

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1996

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TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JANES

It's hard to fight the clean plate syndrome

I never realized why I loved Hershey Kisses so much until a few years ago. It was right after Easter, and during and a spontaneous visit to my folks in Wyandotte, I found myself unwrapping three kisses at a time. Momma noticed this and recalled "we enticed you to take your first steps with those."

Aha! Helplessly programmed as a baby, I patted the extra pounds on my hips and teased "so, this is all your fault." Well-intentioned parents often install in their children, and loved ones, habits that can last a lifetime. Sometimes for better or for worse.

In my case, the most effective was the clean plate treatment. Many of us "survivors of wonderfully neurotic parents" (of which I am proud to be) vividly can recall being admonished to eat every morsel on our plates. The main reason was that there were other children in the world not so fortunate. Of course, our parents had noble purposes. It was indeed to make us grateful for what we had to eat. Now coming from a family of five, we weren't considered "picky" eaters. If we didn't eat, we soon found that there was nary a leftover to be had, and when the kitchen was closed, that was it.

Momma's idea of the four basic food groups was meat, potatoes, bread and corn. Fresh vegetables were something eaten off a roasting tray. The clean plate pressure ultimately affected lifelong eating habits.

Childhood patterns

When we were children, our parents decided how much food to put on our plates and that was the amount that had to be eaten. So in adulthood, it can be difficult for us to choose exactly what is enough. I've met people who claim "when I was little, I faithfully ate everything left on my plate; now I eat everything left on my kids' plate." I once felt compelled to finish off a leftover third of a chocolate cake "because it was there." It wasn't even on my plate, but I reasoned that it was better for me to have it than worry about the cavities, zits or obesity that might overcome my kid. No wonder I became plump; the only way left to grow was sideways.

The clean plate syndrome haunts in even subtler ways. If dinner leftovers aren't totally consumed, I stuff the refrigerator with dabs of leftovers, probably, of course, to avoid feeling guilty about "wasting." Only after the leftovers grow green fur can I throw them out to the compost pile with a clear conscience. I can't stand for food to go unwanted in restaurants. My healthy eating club leader exhorted us to "leave food on the plate and simply push it away." I still ask the waiter to wrap uneaten portions to be taken home so they'll keep the other leftovers in the fridge company.

Maybe there's one positive effect of the clean plate syndrome in adulthood. While I still feel obligated to finish the last few bites of food, I also must check to various centers working to relieve local and international hunger. In a world where some people have too much and others so little, this action makes sense to me. I guess it could be a lot worse. Memories of being coerced with food linger.

Sweet memories

Don't you remember "if you don't clean your plate there will be no dessert?" My favorite of course, was always Tuesday night novena at church when the catch phrase "be good in church and we'll go to Affholter's Dairy for blue moon cones." No wonder I was an altar boy and even considered joining the clergy! I thought blue moon ice cream cones were commonplace after church on Tuesday nights. So why don't I, a sensible grown up deposit all this unneeded guilt and food in the garbage instead of my mouth or the refrigerator? The updated, new me recalls, "That would be wasting food! Guilt!" Besides, there's no escaping it. Although you can turn the clean plate syndrome in a constructive direction, it never really goes away. When my stomach is full, the refrigerator stocked and the pantry brimming, I feel safe and comforted.

The food I'm creating now is far more healthy and much lower in fat. Even though I try not to imitate my parents, I firmly believe that I have overcome the inherent need to feel "complete" when the plates and platters are licked clean.

See Larry Janes' family-tested recipes inside. Chef Larry is a free-lance writer for the Observer & Eclectic Newspapers. To leave a voice mail message for him dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1888.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Romantic recipes for Valentine's Day
- Celebrate Chinese New Year



Cookbook author: Howard Paige, author of "African American Family Cookery," with some of the dishes featured in his book.

BY KEELY WYONIK
STAFF WRITER

You could say there's a lot of soul in African-American cookery. But it has nothing to do with chitterlings, hog maws, greens, and black-eyed peas.

Howard Paige of Southfield dispels a lot of myths about what you might think African-American cookery is in his recently published cookbook, "African American Family Cookery."

"If we are to enhance the public image of African-American cookery, we must recognize the narrow image of food preparations that the abstract term 'soul food' invokes in most people's minds," explains Paige. "We must keep in mind that the term 'soul food' is a new description born from the black nationalist struggles of the late 1960s and early 1970s."

"It's birth never considered the history of African-American cookery."

To find the soul in African-American cookery, Paige spent seven years researching what he calls a "new review in African-American cookery."

"All I'm reporting is what history has revealed," said Paige, a medical technologist at Oakwood Hospital in Dearborn. "My main purpose is to expand the concept of African-American cookery beyond the narrow concept of 'soul food.'"

"African American Family Cookery," is Paige's second book. His

NEW COOKBOOK HAS HISTORICAL FLAVOR

Cooking demonstrations and book signings

- African-American Foodways. Tricks and traditions of authentic African-American cooking. Discussion, cooking demonstrations, and book signing, noon to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 10-11 and Feb. 24-25; Sunday, Feb. 18 - Henry Ford Museum, Oakwood Boulevard & Village Road, Dearborn, (313) 271-1978. Included in museum admission, \$12.50 adults; senior citizens, 62 and over, \$11.50; youth, ages 5-12, \$6.25. Children under five, free.
- Book signing at Truth Book Store, noon to 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 16, Northland Mall, Southfield.
- Cooking for Preschoolers the African-American Way. (for children ages three to five, and their caregivers), lecture and cooking demonstration, 11-11:45 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 17, Troy Public Library, 510 W. Big Beaver Road in the Civic Center Complex. No charge, but registration is required, call (810) 524-3541.
- African-American cooking demonstration/book signing, 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 20, Marcote Room, Southfield Public Library, 20000 Evergreen Road in the Civic Center. No charge, but registration is required, call (810) 948-0470.

"African American Family Cookery," by Howard Paige (Aspects Publishing Co.) is \$21.75 including text, and available by sending a check payable to Howard Paige, 23905 Plumbrook Drive, Southfield, MI 48075.

first, "Aspects of African-American Cookery," was published in 1986.

True to the title, "African American Family Cookery," is designed to be used by families. The book, which is subtitled "Healthy Eating, Low Fat, Low Sugar, Low Salt," contains over 50 pictures drawn by Paige, and lots of illustrations including the Food Guide Pyramid, and information on how to read food labels. There are numerous suggestions for eating for Heart Healthy Health and two weeks of suggested menus.

"This book was written for children and also for families to get together to prepare food. This creates memories," said Paige who is a board member of the Central Wayne Division of the American Heart Association. "I wanted to make food preparation easy for a father and son to do together."

He also shows readers how they can cut down on fat. His recipes are nutritionally analyzed, low in fat, sugar and salt.

Many of the recipes, such as Fried Catfish-Oven Fried, Banana Cake, Sally Washington's Red Rice are diagrammed to explain step-by-step how to assemble and prepare the ingredients.

Readers will learn that African-American cookery has roots in Africa, but also throughout the United States encompassing a wide variety of foods. "Although African-Americans wielded a great

See COOKBOOK, inside

Wine Selections

Fume blanc is another name for sauvignon blanc. At one time, the difference in names supposedly reflected a difference in style. For the most part, today, this is not true. By either name, it's great wine to accompany crab, shrimp or prawns, scallops, oysters and mussels.

- 1994 Hogue Cellars Fume Blanc \$7.50
- 1994 Pinocorrell Fume Blanc \$7.50
- 1994 St. Saviignon Blanc \$2.50
- 1994 Dry Creek Vineyard Reserve Fume Blanc \$14.50

Dynamite reds for lamb dishes, hearty soups, savory stews and winter comfort foods:

- 1993 Bonterra Cabernet Sauvignon \$12.
- This is Fetzer Vineyards organically grown wine. Soft, well-managed tannins make it appealing for immediate drinking.
- 1993 Clos Pegase Cabernet Sauvignon \$20

- 1992 Conn Creek Cabernet Sauvignon \$18
- 1992 Conn Creek Cabernet Sauvignon \$20 - very Bordeaux-like. Good now, but will improve with at least five years cellaring.

■ 1992 Hesse Collection Cabernet Sauvignon \$18.50. The first allocation of this wine literally blew out wine shop doors. Don't miss the second allocation of this fabulous wine.

Chateau De Baun wines play a new tune



wines for some time, you may remember that at the get go this winery attempted to put the symphony grape variety on the California wine map. The orchestration played on one note, sparkling symphony, dry symphony and on through dessert symphony, all given a music-related proprietary name.

The lyrics never caught on, but owners Ken and Grace De Baun did. They were enchanted with symphony, but came to realize that their estate vineyards in the Russian River Valley could tantalize your palate better with chardonnay and pinot noir, wines that do sing their way into your heart. They've kept some acreage of symphony, are growing merlot and are trying their

hand at nebbiolo, an Italian varietal. Symphony is a muscat hybrid developed by University of California at Davis viticultural school. Stelle (\$11) produced by Chateau De Baun is a versatile crowd pleaser made from symphony. It's one of its best renditions. In a uniquely shaped bottle, it has slight spritz, a touch of sweetness and can double as an aperitif wine with fruit and cheese or as a light dessert wine on its own. It's good palate mood music.

We're very attracted to the chardonnay and pinot noir from Chateau De Baun. These are grape varieties with a Burgundy heritage. If one traces the ancestry of the family name De Baun to its French roots, the translation is "from Beaune," the city at the heart of Burgundy. In fact, Ken De Baun traces his family history back to the 17th century in Burgundy. With chardonnay and pinot noir Chateau De Baun has found the right focus, a new orchestration and the concert production is very well priced. The Russian River appellation is

an ideal region for growing both chardonnay and pinot noir. At \$11, the 1994 Estate Chardonnay comes across like a much higher-priced wine. Fragrant French oak, which is about 20 percent new, is showcased in the aroma and on the palate. Tropical fruit characters abound and the wine has superior fruit, oak and acid balance with a lengthy finish.

The 1993 Chateau De Baun Creekside Vineyard Chardonnay \$20 is a step above, not only in price, but in quality. It's a no holds barred, 100 percent barrel-fermented, reserve-style wine that is a selection of 20 special barrels from a 130-barrel lot. The wine is big and rich without being over-oaked. The complex fruit profile shows through. It has limited availability at the retail level, but you might find it at some of our area's finest restaurants. The 1993 Chateau De Baun Pinot Noir \$11 also has restricted availability. But we've seen it stocked at the Red Wagon in Rochester.

See WINE, inside