

TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JONES

There are no small potatoes at our house

I'm a meat and potatoes kind of guy. I know I have to eat vegetables, and bread is more like a dessert than anything else. But whether it be a simple broiled steak, baked chicken or pot roast, the only thing in my mind that could make it better would be a great potato.

The Jones Gang doesn't consider it a meal without some kind of potato or starch. We've been eating more rice and trendy starches like couscous, barley, bulgur and quinoa, but nothing beats a great potato.

Momma was, and is still, known for her exemplary mashed potatoes. Whenever the grandkids visit they ask - "Mimmi, make any mashed potatoes?"

What makes them special is momma's secret addition of a pared parsnip. She tosses it into the ruggedly simmering pot of "all purpose" potatoes. Please don't tell any of the grandkids that they've been secretly eating a vegetable without knowing it.

My favorites

Personal favorites include potatoes baked in rock salt. I'll never forget the delectable taste of my first potato baked in rock salt. I never knew potatoes could be so fluffy. "What's the secret?" you ask? Scrub and pat dry some good bakers. Place them in a deep casserole dish and cover with rock salt. Bake at 350 degrees until an inserted fork easily slides out. That's it. Nothing special, no secret. Potatoes and rock salt, period.

Want to make them even better? Try this method with a Yukon Gold potato. Look for Yukon Gold potatoes at upscale markets including Vic's Quality Fruit Market in Novi and Beverly Hills, Pappa Joe's in Rochester, Joe's Produce in Livonia, Strawberry Hills in Farmington Hills, and the Roadside Market in Plymouth.

You can get a bag of rock salt at your local hardware store and start cooking. You can reuse the rock salt over and over. Try baking a pear, especially a Bosc, or an apple in rock salt. You'll think you've died and gone to heaven.

Equally demanded on the potato front are my ever popular no-fat fries. Again, using a good Idaho baker or a Yukon Gold, I scrub the potato, pat dry and cut into wedges. The wedges go skin side down on a baking sheet and the potatoes are sprayed with non-stick coating like Pam or even better, the all new "I Can't Believe It's Not Butter" fat-free spray. Then I give the potatoes a healthy shake of Mrs. Dash table salt, onion powder and paprika. The entire process takes less than 15 minutes, and if your kids like fries, this is the healthy alternative.

Fellow workout buddy George of Garden City passed along an equally good potato recipe at last week's 6:15 a.m. aerobic's class. George suggests that you wedge up a bunch of potatoes, sprinkle them with cayenne pepper, paprika or chili powder and one beaten egg white (beat until stiff). The beaten egg white gives these potatoes a real crispy coating and the spices make them tasty. Place the coated potatoes on a baking sheet sprayed with non-stick cooking spray and then bake them at 400 degrees for about 40 minutes. Making no fat fries these ways will save more than 12 grams of fat from each serving.

Hash browns

Hash browns have always been a personal favorite and whenever I bake up a batch of potatoes I always make a few extra for a batch of hash browns. I find the biggest non-stick pan I can get my hands on and fry up a chopped onion in a little butter or margarine until it just begins to turn golden.

Then I grate an old baked potato that has been in the refrigerator for a few days (skin and all). Cover the pan with a lid, reduce the heat to medium low and let it simmer for about 15 minutes. The trick is "flipping" the batch so nothing falls onto the stove burners.

I would be remiss not to mention scalloped potatoes. Once in a while, a batch of homemade scalloped potatoes, the way momma used to make them with shredded cheddar and a roux of browned butter and flour, is just what this old homelady needs.

See Larry Jones' family-tested recipes inside. To leave a voice mail message for him dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1886.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Meet the co-owners of SunShine Treats in Farmington Hills.
- Wine-up to glorious noshing.

A taste of her own medicine



PHOTO BY JERRY ZOLYNSKY

Making cookies: Matthew Gulker (left to right), his friend, Matthew Bellefleur, and Dr. Susan Bellefleur work together to make lower-fat chocolate chip cookies.



BY SANDRA DALLA-PRISTY
SPECIAL WRITER

Have you wondered what doctors feed their children? The answer isn't a medical secret. The "Dr. Moms" we talked to serve their children nutritious food.

Dr. Susan Bellefleur, a pediatrician who lives in Beverly Hills, was already aware of the importance of making good food choices before the birth of her son, Matthew, four years ago.

"A number of things helped me evolve toward a healthy life-style," said Bellefleur.

"My father had a massive heart attack when I was 11 years old, and this served as a wake-up call for the whole family," she said. "My mother started cooking healthier meals and she eliminated such things as fried and fatty foods, and smoked meats from our diet."

"Our whole way of eating changed. For instance, our tradition of having bacon and eggs for breakfast was replaced by nutritious foods, like whole grain cereals."

With this foundation, and with the knowledge she gained in medical school about good nutrition, Bellefleur, and her husband Jeffrey, a pediatric anesthesiologist, normally eat only good

The Dr. Moms we talked to serve their children nutritious foods that are low in fat. They agree the best thing to do with children is to offer them a variety of good foods, and let them choose what they want.

foods and participate in a regular exercise program.

"We have given Matthew healthy foods from the very beginning and he likes them. When he goes to birthday parties, he takes the frosting off his piece of cake, because, he says, it's too sweet."

She added that her son considers "treats" to be such things as applesauce and yogurt. "For Matthew, a really special treat would be a Fudgesicle, or homemade lower-fat chocolate chip cookies."

According to Bellefleur, she sees too much childhood obesity in her practice. "Children not only eat the wrong things, they are too sedentary. I urge parents to feed their children healthy foods and to encourage them to do regular exercise."

A big part of her advice to parents is to watch the fat in their children's diet. "Children over the age of two can drink low fat or skim milk. Whole milk is a must for babies under two years of age, and

grainy and fat foods, such as grilled cheese sandwiches and deep fried chicken pieces, should be limited."

She also advises that salt shouldn't be added to the food their children eat. "If children don't acquire a taste for 'unhealthy' types of food, they won't

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Kenwood produces exceptional wine

Soft, luscious merlots:
• 1992 Alexander Valley Vineyards (\$15)
• 1992 Dry Creek Vineyard (\$15)

Scallops, salmon, shark, sturgeon and swordfish complement big, buttery reserve chardonnays. Chicken, pork, veal and rabbit as well as poultry are also superior matches.

Try these chardonnays:

• 1992 Baulieu Vineyards Carneros Reserve (\$15)
• 1992 Morgan, Monterey County (\$25)
• 1993 Vitis Mount Eden Carneros Reserve (\$14)

Spicy vegetable dishes, fresh seafood, crab, shrimp, and swordfish will pair with these sautignon blancs:

• 1993 Meridian (\$8.50)
• 1993 Quivira (\$8.75)
• 1993 Proven Cuvée de Pinot (\$8.50)

Best buys under \$10:

• 1993 Round Hill Sauvignon Blanc (\$7)
• 1993 Geyser Peak Semichard (\$7.50)
• 1992 Queen Adelaide Shiraz-Cabernet, Australia (\$6)
• 1993 Casa Di Pascatoni Sicilian Red (\$6)

Kenwood Vineyards, in Sonoma Valley, a Sonoma County California appellation, has been making premium wine since 1970. At the time of Kenwood's founding, there were only 30 wineries in all of Sonoma County.

Martin Lee Sr., his son, Marty and Michael, and their brother-in-law, John Sheela, acquired the historic Pagan Brothers Winery (founded in 1908) and renamed it Kenwood Vineyards. The best part of the Kenwood story is that the same people are still there, 25 years later, making consistently great wines. Americans are attracted to the new kid on the block when buying American wine, but prefer experienced European producers. It is time to give kudos for experience and consistency in the good old USA.

"We were organic winegrowers back in the early 1970s," recalled winemaker Michael Lee. "In the early 1980s, with a host of new agricultural chemicals available, farmers began to use every new pesticide and herbicide they could get their hands on. If there was a disease, there was a chemical to get rid of it."



Kenwood Vineyard

Winery founders: Kenwood Winery's founders and owners John Sheela, (left to right), Marty Lee, and winemaker Michael Lee, are still together and enthusiastic about their partnership after 25 years. They produce consistently good wines.

Kenwood has come full circle in the 1990s. They are now getting away from chemicals, and are becoming organically certified viticulturists. Without the use of chemicals, grape vines are trained and pruned to open the leaf canopy so the fruit is in view. This way, the sun and wind help keep the grapes warm, dry and healthy.

Family ownership is very special in the wine business. "Low-tech. When we purchased Kenwood, the three boys (Michael, Marty and John) divided our roles into departments. I'm in charge of winemaking, Marty handles sales and John is president. We have each become experts in our area of specialty while supporting each other. With equal power, salary and responsibility, there is no need to compete. We make decisions independently, but with constant communication and discussion."

However, everyone watches sales at Kenwood and chardonnay continues to lead the pack. Even though it is written that consumers are looking for an alternative white

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