

taste buds  
chef Larry  
Janess

## Turkey is versatile and light

Having been part of the consortium to eradicate the generic term "light" from our culinary conversations, I will mention, but only once, that turkey is today's "light" meat.

Unfortunately, many of us still relegate turkey strictly to Thanksgiving Day and the subsequent days following. However, with modern processing techniques and Americans following a more healthy lifestyle, a trip to the market can have us encountering turkey breasts, turkey ham and individual wrapped turkey legs (Dad's favorite), not to mention a whole flock of turkey luncheon meats and, now, ground turkey.

When I was growing up in Wyandotte, hamburger was a big part of the Janes Gang diet. Mama frequently concocted casseroles of goulash, loaf pans brimming with meatloaf and giant skilleters of taces and sloppy joe.

Back then, Mama would send me to the local A&P with orders to "search out the best pack of stewing beef you can find." It was then up to me to push the little buzzer that summoned Mr. Stevens, the butcher, who always so graciously offered to grind it into "burger" the way your Moma wants it.

Ah, but times they are a-changin'.

IN THE JANES Gang freezer, seldom does a piece of red meat cross paths with the Popsicles. In quick glance, however, will show numerous packages of ground turkey, ready to be made into this week's pre-planned menu consisting of lasagna, spaghetti sauce, Swedish meatballs, chili and the family favorite, turkeyburger pie.

Ground turkey is becoming more and more popular, especially in the metro area. Last year, you would have had to search out frozen tubes of ground turkey, sometimes hidden under those big 20-pound whole suckers in the freezer case. Today many markets are featuring an assortment of ground turkey brands (e.g., Louis Rich, Longacre Farms and Mr. Turkey) in the frozen case, easily in view between the Cornish hen and Jimmy Dean's pork sausage.

In recent months, however, yours truly has noticed that many markets are offering fresh ground turkey. A recent trip to the Shopping Center market near my home found fresh ground turkey at \$1.99 per pound and the frozen varieties available at \$1.19 per pound.

Of course, prices vary wherever you shop, and I've seen the ground turkey, when it's on sale, for as low as 88 cents per pound, with most averaging between 99 cents and \$1.09 per pound. Compare that to fresh ground stewing beef and you will notice more than a 50 percent savings.

What's even more important is the fact that ground turkey is much lower in fat, cholesterol and calories compared with ground beef. Ground turkey is, at minimum, 50 percent lower in fat compared with other ground meats.

NEEDLESS TO say, it's a great choice for a diet low in calories and cholesterol. Of course, because of this lower fat content, ground turkey offers a higher proportion of usable protein compared to other ground meats. Need proof? Brown up a pound of hamburger next to a pound of ground turkey. Choot a little and use a "lean" hamburger. Then, pour off the melted fat and compare. The results are shocking.

So before you all rush out and gobble up (excuse the pun) all the ground turkey, there are a few more things you should know. Try not to view this as a negative response, but if I prepare ground turkey, I find it to be somewhat bland.

# Entertaining options

## Hildens prefer informal

By Ariene Funke special writer

SUE HILDEN'S friends have come to expect the unexpected.

An invitation to the Hilden home in Farmington Hills might mean an evening lounging in the hot tub. On the other hand, it might be the ticket to a home version of the "Gong Show."

"You only live once," said Hilden. "Enjoy yourself. Relax and enjoy yourself and have fun."

Sue Hilden, a 41-year-old owner of a tanning and body-tinting salon, and her 43-year-old husband, Russ, owner of an oil company, have been throwing parties for as long as they can remember.

The Hildens' style is casual and informal, and based on a strong desire to be with friends and family as often as possible.

"We have very wonderful friends, and we love to have them around," Sue Hilden said. "Many times we entertain on the spur of the moment. After a couple of weeks have gone by, I start thinking about what we can do to get together."

The Hildens, formerly of Livonia, moved to Farmington Hills about two years ago. The house, designed with entertaining in mind, has a swimming pool, indoor hot tub, special stereo system and lots of sliding doors leading to the backyard deck.

SIMPLE, EASY-TO-EAT foods are the norm. Often guests contribute favorite dishes for the buffet table.

"Sue Hilden always tells guests how to dress so they will be comfortable and in tune with planned activities. Although she often dreams up a theme, she's flexible.

"When you give a party you have to go with how things are going," said Hilden, noting that guests sometimes prefer to chat rather than play games. "I take my cues from the guests. I don't plan a lot ahead of time."

Hilden favors active pastimes, such as pingpong tournaments and relay races. She especially enjoys teaming up people of different ages.

"In Livonia we had a small home, but that didn't stop us," she said. "I enjoy most the different age groups and how they get along."

Children are always welcome at a Hilden get-together. And friends have learned to be good sports about the activities. One of Hilden's more outrageous themes was a "Gong Show" party, in which her friends had to risk the "gong" while performing their "talent."

"They made me promise I would never do it again," Hilden said, with a laugh.

The family's cottage near Jackson is the setting for barbecues, hot dog roasts and parties several times a year. Especially popular is the Hildens' annual Halloween party, which last year drew 200 people to the cottage property.

Guests drove down a dark, winding road to the beach. Along the route were assorted costumed characters jumping from behind bushes to keep everyone in a proper Halloween mood. Activities included a scavenger hunt to "gather ingredients for the witch's potion," Hilden said.

PARTYGOERS dined on grilled Italian sausage, kielbasa and sauerkraut, chili, pumpkin pie and caramel apples.

"That's our most elaborate party," Hilden said. "We actually had strangers come and ask if they could pay and attend."

The fun-loving Hildens is planning a lip-synch theme party. Presumably, her guests will impersonate a singer and mouth the words on a record or tape.

"I may lose all my friends after that," Hilden said.

Hilden says she doesn't like to serve typical lasagna and baked beans party fare. She prefers simple but delicious foods, prepared "with a twist." She generally decides in advance if the party will feature a main meal or assorted finger foods.

"I usually don't combine the two," she said.



Sue and Russ Hilden entertain guests at the hot tub, or host other kinds of informal parties, in their Farmington Hills home. They have an easy, relaxed lifestyle. "You only live once," she says. "Enjoy yourself."



Sharon Katz of Bloomfield Hills says she loves to "make a party." She plans variations on the formal table and has it set several days ahead. Katz does all the cooking herself, without us to "make a party." She plans variations on the formal table and has it set several days ahead.

## Katzes' parties formal

By Ariene Funke special writer

SHARON KATZ serves dinner with love and beauty.

Katz, a Bloomfield Hills homemaker, likes nothing better than serving wonderful meals on a dinner table decked with flowers, fine china and fresh, crisp napkins.

"It's really a labor of love," Katz said. "It's very exciting."

Katz and her husband, Samuel, owner of a Madison Heights produce market, host several dinner parties each year. They are generally elegant, formal affairs for friends and family members.

The guest lists range from "intimate" groups of 12 to as many as 20 or 40 people. Usually the dinner is complete, all-down meal, but occasionally it is a buffet.

Although Katz does hire people to serve the meal, she does all the cooking herself on the day of the party. And she never serves the same meal twice.

"I put all my energy into cooking, from start to finish," Katz said. "It's the way I want it to be. The cooking part has never been anything but a pleasurable experience. I don't use recipes."

Giving a dinner party affords Katz the opportunity to indulge her creative energy, from planning theme and issuing unusual invitations, to setting a beautiful table and cooking a special meal.

HER THEMES may be seasonal, such as springtime and flowers, or whimsical, such as "It's a girl" or "Buttons and bows." Although the theme is reflected in the decorations, Katz usually doesn't stipulate an unusual dress code.

"I don't like people to be inconvenienced," Katz said. "I would rather that they just come and enjoy the theme."

Invitations, mailed four weeks in advance, often reflect Katz's flair for the unusual.

"I think it sets the mood," she said. "Once, for a springtime theme, Katz attached an invitation to a single silk flower packed in a florist's box. Each box, containing the invaluable invitation, was delivered to the prospective guest's home. Katz said guests seldom turn down an invitation to one of her dinner parties."

Three days before the party, Katz sets her dinner table. She has several sets of fine china and fancy napkins, which she likes to mix and match for maximum effect.

Antiques are used as accent pieces. "I think a table should be dressed, like a woman," Katz said. "I love setting the table. It's a form of art, and the effect is never boring. Each person is interesting, and each place setting should be."

KATZ'S LOVE of cooking was nurtured as she grew up watching her grandmothers, both from Eastern Europe, prepare favorite foods and roll dough for fragrant, tasty strudels. As she grew older, cooking became an increasingly satisfying pastime.

"I tried to emulate them," Katz said. "It just carried over. I began with small dinner parties. Friends would call me and ask me how to cook. I enjoyed being able to tell them how to do it."

Katz would rather cook than eat in a restaurant. Her repertoire ranges from soup to desserts. And, she said, some of her happiest moments are spent in the kitchen, basting the meat and talking with her three grown daughters.

But Katz doesn't use recipes. She likes to prepare meals that rely on fresh fruits, vegetables and top-quality meats made more exciting with herbs, seasonings and combinations of ingredients. If she later has trouble duplicating the recipe, "Those are the chances you take when you don't write it down."

"I enjoy changing it a little bit so I can enjoy it, but in a different way," Katz said.

Skilful blending of tastes, colors and shapes is the secret, Katz said.

## What's your recipe for entertaining?

Do you prefer to entertain formally or informally? Whichever your choice, send us one or more of the recipes you like to prepare when guests are coming. Maybe you've got a recipe for meat, fish or vegetables you like to grill over the coals and serve at an outdoor barbecue. Perhaps you have a recipe for an entree that is elegant and especially suited for a formal dinner. What about appetizer, soup or dessert recipes?

The Observer & Eccentric will publish its own cookbook featuring recipes from readers of the Taste pages. Yours may be among those selected for inclusion.

Send your recipe to: Taste Cookbook, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 35351 Livonia, MI 48150.