

Chef Zachary shares recipes

Spice from page B1

See related story on Taste front. Recipes from Chef Zachary Smith.

VEGETABLE CASSEROLE

- 8 ounces mushrooms, quartered
- 1 medium Spanish onion, large dice
- 8 cloves garlic sliced thin
- 1 healthy tablespoon Mediterranean Magic (spice blend) of Italian seasonings
- small zucchini large dice

- 1 small yellow squash large dice
 - 1 medium eggplant large dice
 - 2 ounces tomato paste
 - 2 ripe tomatoes peeled and seeded large dice
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 8 ounces grated Mozzarella cheese
 - 4 ounces grated Parmesan cheese
 - 4 ounces plain bread crumbs
- Cut all vegetables the same size. Sauté onions, mushrooms, garlic

in olive oil, add herbs, squash, eggplant. Add tomatoes and tomato paste, toss well.

Put in casserole dish, top with blended cheese and bread crumbs. Bake at 425°F until golden brown. Serve with garlic bread and/or noodles.

LEMON SOLE

- 2 portions of sole or any white fish
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine

garing
1 tablespoon white wine or water
Juice of half a lemon
Soft Herbs (spice blend) or your own blend of favorite herbs such as parsley and dill

Sprinkle fish with soft herbs. Place in pan. Add water or wine, squeeze lemon juice over fish. Chip butter or margarine over fish. Bake in oven at 425°F until done. Pour juices over fish.

people could use at home was exciting. My career helped open a lot of doors. I can talk and do what I say I can do. Merchant of Vino gave me a shot, and let me demonstrate my product in their stores.

For the past 20 years Smith has served as executive chef at many outstanding restaurants including Benbow Inn in northern California, Harrah's at Lake Tahoe, and the Hyatt Regency in San Francisco.

His ultimate goal is to help people change the way they eat. "We're behind times," he said. "We need quicker cooking techniques with a healthier focus."

He'd like his gourmet spice blends to become a household name, and make a cooking video to share his knowledge with others. "I would also like to open a restaurant," said Smith. "I'm waiting for the right opportunity."

In the meantime, he's busy

knocking on doors, trying to convince merchants to carry his gourmet spices. He just added Kroger to the long list of specialty stores, and grocery stores including Shopping Center Markets and Farmer Jack, that carry his gourmet spices.

"You can't give up," he said. "Like when I was trying to become an international chef. I studied 10 years to become a chef and didn't call myself a chef until they called me a chef."

When things weren't going his way, Smith said he realized there was something he needed to learn to open the door. "I've adopted the philosophy that you can always improve," he said.

If you can't find Chef Zachary Smith's spices, which range from \$4.50 to \$4.99 at your market, call (313) 730-4287. Each spice has a colorful label, the flavorful contents are sure to bring out the culinary artist in you.

Hearty soup warms, comforts on chilly days

See related For the Love of Food column on Taste front.

Rick Halberg chef-owner of Emily's Restaurant in Northville lives in Farmington Hills with his family.

He has established a reputation as one of Michigan's outstanding chefs. Rick is an extensive traveler, and is known for his fine French inspired Mediterranean and Italian cuisine.

Look for his column on the third Sunday of the month in Taste.

RIIBOLLITA

- 2 1/2 cups diced savory cabbage
- 2 cups diced red onion
- 3/4 cup diced carrot
- 1 1/2 cups diced green beans
- 2 large stalks celery with leaves, diced
- 2 1/2 cups cleaned, shredded spinach
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 1 1/2 cups shredded basil leaves
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

- 2 ounces olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups chopped canned tomatoes
- 1 1/2 quarts chicken stock
- 2 cups diced potatoes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 3/4 cup cooked Cannellini beans
- 3/4 cup diced, cooked potatoes
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Heat the olive oil in a suitable soup pot, and sweat the onions, garlic, carrots, celery and cabbage

until softened. Add the tomatoes, chicken stock and diced potatoes, bring to a boil and cook at simmer until potatoes are tender.

Add the tomato paste, basil green beans, spinach and parsley. Pass the cooked potatoes and cooked Cannellini beans through a medium plate of a food mill into the soup and stir until blended.

Cook until green beans are tender, add the grated cheese, season with salt and fresh cracked pepper. Serve with grilled bread and a drizzling of extra virgin olive oil.

A delicious twist on the traditional

(NAPS) - One of the most delicious ways to celebrate the season with family and friends can involve creating interesting twists on the traditional. One excellent example which you and your guests may enjoy is a deliciously different Christmas Bread Pudding made with one of the premium cognacs.

CHRISTMAS BREAD PUDDING

- Stale bread: about 3/4 of a loaf of French bread
- 1 pint milk
- 3 whole eggs
- 6 or 7 teaspoons of sugar
- 3/4 cup raisins

- 1/4 cup cognac
- 2 teaspoons butter

Boil the milk and sugar. Then add the cognac. Crack the eggs into a salad bowl and beat well. Pour the milk over them, little by little at first to avoid cooking the eggs, beating vigorously all the while. Alternate cut pieces of bread and raisins in a well-greased, deep baking dish.

Pour in the egg, milk and sugar mixture. Wait a minute, until the bread has absorbed all the liquid. Then crush with a fork and pack loosely. Bake with butter on top and bake in a 400-degree oven for about 40 minutes.

Recipe by Rémy Martin



Chocolate delight: Surprise the person who has everything with "Something Chocolate," a velvety rich combination of chocolates and a butter almond crunch crust.

'Something Chocolate' great gift

For the person who has everything, and doesn't want a thing for the holidays, surprise them with "Something Chocolate," a one-of-a-kind torte created by Andy Sheridan a second year culinary arts student at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

The unsliced 6-inch torte comes in a gift box, and is hand-delivered in the North Wood-

ward metropolitan area.

The cost is \$37.50, call (248) 644-8190.

"This is definitely a holiday torte," said Sheridan. "My mother always made it for the holidays before it turned into her business in 1978."

Andy succeeded to the business in 1994 with the help and support of his family.

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