

## COOKBOOKS



KEELY WYAGONIK

## She put her heart into healthy changes

**M**ary Ter Meer, and her husband Dave, a retired banker, were careful about what they ate, but it wasn't good enough. Her life changed forever in 1992 when Dave suffered two heart attacks a month apart.

Determined to help him get well, Meer began researching the role diet plays in reversing heart disease. In the process, she was inspired to write a book, "Vegetarian Cooking For Healthy Living: An Ultra Low-Fat Nutrition Guide for Living Well," with registered dietitian Jamie Gates Galeana, (Appletree Press, Inc., \$17.95).

The book, which helps readers make healthy changes in their life, is the 1998 Benjamin Franklin Award recipient for "Best New Voice," an award for excellence presented by the Publishers Marketing Association during the BookExpo America Convention in Chicago.

Meer will be at Borders in Birmingham Wednesday, Sept. 16, and Dearborn Thursday, Sept. 17, signing books, and offering free recipe tastings at the following Borders bookstores.

### BOOK SIGNINGS

Mary Ter Meer, author of "Vegetarian Cooking For Healthy Living," will be signing copies of her book, and offering free recipe tastings at the following Borders bookstores.

■ **Borders Books** - 34300 Woodward, Birmingham, (205) 203-0005 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16

■ **Borders Books** - 5601 Mercury Dr., Dearborn, (313) 271-4441 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 17

After her husband's second heart attack, Meer was anxious to make some changes in their lifestyle. "My daughter Anne sent us Dr. Dean Ornish's book. We had nothing to lose so we tried his 'Program for Reversing Heart Disease,'" she said. "You limit calories from fat to 10 percent of your diet."

The Meers ate their last chicken breast on March 5, 1992, and embraced Dr. Ornish's ultra low-fat vegetarian diet. They began exercising regularly and started learning and using stress reduction techniques.

Dave's cholesterol dropped from 240 to 170 in six months. Mary lost 35 pounds. "I wasn't even thinking about losing weight, it just came off," she said. "I've been a yo-yo dieter all my life."

Since beginning this journey to wellness, Meer said she's learned so much. "I learned that fat occurs naturally in food and that I could not add a lot of fat when I was cooking." She was discouraged by what she read in vegetarian cookbooks. Many of recipes used a lot of oil, cheese and nuts, or ingredients she said that were so strange she didn't know where to get them.

### Making changes

"I went first to my old recipes, and adapted them," she said. "In the past our meals were built around meat - meatloaf, pot roast, chicken breast." Since then she's learned that if you use a broad range of plant food your

Please see COOKBOOKS, B2

### LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Focus on Wine
- Celebrate Jewish New Year

# Here's the skinny ON worldly chicken

BY PEGGY MARTINELLI EVERTS • SPECIAL WRITER

**P**ollo, poulet, csirke, kuku, chicken, pul, pili, galinha. Chicken - in any language - is truly a universal food. Because of its mild flavor, chicken easily adapts to recipes of all ethnic cuisines, and we find it in dishes on all continents.

Today's chickens are descendants of wild fowl that roamed the dense jungles of primeval Asia. They were domesticated in India about 2,000 B.C. Thousands of years later, France's King Henry IV stated in his coronation speech that he hoped each peasant under his rule would have "a chicken in his pot every Sunday." This quote was later paraphrased by President Herbert Hoover.

Chicken was not always the reasonably priced meat it is today. Until as late as World War II, only the affluent were lucky enough to have their proverbial Sunday chicken. Today, thanks to modern production methods, almost anyone in our country can afford this versatile fowl. In fact, most of us think of chicken as one of the most economical meat choices.

For the health conscious of all ages, chicken can be the center of a nutritious, satisfying meal. It pairs well with pasta, rice, couscous,

dumplings or potatoes, and is complemented by nearly every vegetable, many fruits and virtually all herbs and spices. With all these combinations, chicken never has to be boring.

### To skin or not to skin

Hot and spicy or mild and soothing, a chicken dish can be just about anything your heart desires. However, if you've ever eaten a dry, tasteless piece of boneless, skinless chicken breast because you're watching calories or cholesterol, take heart. Researchers at the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducted a small study on chicken, and the results suggest that the reduction in fat from cooking chicken without the skin are small and unlikely to be of nutritional importance in a varied and balanced diet.

Cooking chicken with the skin on reduces cooking time and increases moisture retention in the meat; but the spices and seasoning you add to the skin are lost when you remove it before eating (as you should). The most important thing to remember is that nutritious food, like chicken, must taste good and be moist and tender to be acceptable. It makes little sense to eat foods that are not pleasurable and satisfying. If taste is sacrificed, a low fat diet becomes a burden.

Chicken and poultry must always be cooked until well done because of the high incidence of salmonella contamination. To test for doneness

on a whole bird, move the leg. The joint should move freely. When you cut cooked chicken, the juice should run clear, not pink. Use a meat thermometer to check for an internal temperature of 180°F. Done does not mean dry and tasteless. Getting the "bird" done just right is not a new problem for cooks. A 17th century treatise by England's Sir Kenelm Digby on how to capture the juices, directed the cook to set the chicken on a spit, heat through, baste with butter and sprinkle with flour. "This by continuing turning before the fire will make a thin crust, which will keep in all the juice of the meat."

Those new indoor electric grills (such as the George Foreman Lean, Mean, Fat Reducing Grilling Machine) do a great job of cooking a skinless chicken breast while retaining the moisture and flavors. With a little trial and error, you can accomplish the same thing on your barbecue grill, or in a skillet with a small amount of olive oil.

### White meat vs. dark meat

The reason leg meat is dark is because of the oxygen that was supplied to the active muscles. Chick-

Please see CHICKEN, B2

### BUYING POULTRY

Chicken comes in a multitude of forms: as whole birds, parts, boneless pieces, ground or canned. Buying a whole bird is usually the most economical way to purchase chicken. If you're confident, and quick with a sharp knife, you can easily cut and bone a whole chicken into halves or quarters. Some markets will cut the chicken up for you. Purchase about 1 1/2 pound of raw broiler, fryer, or steaming chicken for each 3 ounce serving needed.

■ **Roasting chicken** - These are usually young, tender birds with soft, pliable, smooth textured skin. They have enough fat to brown well at a moderate temperature. They usually range from 2 1/2 to 5 pounds and can be up to 8 months old.

■ **Broiling, frying, rotisserie chicken** - These birds usually weight up to 3 1/2 pounds, and are about 2 1/2 months old. They can be left whole or cut into parts for pan broiling or frying, oven baking or barbecuing.

■ **Baking, steaming chicken, or hens** - These are older birds, ranging in age from 10 to 18 months, and weighing in at 3 to 6 pounds. Their age makes them more flavorful, but less tender. They require slow cooking in a covered pan with water, steam or pressure. They are good in soups, stews and casseroles.

■ **Rock Cornish hen** - Is a miniature chicken weighing up to 2 1/2 pounds. Each hen is usually considered a serving. They are best broiled or roasted.

■ **Squab chicken** - Different from the true squab, this is a very small, 4- to 6-week-old chicken that weighs no more than 1 1/2 pounds. They are best broiled, grilled or roasted.

■ **Range chickens** - The pillars of the poultry world, instead of the mass-produced birds' allotment of 1 square foot of space, each range chicken has double that area indoors plus the occasional freedom to roam outdoors. Typically they are fed a special vegetarian diet, free of antibiotics, animal byproducts, hormones and growth enhancers. This diet, and their freedom of movement, give them a fuller flavor. However, the added amenities make them more expensive. Range chickens average about 4 1/2 pounds and are usually 10 to 12 weeks old.

## Lean pork tenderloin, apples, cider a tasty trio

### MAIN DISH MIRACLE



MURIEL WAGNER

Most of us have preformed notions about food. We base these ideas on past food experiences and food folklore. Often, these stereotypes don't match current nutrition information or food availability. Thus, we self-impose dietary restrictions that are not related to fact, and may be unnecessary.

Pork is a case in point. Most of my patients raise a skeptical eyebrow when I suggest that lean pork cuts can be part of a low-fat diet. Of course, this depends on the portion size and preparation.

Pork is not the same meat that it once was. Pork producers have long changes in the diets of the animals. Pork tenderloin is an example of a very lean cut. Surprisingly, it's nearly as lean as skinned chicken breast. It has less than half the fat of beef tenderloin which is the leanest of the tender steak cuts.

Pork tenderloin was traditionally attached to a loin roast. In recent years it has become available as a separate meat. It is very tender and cooks quickly. It should be roasted at high heat. Because it has so little fat, a lower temperature would dry out the meat before it's browned and cooked through.

This recipe enhances the flavor of the tenderloin with a natural ally and a queen of the harvest fruits - apples and apple cider. What is fall without a trip

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to the cider mill? However, be sure to buy pasteurized cider, or boil the cider for two minutes to destroy any disease producing bacteria. This is the recommendation of the Federal Food and Drug Administration in response to disease problems which emerged from the use of unpasteurized apple juice last year.

The choice of apples can be yours - but make mine Golden Delicious. This variety holds up well when baked. It has that tart-sweet taste that goes well with pork. Because pork tenderloin is so lean, the cider keeps the meat moist. When you serve the sliced pork tenderloin with apples, and the cider pan juices, you won't miss the fat.

I like to serve this dish with baked acorn squash halves and tiny brussels sprouts that you can find only in the fall. On of my patients makes an extra tenderloin to reheat the next day with barbecue sauce. She says it's the perfect sweet-sour combination of flavors.

### HARVEST PORK TENDERLOINS

- 2 (8 to 10 ounce) pork tenderloins
- 6 apples (your choice, I like Golden Delicious)
- 3 cups apple cider

Spray a shallow roasting pan with nonstick spray. If the cider is unpasteurized, bring to a boil and boil 2 minutes. Wash apples and core. Cut into medium slices. Place on bottom of roasting pan.

Prick tenderloins with a fork. Place on apples. Pour cider over meat. Insert meat thermometer in thickest part of meat. Roast until thermometer reads 155°F (about 30 minutes). Do not overcook.

Let stand for 10 minutes. Cut into slices and serve on apples with pan juices spooned over the meat. Serves 4 to 6 people.

Food information (per 3 ounce portion)  
Calories 150; Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 1.1g, Cholesterol 78mg, Sodium 60mg

Food Exchanges = 1 fruit, 3 very lean meat

Look for Main Dish Miracle on the second Sunday of the month in Taste. Muriel G. Wagner is a registered dietitian and nutrition therapist with an office in Southfield. She publishes "Eating Younger," a quarterly newsletter with recipes and nutrition tips. To subscribe, send a check for \$13.50 to "Eating Younger," P.O. Box 69021, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069.