



Rita Leinwand makes French cooking and other cuisines easy in her new cookbook

Cookbook beats mealtime blues

By ETHEL SIMMONS
Former Bloomfield Hills resident Rita Leinwand, now living in Los Angeles, appears to be the least of the West Coast when it comes to cooking. People have lined up as early as 4 a.m. to assure themselves getting into one of her university-system classes, which begin enrollment at 9 a.m.

Mrs. Leinwand, speaking on the phone from Los Angeles, delightedly recalled the women who came in a chauffeur-driven limousine and had the driver set up a card table, chairs and tea to ease their wait.

You can see there would be a ready market for Mrs. Leinwand's first cookbook, "How to Beat Those Cordon Bleus: Rita Leinwand's Lessons in French and Other Great Cuisines," published last fall.

"IT WAS the best-selling book on the West Coast during the Christmas season," the graduate of L'Ecole du Cordon Bleu said. Seventy-five hundred copies of the first edition have been exhausted, and the cookbook is now in its second printing.

Mrs. Leinwand collaborated on "How to Beat Those Cordon Bleus" with Louis Peyser, a friend, amateur cook and professional TV scriptwriter. Also on the team was Fran Rabuffi who did the lively drawings that illustrate the text.

"The illustrations are not from Mrs. Leinwand explained. They are pertinent to understanding the recipes, step by step with diagrams.

"IT'S LIKE watching me in class, and the recipes really work," she continued. Take Mrs. Leinwand's recipe for broche (French yeast dough). "I've been one of Julia Child's assistants, and her recipe goes on for pages. Mine is concise."

All the recipes have been tested in Mrs. Leinwand's classes—on more than 3,000 people.

"We were supposed to turn in 180 pages to the publishers (The Ward Ritchie Press, Pasadena) but we turned in 450." The publishers added 26 pages to the originally requested length.

Mrs. Leinwand's co-author, Mrs. Peyser, usually works as a team with her husband Arnold. Together the Peysers wrote a book with the late comic Allan Sherman called "Instant Status," on letters to be left around casually.



Co-author Lois Peyser is a professional writer who has attended Mrs. Leinwand's classes (Staff photo by Barbara McEllan)

THEY HAVE done scripts for TV series including "Mission Impossible" and "Dick Van Dyke" and TV movies of the week, among these "Sudden Single" with Hal Hallbrook.

Mrs. Peyser, in Birmingham on a promotion tour for "How to Beat Those Cordon Bleus," said she and Mrs. Leinwand first met at a party, although their parents had known each other in East Orange.

"She has an enormous following," Mrs. Peyser said in admiration of Mrs. Leinwand. "She's a phenomenal teacher. She never stops learning. She makes people feel very, very confident."

Of her part in the book, Mrs. Peyser said, "I put it together and organized it. I thought I'd just done it off in a weekend, but it was done over a period of a year."

IN ANOTHER year, the two women will bring out another book, on menus.

Mrs. Peyser mentioned the book's recipes for soups that are a meal in one, such as Black Bean Soup and Fish Soup with Red Garlic Sauce. Mrs. Leinwand always calls Zucchini Soup with Green Garlic Paste "absolutely wonderful," her friend said.

There are six recipes in the book the co-authors decided to call perfect. "They are as close to foolproof as possible," Mrs. Peyser said. In the cookbook these are given as Perfect Cream Soup, Perfect Pie, Perfect Pie Crust, Perfect Quiche, Perfect Roast Chicken and Perfect Souffle Grand Marnier.

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The Good Life

Monday, May 12, 1975 (L.H.A.P.W.G. 9A.R. 7A.M. 7A)

SOUPES AU PISTOU VERT
(Zucchini Soup with Green Garlic Paste)

6 zucchini, sliced (not peeled), about 2 1/2 cups
2 medium onions, sliced (1 1/2 cups)
4 Tablespoons olive oil or butter
6 cups chicken stock, homemade or commercial
2 cups lima beans (one 16-ounce frozen package)
1 cup peas (half of 16-ounce frozen package)
Salt and pepper
2 Tablespoons sour cream

Pistou
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 slice bacon, fried until crisp, drained and crumbled
2 teaspoons fresh basil, or 1 teaspoon dried basil
4 Tablespoons parsley, minced
2 egg yolks

1/2 to 1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated.
1 teaspoon olive oil
Garnish
6 slices bacon, fried until crisp, drained and crumbled

Serves 4

1. In a 4 to 5 quart saucepan, saute the onions and zucchini in olive oil or butter until a light brown.

2. Add the chicken stock and bring to a boil. Add the lima beans and peas, and when the mixture comes to a boil again, reduce the heat and simmer until the vegetables are soft, 20 to 25 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.

3. Puree the soup in the blender. Return to the saucepan.

4. Pistou: in the blender, put the garlic, bacon, basil, parsley and egg yolks. Blend for 1 minute. Add the Parmesan cheese, and blend again. It should now be a thick paste. If necessary, add more Parmesan. Stir in 1 teaspoon olive oil.

5. Bring the soup to a simmer over low heat. Stir in the sour cream. Do not allow the soup to boil.

To serve: Ladle the hot soup into individual bowls. Add 1 teaspoon of pistou on top, and a little crumbled bacon. The soup should be stirred at the table.

Ahead: The soup and the pistou may be prepared four days ahead through Step 4 and refrigerated separately.

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