

## Island food, drink create pure bliss

By ETHEL SIMMONS

Here's how to make it

On the way to a cocktail party in Abaco, one of the out islands in the Bahamas, our tour guide stopped along the way to climb a tree for a coconut.

He managed to knock it down, almost on the head of the traveler in our group, who was waiting to catch it.

As our leader pointed out, "It's like bringing a bottle to a BYOB party except in the Bahamas we can do it with coconuts."

Actually when we arrived we found our hosts had already mixed us some nice Gombay Sashes, so we didn't have to crack a coconut.

YOU CAN BRING a little bit of the islands into your life right now, even though you stay at home. Pick up a coconut in the supermarket and make the most of it.

Use the coconut milk to make Pinã Colada or another favorite tropical drink.

Use the coconut meat itself for Never Enough Cocktail Coconut, an hors d'oeuvres from "The Abaco Cook Book" with recipes and illustrations by Fran Woolley.

**REMOVE COCONUT** from shell, and cut into thin strips with a sharp knife or a salad maker. Spread out on a cookie sheet, salt generously, and place in a hot oven.

**Toast** to a golden brown. Watch and stir during process to prevent burning. Try it once and you will make it again and again.

There are lots of other yummy things with coconut from her cookbook including these desserts: Coconut Fingers, Coconut Corns, Viola's Coconut Cakes, Toasted Coconut Cheese Pops, Toasted Coconut Shell, Marsh Harbour's Best Coconut Pudding, Meringue for Coconut Pudding, and Molly's Coconut Ice Cream.

One of the most delicious desserts I tried in Abaco, at Guana Harbour Club on Great Guana Cay, was coconut pie, made with fresh-grated coconut.

I DIDN'T come away with the recipe, but it was pure bliss, as was the rest of the native food we lunched on after a morning of swimming and shelling at the beach.

Russell, the Bahamian skipper from Treasure Cay, who brought us to Guana Cay, ordered a hamburger and

french fries. He put ketchup on his french fries, too.

So, while our tour group was exclaiming over platters of conch, turtle and grouper fish fritters with sauce, he was dining American-style.

I guess we all enjoy eating what ever's out of the ordinary.

Incidentally, Russell ate his ham burger with a knife and fork, an interesting touch.

**DON'T THINK** you can come up with conch (pronounced conk) in suburban Detroit, but some of the most delicious dishes in the islands are made with this delight sea creature.

Besides conch fritters, I tried conch chowder, equally delightful, and in Nassau at the Prince George Hotel Arcade featuring native food cranked conch with peas 'n rice.

These peas were pigeon peas, different from what we normally think of as peas, so a portion of regular peas and carrots was also served.

Grouper is a favorite fresh caught fish that turns up on island menus. Turtles abound and you'll find turtle soup, stew or steak.

**BOAR HUNTING**, with guide and dog, is a tourist attraction on Treasure Cay. Fran Woolley's cookbook gives a recipe for Abaco Wild Pig Spare Ribs that may adapt to domestic pig. You'll need:

- 4 to 5 lbs. fresh Abaco spare ribs or whatever
  - 1 cup tomato catsup
  - 1 cup vinegar
  - 1 cup Worcestershire sauce
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1 tsp black pepper
  - 2 tsp chili powder
  - 1 tsp cayenne
  - 1 large finely chopped onion
- Wipe the spareribs and lay in roasting pan. Blend all remaining ingredients and pour over the meat. Cover and bake in a moderate oven (350 degrees F.) about one and one-half hours, uncovering during last 30 minutes of baking. Serve with parsley potatoes.

**LOBSTER OR** crawfish, twice as big as what we might see here, depending on the day's catch, is served nightly in the dining room of the Treasure Cay Beach Hotel.

"The Abaco Cook Book" gives this recipe for Broiled Crawfish: Crawfish (1 per serving), Salt and pepper.

- Butter sauce
- Split broiled crawfish in half. Remove vein. Put in baking dish. Season with salt and pepper and dot with butter. Bake 10 minutes. Serve with black butter (recipe follows).
  - 6 tbsp butter
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1/2 tsp black pepper, coarse fresh ground
  - 1 tbsp lemon juice

### In concert



HAIG MARDIROBIAN

Pro-Musica of St. John Armenian Church of Southfield will present organist Haig Mardirobian in concert Sunday, March 16, at 3 p.m. in the church, 22801 Northwestern Highway, Southfield.

Mardirobian's performances have included solo and concert appearances throughout the United States. He has made many recordings and has composed and conducted musical scores for radio, television, theater and films.

Tickets at \$4 for adults and \$2 for children are available in the St. John Church office. This is the third in a series of concerts presented by the St. John Pro-Musica Committee.



Tropical beauty in a coconut palm on Treasure Cay. (Staff photo by Ethel Simmons)

Brown the butter well, add salt and pepper and taste the lemon juice. Serve piping hot over crawfish.

**ABOARD AIR** Jamaica, which flies you direct to Nassau from Detroit first-class passengers are served a meal that starts with a cocktail before the plane has left the ground and

finishes many courses later just about landing time.

A Rum Bambaule is the drink. Hors d'oeuvres include banana chips (scrumptious) and seafood fresh shrimp, sardine and salmon.

There's a salad with king crabmeat and white wine, then steak or duck for the entrée and more wine, red or

white, followed by chocolate torte or a banana or pear for dessert.

Blue Mountain coffee beans go into the Jamaican coffee and your choice of after-dinner drinks includes Tia Maria, a coffee liqueur.

A wrapped candy adds the final twist. Oh, yes, somewhere along the way there was champagne.

## Cuisine and Duglass

# Tangier, North Africa fascinating port city

There has always been a mystique about the way of life of the North Africans, as glimpsed on the midnight movies.

On our Mediterranean tour, the initial port of entry is the fascinating city of Tangier, which aptly conveys the mood of the familiar phrase, "Come to the Casbah."

Legend says the town of Tangier was founded by Antea, son of Neptune and earth. Hercules divided the two continents to create the Mediterranean so the Atlantic waters would mingle their waves to form a grand gateway to a bouquet of countries encompassing the tranquil, luminous and intensely blue Mediterranean sea.

**THE PRINCIPAL** dish is couscous well loved by all North Africans.

"I was first introduced to this kooky dish when I was in Paris studying at the Ecole Hoteliere. And like most of the students I would budget my spending as thrifly as possible, thus at 8 o'clock could often be found at the self-service on Avenue Wagram consuming my inexpensive chicken and chips with chocolate yogurt for \$1.50.

Usually, on a Saturday night, friends and I would head for the sinful side of the city, to fill the gap of a short and delicious weekend.

I'm not sure of the exact location but the foreign Eastern scent of spices and lamb, and chicken too, steaming in a couscoussier, are still quite pleasant memories.

**OUR NEXT PORT** of entry will be Malta. We will continue on a tour of the Mediterranean Sea countries, offering ethnic recipes.

If you are from any part of the tour and would like your family's favorite dish photographed and the recipe published in my column, please send the information to The Observer & Eccentric, 1225 Bowen, Birmingham 48012, to my attention.

**COUSCOUS**  
From "A Quintet of Cuisines" by Michael and Frances Field

- 2 pounds couscous (gran pellets with semolina)
- 2 1/2 teaspoons salt dissolved in 2 1/2 cups cold water
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 4 tablespoons sweet unsalted butter, cut in pieces
- Beef, lamb or chicken may be used in the following:
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 pounds boneless chuck, cut into two-inch cubes and patted dry with paper towels
- 2 cups finely chopped onions
- 4 teaspoons herbs, 1/2 cup cayenne, 1 cup ground cummin, 2 tablespoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup ground black pepper
- 4 medium carrots, peeled and cut crosswise into two-inch pieces
- 4 medium turnips, peeled, cut the same as the carrots
- 1/2 cabbage cut into two-inch pieces
- 2 cups canned garbanzo beans drained
- 2 medium tomatoes, quartered
- 3 cups cold water
- 6 medium boiling potatoes, peeled
- 4 small newton speck, cut into two-inch pieces
- 1 pound available squash, cut into two-inch pieces

**Method:**  
Add the water and oil, the couscous, cover and set aside for 15 minutes. In a four-quart couscoussier or stew pot heat up 1 cup oil, oil must be hot. Add the meat, onions, herbs, allspice, salt and some pepper.

Fry uncovered for about 10 minutes, turning frequently until nicely colored. Then add all the other ingredients (vegetables).

Pour in 3 cups water or until covered, with the exception of the aubergine, potatoes and fresh squash.



By DUGLASS DUGLASS

If you are using a couscoussier, set the top part over the steaming meat and vegetables. If you are using a pot or casserole, place a colander inside, so it will rest on the edges of the pot.

**WHEN YOU** set the colander in place over the casserole, place a piece of cheesecloth between the two. This will prevent the pellets from falling into the broth and will distribute the heat more evenly.

Divide the couscous into two portions. The first part will be dropped into the colander by rubbing the pellets in the palm of your hands, then letting them fall into the steam. Cook for about 30 minutes.

Remove first batch. Set aside. Remove all the meat and vegetables, leaving just the broth. Add the remainder of the vegetables, more water if necessary, bring to a boil.

Set the colander or couscoussier top back on the base and add the remainder of pellets or couscous by the same process as before and cook for 30 minutes.

To serve the couscous, pile the cooked pellets on a large platter, reheat the meat and vegetables momentarily, then arrange them around the platter. Bring the sauce to a boil, whip in the butter and serve alongside.

Hot lime flavored tea will do nicely, please.

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THIS WEEK ONLY

**PHOTOGRAPHER'S HOURS: Store Opening to 1 Hour Prior to Store Closing**

Photographer will be at the following stores March 4 to March 8: Troy, Lincoln Park, Ann Arbor, Boy City, Grand River, Grafton, Flint, Highland Park, Pontiac, Roseville, Southfield, Livonia, Port Huron, Saginaw. Photographer will be at the following stores March 4 and 5: Monroe, Adrian. Photographer will be at the following stores March 6 to March 8: Midland, Grosse Pointe Farms.