, Bonnie and Allison, 13 months, present one of their favorite dinners, Chicken Ala Cressents with gravy, peas and chunky fruit salad.

volunteer for the Bethany Christian International Adoption Agency and has the joyful job of greeting the flights of incoming babies at Metropolitan Airport and escorting them to their flights or to their waiting adoptive parents.

Goodrich gives full credit for her delicious recipes to her aunt, Marjorie Head of Livonia, who is the noted cook in the family.

Submit recipes to be considered for publication, to Winner Dinner, P.O. Box 3503, Birmingham 48012.

OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC Winner Dinner Recipes

CHICKEN CRESCENTS

- 1/2 cup crushed herb-seasoned croutons
 - 1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans
 - 3 ounce cream cheese with chives
 - 2 tablespoons butter softened
 - 1/2 teaspoon lemon popper
 - 1 cup cubed, cooked chicken
 - 1 can, 2 oz. mushrooms, drained
 - 1 can Pillsbury crescent rolls
 - 3 tablespoons butter, melted
 - 1 package chicken gravy mix (Sauce)
 - 1-2 tablespoons chopped chives (Sauce)
- Combine croutons and nuts and set aside. In a separate bowl, combine cream cheese, 2 tablespoons butter and seasoning mix well. Stir in chicken and mushrooms, set aside. Separate the crescent dough into 8 triangles. Spread each with about 1/4 cup of the chicken mixture. Roll up starting at the shortest side of the triangle and roll to the opposite point. Tuck the sides in and point under to seal completely. Dip rolls in the melted butter. Coat with crushed nut mixture, place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 15-20 minutes until golden brown. Add chives to gravy and spoon a small amount on top of each roll. Serves four.

FRUIT SALAD

- Your choice fresh fruit
- 1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon paprika
 - 1 teaspoon celery seed
 - 1/4 teaspoon onion juice
 - 1 cup salad oil
 - 4 tablespoons cider or white vinegar
- Combine and spoon fruit into individual serving dishes and top with a spoonful of the dressing. To make dressing, mix together the sugar, mustard, salt, paprika and celery seed. Add the onion juice. Very slowly, add the oil and vinegar a little bit at a time. Beat with a whisk or a fork until well-blended and thick.

CAKE

- 1 box graham crackers
 - 2 packages instant French vanilla gelatin pudding
 - 8 ounce carton Cool Whip
 - 3 cups milk
- Spray 9x13 pan with non-stick spray and line with whole graham crackers. Mix pudding with 2 cups of milk. Fold in Cool Whip. Put half of the pudding mixture on top of the graham crackers. Add another layer of crackers, the rest of the pudding mixture and then another layer of graham crackers. Spread frosting on top. Refrigerate overnight before serving. To make frosting combine, 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar, 2 packs of Nestle chocobake, 1 tablespoon light Karo syrup, 1/4 cup butter, and 2 tablespoons milk and mix well.