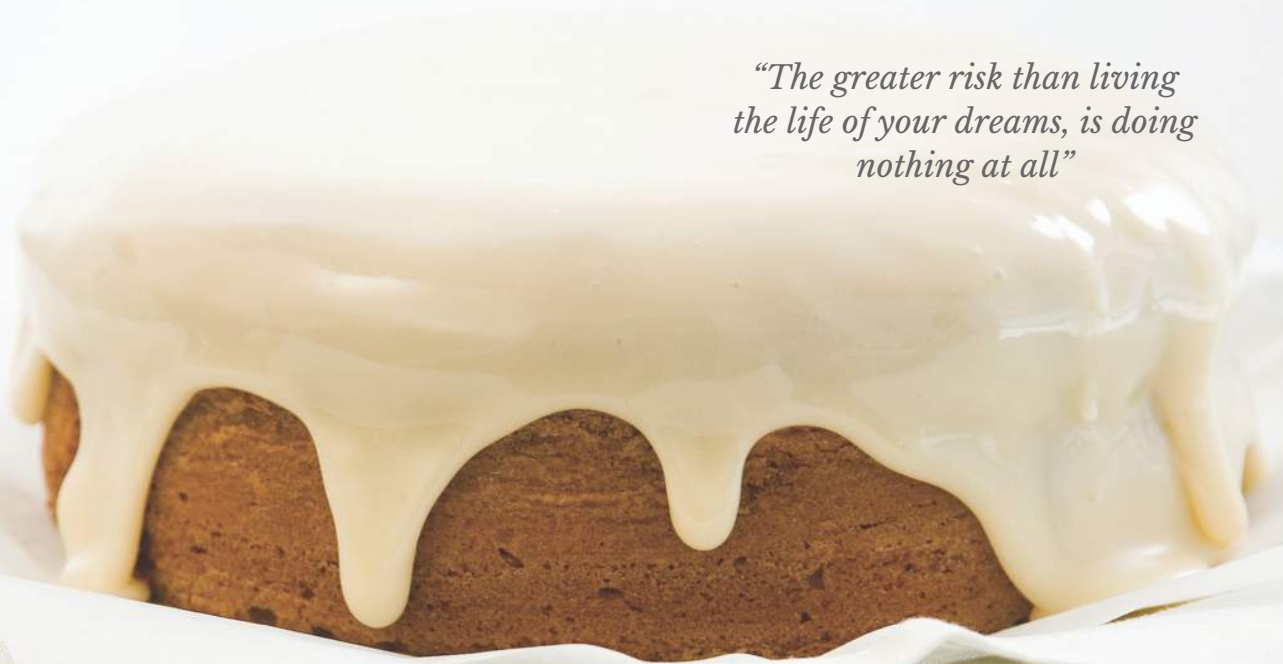


FRIENDS | ISSUE 2

ANNA

MAKE EVERYDAY SPECIAL

*“The greater risk than living
the life of your dreams, is doing
nothing at all”*



EVERYTHING-ANNA.COM

Luscious dainties, the very best tarts, extraordinary cakes and cookies



*Every once in a while someone profoundly affects your
life and long after they are gone the effect lives on.*

for the memory of mary eileen molloy

She told me a story of a special someone, more privileged, whose wife had passed away and with so many beautiful possessions to pack away, would she care to choose something for herself? She felt honoured and hesitantly accepted the kind offer. She looked over the many beautiful things, and then she chose it, the perfect one, a beautiful red handbag made of the most luxurious leather; so unique. She wore it to the ballet; she said it gave her style.

What a privilege it was to know you, in all of your humility, courage and grace was your style.

Like anything in life, the things most special are worth waiting for, and at ANNA this is certainly the case. It took us an extra month for our second issue to make its debut, but because we took that extra time, the reward for your patience is a magazine, I think, far superior to our first.

Throughout this issue you will see that when people follow their dreams, incredible things happen. From my own experiences, to the personal stories of my friends, from my exceptional photographer and master art director to the advertisers and the incredible woman I dedicate this issue to; though you may not know all the details, each of them has a story to tell and it has made them the substantial people that they are. Their passions, talents and above all, their kindness and humility, contribute to this life in a way that brings light into the world.

The last few months have been wonderful, exciting, inspiring and at times completely overwhelming. Since launching in Winnipeg this past summer, we have served crepes at the Bay, paired cake with Starbucks, painted our very own department store window and sold enough magazines to attract national partners who placed ANNA on bookstores shelves across Canada. Subscriptions that used to come from my hometown, quickly appeared from the city and now from across the country.



Con't next page...

I embrace every single one. I'll be honest and say that I just wanted to follow my heart; I'm not sure that I really understood what could happen or where it could go. I thank you so very much for embracing my dream, by buying this magazine you allow me to continue to do what I love and inspire others to do the same.

Over the last while, I have thought much about what it means to be successful, and what I know is that our lives are not defined by what we do or what we have, rather how we feel about ourselves, that we are real about who we are and whether we take the time to do something nice for someone else. I have also had many opportunities to answer what this magazine is about. I have, from a very young age had an insatiable desire to make a difference, to have a voice. I would cringe with sadness when I witnessed someone being made to feel less than another. Being born into an immigrant family who had their struggles trying to fit into a new culture, I have felt that. Now when readers write to me and tell me I inspire and empower them to pursue their dreams and live their life with purpose, I realize that perhaps what started out as a magazine about food and entertaining, that was to be beautiful, extraordinary and luxurious, quickly set the stage for something more.

A voice that would remind us that we should all have equal opportunity to live this life and that when we leave here, to have made every effort to make it a bit better.

I felt the pressure for this second issue, but as I'm looking through it here, one final time, I realize it's done and it's good. From my home and the home of my friends, from a magical moment in New York to luscious baking and fabulous brie, from the best ham, prime rib and turkey, to spicy Indian and a special holiday; with beautiful stories woven throughout, I hope it will touch your heart.

I hope you enjoy this very special issue and remember to see each person for who they truly are, appreciate your friends and every moment and no matter what it is, make every effort to live the life of your dreams.

Enjoy!

Mari



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With my mom out of town, my dad said “If you make dinner, I’ll buy the turkey.” What seemed intimidating and complicated, turned out to be juicy and spectacular.

What I Have Learned

It's a Wonderful Life

In a Minneapolis airport on the way to New York, I notice a couple waiting, quintessential New Yorkers it seems, a lovely couple, elderly. There's something about them. An energy, something special.

She with short fiery red curler-rolled hair and black extra large rimmed glasses, and he with legs crossed in her direction, leaning into her. She is reading to him, from a large hardcover book, I can't quite make out the title. I watch him lean over quietly and kiss her cheek. It seems to go unnoticed as she continues to read. Something about them, an energy, an innocence, a kindness. So beautiful. Tears running down my face. I am caught, I can't explain. I can't help but glance over from time to time as we wait.

Finally, our flight and I'm looking for my seat. It's next to theirs. They are settled in, I sit down next to him. He says, "Hello Dear, do you know the distance from the edge of Manhattan to the tip of Long Island?" I say that I don't. He tells me the answer. He turns to his wife, "What should we eat when we get home, Dear?" Tenderly she explains what is left at home and how she will make it for their dinner. She returns to her book and continues to read to him. Suddenly he looks back at me. "Hello Dear, do you know the distance from the edge of Manhattan to the tip of Long Island?" he asks. "No, I don't", I speak lightly, my tears running. He tells me. Then to her, "What should we eat when we get home, Dear?". And the magic begins as she, without hesitation tenderly explains in the same meticulous manner as she did just minutes before. Tears.

I feel life in its preciousness, its fragility. Acceptance of each moment. Each special moment. It all makes sense. I am overwhelmed.

I think about my own life. So many ideas, so much time wasted. I feel like I have music inside of me that is dying to play. I never let it play. I want to be thankful for my life and celebrate my gifts. I want to live my purpose. I want to give each precious moment the respect it deserves. I need to make a change. I want to make a difference, at all cost, I want to live my dream.

What will it take? Perfect timing, money in the bank? And there's always the chance I won't make it. Worse yet, I could lose everything. The greater risk I think, is doing nothing at all.

Today, with the second issue of this magazine about to go to print, I know I have made the right decision. Every day is spurred by the growth of this business, something that seemed impossible, so risky. Of course it's not always easy, it takes drive and determination, persistence and patience, faith in myself and trust in powers greater than myself, but I love every minute of it! I feel completely fulfilled! And when the fears and strain set in, I remember that serendipitous moment in the Minneapolis airport, and it inspires me to hold on and move forward.

I don't know what the future holds, all I know is that I have this day and a decision of what I will do with it. I choose to feel lucky to be living it.

Manners & Etiquette



What you do is not what matters...

Whether we're talking about a table-setting or a handshake, the rituals of etiquette have long held value.

From 2500 B.C. with the first known manners guide, the Instructions of Ptahhotep, people have understood that the technical aspects of courtesy — how you hold your fork, or whether you even use one, if you leave your hat on, what you serve for dinner — aren't really the issue. Recognizing that manners are really about extending a small gesture of respect, about indicating an interest in others, about getting by in the world in a way that shows care and consideration for oneself and for others that is the issue. Who better to receive these gestures than close friends and family?

When it comes to modern manners most of us know that it's the little things, for no reason, or on no specific day that mean the most. Everyone's tired and busy, so the little things are often set aside and saved for special occasions. Even then, we realize that having the whole family sit at the table for a holiday dinner, or planning a big surprise party for a friend, isn't so much about "acting civilized" and "doing what you should do" as it is about choosing to take time to be together, to laugh, tell stories, to connect in some small way.

Inviting guests over and making them feel welcome is a way of opening your heart, not just your front door, it's a way of letting people know that you are interested in sharing with them; food, the comforts of home, and maybe some conversation.

Choosing to take a minute out of a busy, tired, stressful day to set a pretty table, or find someone's favourite kind of cheesecake shows another that they have value.

Over the course of our personal histories we develop our own important rituals. Consistent small gestures such as remembering a birthday and sending a card or enjoying a glass of Chablis while you chat long distance with your oldest friend, are traditions that connect us with our family and friends in a very personal way. Annual rituals like packing some shortbread and hot chocolate and tromping through the tree farm to find the perfect pine or even eating pizza out of the box every Friday night are meaningful too. **What you do is not what matters – indulging in the moment and making an effort, and that you do it at all, that means something.**

Make Everyday Special

In quest of the ultimate brownie

It's the little things that make life special, but brownies for breakfast? OK, I have to admit when it comes to special moments I usually allow precious to reign over proper and nutritious. One of my fondest memories is when my daughter, Isabella was about five years old. Friday mornings before school, we decided, should be special. Just the two of us, in our favourite cafe, without interruptions. She could order whatever she wanted; it was always the same, toast with butter, a large chocolate milk and her very very favourite, a huge luscious brownie. I loved just sitting there watching her get carried away, in her fancy red velvet gown, with her eyes closed as she bit into it. Joy, I used to call it.

This past summer, having breakfast at the same café, we noticed three little girls, dressed in taffeta and organza, sitting in a row, with eyes fixed on a large brownie sitting in front of each of them. Isabella and I looked at each other with a wink, we understood.

In quest of the ultimate brownie, we found it in the middle of the night, downstairs for a drink, with neither of us very sleepy and she needing a treat to bring to her friends cottage the next morning, we decided to test yet another recipe. With Isabella sitting on her favourite stool, I quickly whipped it together. When it was done, we tasted it. It was heavenly and decadent with a light crispy outside and goeey inside. With little flour to hold it up, it rose and then fell when we took it from the oven - like a chocolate soufflé.

Made with pure cocoa, you can really taste the richness of chocolate, and with large chunks of walnut, perfect!

Fudge brownies with walnuts

3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
3/4 cup butter
1 cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 eggs
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
3/4 cup walnuts, chopped

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line the bottom of a 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper. In a glass bowl, melt 1/4 cup butter and sift in cocoa; mix to make a chocolate paste. Set aside.

In bowl of stand mixer, beat remaining butter with sugar; add chocolate paste and beat until fluffy. Add vanilla and eggs, one at a time; give batter a quick beat until just combined. In another bowl, sift flour and cocoa together and add to butter mixture. Add walnuts and pour into the prepared baking pan. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Cut into squares to serve. Makes one 9-inch square pan.

This brownie is decadent enough to serve at a nice dinner, drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil and a coarse sea salt. Makes 9 1-inch brownies.



Fudge brownies with walnuts

Traditions

A Holiday by the Sea

In a far away land is a small Caribbean town, with endless beaches, where the ocean touches the sky and the energy surrounds you like a giant cloud, where villagers enjoy a simple way of life, where they spend all day at sea in search of dinner, where they take long naps and hold hands as they walk along the beach, where families come together with music and laughter; it seems they understand the only thing important is to love and to be loved.

About five years ago, word began to spread of this town's quaintness and has since been disrupted by developers and businesses and now has a main strip "Fifth Avenue" embellished with lavish hotels and luxurious boutiques inhabited by sophisticated travellers in search of extravagance and indulgence.

My friend Susan lives here, in this city by the sea, and for her it has become a way of life. She followed her heart and it took her there, where she has made friends, a place where she feels loved, a place she calls home.

Last year we decided to see for ourselves, together with my daughter and three friends we traveled to this place we had only dreamed of. In one glorious week I understood why Susan decided to make this town her home. The reason lies somewhere beyond the fancy strip and the expensive shops and the lavish hotels. I saw the true glamour of Mexico, the way Susan sees it. The way life was meant to be. Everyday people on their way to work, with lunches packed in tin cans, bicycles with special front seats for women to ride with their husbands, where a magical energy seems to surround them, I envied them, their simplicity with few things to call their own, so unaware, with smiles on their faces, so content to be. I wished they'd had a say in sharing their little corner of heaven.

And for me the memories. I will never forget. When I close my eyes I remember... my daughter giggling with her friends, jumping the ocean waves, for hours and hours just jumping and giggling, I can hear them saying "friends forever." I remember a simple beachside apartment, a perfect view, Spanish soap operas over lunch, watching dolphins for what seemed like hours, picking sea shells for Dad and finding the perfect one. I remember the food and wandering the streets, getting lost and finding my way home. I remember the peace, the joy, I remember sleeping beside my daughter and looking at her sunburned face. I remember thinking this is the best moment of my life.

I had lost touch with Susan but now I have found her, I'm having coffee with her, reconnecting with her, "Getting established here hasn't been easy, but now it's home", she said, "I have found my way." I understood. I am so happy for you. How much I've missed you. "Remember when you said you would be my friend forever?" We promised to keep in touch. The next day a note at the front desk, "Thanks for the visit, I needed that, you inspire me, Love, Susan."

Susan runs a successful private catering business. It's like an elaborate concierge service for some of the best private rental properties in Playa Del Carmen. When the guests arrive, Susan meets with them to plan a personal menu and event schedule for their stay and, together with her staff, shares the true essence of Mexico. You can visit Susan's work at unoevents.com.

Imagine private menus and true Mexican cuisine prepared by those who know it best. Here, Susan shares some of her favourites.

Chicken enchiladas verde

Salsa verde

1 pound tomatillos, husked, quartered
1 1/4 cups chicken stock
1 clove garlic
1/3 cup chopped onion
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded, chopped
2 tablespoon cilantro

Filling

2 1/2 cups cooked chicken breast, shredded
1/2 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
1/3 cup cilantro, chopped
1/3 cup chicken stock
1/3 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon lime juice
1/2 teaspoon cumin
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper

8 to 10 8-inch store-bought flour or corn tortillas, warmed

For salsa, combine all ingredients in saucepan over medium heat. Bring to boil; reduce heat, and simmer 15 minutes, or until tomatillos are tender. Cool slightly. Place in blender or food processor, and process until smooth. Transfer to large pot and cook at medium-high heat until reduced to 2 cups, about 2 minutes. Spread 1/2 cup salsa in bottom of 13 x 9-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray.

Preheat oven to 400°F.

For filling, combine all ingredients in large bowl and toss generously to combine. Spoon 1/2 cup chicken mixture down the centre of each tortilla and roll up. Arrange on top of salsa in baking dish with seam sides down. Continue with remaining chicken mixture. Pour remaining salsa evenly over enchiladas.

Cover with foil and bake 20 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Serve with sour cream, and garnish with cilantro.

Beef empanadas

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup masa (corn flour)
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup melted butter
1 egg for egg wash

Filling

1/2 pound lean ground beef
1/2 tablespoon vegetable shortening
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped fresh tomato
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1/2 clove garlic, minced
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons ground oregano
1 tablespoon flour
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper

In large bowl, whisk together flour, corn flour, baking powder and salt; stir in melted butter. Gradually add 1/2 to 3/4 cup water, working pastry with your hands to incorporate water. Dough should be easy to handle but not sticky. Form dough into ball, wrap with plastic wrap, and chill in refrigerator 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375°F.

For filling, in large skillet cook beef until lightly browned. Pour off excess fat and return to pan. Add onion, tomato, green pepper, and garlic. Cook until onion is tender, stirring often. Add flour, salt, and black pepper. Cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Cool.

To make empanadas, lightly flour work area, divide dough in half, and roll out to 1/8-inch thickness. Using 4-inch cookie cutter, cut rounds and place 2 tablespoons filling onto each. Fold over to form half circle. Tightly seal ends or edges by crimping with tines of fork. Chill in refrigerator 30 minutes. Transfer to cookie sheet, brush with egg wash, and bake for 30 minutes, or until golden.



Chicken enchiladas verde

Black bean salsa and Mexican rice

Black bean salsa quesadillas

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 jalapeno pepper, minced
1 can black beans
2 Roma tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 small can kernel corn
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
Coarse salt to season

2 cups Monterey or medium cheddar
8 to 10 8-inch store-bought corn or flour tortilla shells

Heat olive oil in skillet over medium heat, add garlic and jalapeno and cook for 1 minute. Add beans, tomatoes and corn and cook until tomatoes are soft. Stir in cilantro.

In large skillet over medium heat, place 1 tortilla shell and top evenly with cheese and black bean mixture. Top with another tortilla shell and cook until cheese is melted and tortilla is golden, about 3 minutes. Flip tortilla and brown other side 3 minutes. Cut into triangles. Serves 4.

Mexican-style rice

2 Roma tomatoes
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/3 small onion, chopped
3 whole cloves garlic
2 cups long-grain white rice
4 cups chicken stock or water
1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
3 whole Serrano chilies
1/2 cup carrot, chopped
1/4 cup green peas, shelled

Place tomatoes in blender and puree. Strain and set aside.

Heat oil in skillet over medium heat, cook onions and garlic for 2 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring until grains are translucent and separate, about 5 minutes. Add tomato puree to skillet and cook 4 minutes. Add stock, cilantro, chilies, carrot, and peas. Bring mixture to boil, then reduce heat to medium-low; simmer 20 minutes, or until liquid has been absorbed and rice is tender. Serves 4.



Everyday Easy Food



My favourite food, my style

The storm windows are on, the last of the flowers have bloomed, and with the holidays around the corner, it's time to take it back indoors for a celebration of beautiful simple food. And in keeping with this special issue "Friends and Celebrations", we reveal the most popular unveilings of my very own recipe box and bring it all together, vintage style.

Christmas is my favourite time of year. It brings thoughts of freshly fallen snow, boxwood and magnolia, garland for my front door. And inside, the smell of gingerbread, baking to share with friends, turkey and cranberry, old movies, beautiful music and finding the perfect tree.

Along with the excitement come thoughts of entertaining, and for most everyone I know that can be overwhelming and intimidating. But it doesn't have to be. Remember, entertaining is really just a reason to get together with people you love and true friends don't care so much about the details, they care that you invited them. And don't worry if it doesn't all go according to plan, just go with it.

One year I hosted a neighbourhood brunch and had everyone bring a dish. Perfect and simple, I thought. The day of the party I realized with a table and service that could only accommodate four, I didn't have the space for the food or the dishes to serve it on. I had an idea. I ran out to a local thrift store and for \$28 bought gorgeous platters, china, wine glasses, silverware and a white tablecloth.

As for the table itself, I just worked with what I had, I mixed old with new and pulled little tables out of storage, cleaned them up and fit them all together. As I stood back to see, everything worked, and it had a classic feel. Something simple and inexpensive turned out to be really special.

To style the food for this section we just followed the same rules. I used what I already had and for the rest we scoured flea markets and antique stores, we mixed old with new, classic with modern and the results, I'm sure you will agree, are elegant and timeless.

So whether you're baking, hosting a neighbourhood brunch, cooking Christmas dinner or just need a night in, here are the classics that will take you right through the winter months. My favourite food, my style.

On our quest for vintage we found spectacular tins and boxes some for only a dollar. We cleaned them up and used them here to showcase our finest. My favourite is the petit four tin, the owner remembers buying it many years ago at a chocolatier when she lived in Paris. How fabulous!

My mother's shortbread, luscious dainties, the very best tarts, extraordinary cakes and cookies, my favourites, the very best and they're all here. Bake them, dress them in something special, tie them with a bow, take them out, share them, knock on strangers doors and make them your friends.

Baking



Caramel toffee squares

Delicious

Draped in phyllo and smothered with cranberries, currants, ginger and pecans this lavish Brie is incredibly easy to make but takes centre stage at any celebration, even if it's just for two. There's nothing more romantic than a fabulous baked Brie and plenty of red wine, so light a fire, invite someone special...

Cranberry Brie

1 9-inch Brie
1 package phyllo pastry
1/2 cup butter, melted
6 tablespoons water
1/2 cup dried cranberries
3 tablespoons packed dark-brown sugar
2 tablespoons dried currants
1/4 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
2 tablespoons pecans, chopped

Pre-heat oven to 350°F.

Spread phyllo layers over each other to form a square or a circular area, brushing each layer with melted butter. Place Brie on top and bring sides of phyllo up over Brie one layer at a time brushing each layer with melted butter and place on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

In small pot over medium heat, combine water with cranberries, brown sugar, currants, ginger, allspice, dry mustard, and cloves. Bring to boil, then reduce heat to low. Simmer until cranberries are plump and liquid thickens slightly, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in pecans.

Transfer baked Brie to a serving platter, pour cranberry compote on top, and serve. Serves 6.

Caramel toffee squares

Pastry

1/2 cup butter, chilled
1/4 cup white sugar
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

Topping

1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
2 tablespoons corn syrup
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper leaving long edges hanging over sides. This makes it easier to remove squares from pan after baking.

For pastry, in medium bowl, crumble butter, sugar, and flour together. Pack onto bottom of prepared baking pan and bake for 20 minutes. Remove and cool. Set aside.

Meanwhile, for topping, bring to boil butter, sugar, syrup, and milk in double boiler. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened. Remove from heat and pour onto baked crust. Let cool. Chill. Makes 12.



Chewy chocolate gingerbread cookies

Chewy chocolate gingerbread cookies

1 1/2 cups plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 1/4 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 tablespoon cocoa
1/2 cup unsalted butter
1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger
1/2 cup dark-brown sugar, packed
1/2 cup molasses
1 teaspoon baking soda dissolved in teaspoon water
7 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
1/4 cup granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 325°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

In medium bowl, sift together flour, ground ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and cocoa.

In bowl of electric mixer, mix butter, brown sugar and fresh ginger until fluffy, about 4 minutes. Add molasses and mix well. Add half flour mixture into butter mixture. Add baking-soda mixture, then remaining flour mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate. Remove dough from bowl; cover with plastic and chill 30 minutes.

On lightly floured surface, roll dough into 2-inch balls and roll in sugar. Bake until the surfaces crack slightly, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes. Makes 24.

My Mother's toasted almond shortbread

1/2 cup cornstarch
1/2 cup icing sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 cup butter, room temperature
1/2 cup toasted almonds, crushed
1/2 cup sugar mixed with 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Place sliced almonds on parchment-lined cookie sheet and bake for 3 to 5 minutes, or until golden. Remove from oven, cool, and crush by pressing with rolling pin.

Sift together cornstarch, icing sugar, flour, and almonds. With wooden spoon, blend in butter until soft, smooth dough forms. Cover with plastic wrap and chill in fridge for 30 minutes.

Remove dough and roll out to 1/4-inch thickness, cut into shapes with cookie cutter, and place 1 1/2 inches apart on parchment-lined cookie sheet. Reduce oven temperature to 300°F and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until edges are lightly browned.

Remove cookies from oven and immediately sprinkle with cinnamon sugar; let set for a few minutes before transferring to cooling rack. Makes 12.

Cranberry Pistachio White Chocolate

16 oz good quality white chocolate
1 cup dried cranberries
1 cup salted pistachios, shelled, roasted

Melt chocolate in double boiler, let cool to room temperature. Add pistachios and cranberries and mix well. Pour onto parchment-lined cookie sheet. Spread out with spatula to 1/4-inch thickness and chill in refrigerator until hardened. Remove and break into pieces. Makes about 2 cups.

Best butter tart pie

Filling

2 cups brown sugar
2/3 cup butter, melted
2 eggs, beaten
4 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup golden raisins

Pastry

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup vegetable shortening, chilled
1 tablespoon butter, chilled
2 tablespoons water

Preheat oven to 375°F.

For filling, in bowl of electric mixer, place brown sugar and butter and mix well; add egg and mix well; add milk and vanilla and mix well; stir in raisins.

For pastry, in medium bowl, sift together flour and salt. Cut shortening into flour with pastry cutter or fingertips until coarse and pea-sized. Add water and gather the dough into tidy ball and stop handling it. Wrap in plastic and chill for 30 minutes. On lightly floured surface, roll out to 3/4-inch thickness and fit into 9-inch round tart pan. Pour filling onto pastry shell and bake for 30 minutes. Serves 8.

Best butter tart pie



Red velvet cake



My friend Laura remembers Saturday shopping trips with her mom. They would ride the bus to Eaton's, a downtown department store, and always end their day with Eaton's Special Red Velvet Cake. Someone shared the recipe with her and she's sharing it here with us. A stunning red and gloriously rich red, velvety cake.

Red velvet cake

Makes 3 9-inch cakes

1/2 cup vegetable shortening
1 1/2 cups sugar
2 eggs
2 ounces red food colouring
2 tablespoons cocoa
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 1/2 cups cake flour
1 cup buttermilk
1 teaspoon baking soda dissolved
with 1 tablespoon vinegar

Frosting

5 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
1 cup butter
1 cup icing sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 3 9-inch baking pans with parchment paper and spray with cooking spray.

In bowl of electric mixer, place shortening and sugar, beat until fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add eggs, one at time, mixing after each. In side bowl, make paste of food colouring, cocoa, and salt; add to shortening mixture and mix well. Add vanilla and mix well. Add baking soda vinegar mixture and mix well. Sift in flour, alternating with buttermilk and ending with flour. Mix until smooth. Pour into pans and bake 40 minutes or until tester comes out clean. Remove and cool; invert cakes onto cooling racks and cool completely.

For frosting, in small bowl, whisk flour and milk gradually until smooth. Place in double boiler over medium heat and bring to boil, then simmer until thickened. Cool. In bowl of electric mixer, place butter, icing sugar and vanilla and mix until fluffy. Add cooled boiled milk mixture gradually, beating until smooth.

To frost cakes, layer all 3 cakes with frosting, then frost entire cake. Serves 8.



Basic butter cake

So basic and so beautiful

How can something so basic be so beautiful? When I first tried this recipe I was looking for a simple cake, easy to make. What I found was extraordinary, with a heavy coffee cake-like consistency. We gave it the respect it deserves with white linen and a Victorian cake stand. And with such appeal, we gave it our cover!

Basic butter cake

3/4 cup butter
1 1/4 cups sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 eggs
3/4 cup sour cream
2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder

White icing

2 tablespoons lemon juice
3 cups confectioners sugar
1/2 cup corn syrup

For icing, place lemon juice and corn syrup into small bowl, mix well. Sift in icing sugar gradually, mixing well until completely smooth.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 8-inch round cake pan with parchment paper.

Place butter, sugar, and vanilla in bowl of mixer beat and mix until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, then sour cream and mix well. In separate bowl, combine flour and baking powder, and add to butter mixture. Pour into baking pan and bake for 60 minutes, or until tester comes out clean. Cool then invert onto wire rack to cool completely.

Pour icing over inverted cooled cake.
Serves 8.

A perfect holiday brunch

Christmas morning...I remember my mother-in-law would wake up really early to prepare the turkey and while the turkey was roasting she would begin breakfast. So much wonderful food, with music on the radio and Bing Crosby on TV, with wrapping paper strewn about and everyone hanging around the kitchen...these are some of my fondest memories and here are some of my favourite breakfast recipes, but I certainly don't reserve these just for the holidays, they are fantastic and comforting all year long.

Blueberry pancakes

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons sugar
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
3 cups buttermilk
4 tablespoons butter, melted
1 cup fresh blueberries

Heat griddle to 375°F or cast-iron pan to medium heat.

Combine flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar in large bowl. Add eggs, buttermilk, and butter, and whisk to combine. Batter should have little lumps.

On buttered griddle or pan, pour batter in 1/2-cup portions, about 2 inches apart. Drop few blueberries onto each pancake. When bubbles form on tops, flip and cook other side another minute. Stack high and serve with butter and maple syrup. Serves 4-6.



Beautiful bone-in ham

Bone-in ham with balsamic honey glaze

1 whole smoked ham, bone in, rind on
1/2 cup honey
1/3 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
3 tablespoons good balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 large onion, cut into wedges
1 large orange, cut into wedges
4 sprigs rosemary

Rinse ham with cool water and pat dry with paper towel. Let stand, uncovered, at room temperature about 1 hour. In medium bowl, whisk together honey, orange juice, balsamic vinegar, mustard, and set aside.

Preheat oven to 300°F and place rack on lowest level. In roasting pan with rack, place ham with the thicker rind on top. Place onion wedges, orange wedges, and rosemary around ham, and transfer to oven to cook for 1 hour.

Remove ham from oven and cool slightly. Increase oven temperature to 350°F. Trim rind from ham, leaving layer of fat about 1/4 inch thick. Score fat on top into diamond pattern, cutting about 1/2 to 1 inch through fat and into meat, and baste with honey mixture. Add 1/4-inch water to pan, return to oven and cook 1 more hour, basting often with remaining marinade. If necessary, add a little water to pan to keep juices from burning. Remove ham from oven and rest 30 minutes. To serve, transfer ham to serving platter and garnish with fresh orange wedges and rosemary. Serve with remaining glaze. Serves up to 20.

Baked eggs wrapped in bacon

6 eggs
6 strips bacon
Parmesan cheese, grated
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper

Spray muffin tins with cooking spray and line each with a strip of bacon; break an egg into each. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Broil for 5-7 minutes. Remove from oven and slide knife around outer edge of each baked egg and remove. Serve immediately. Serves 4-6.

Crispy potato pancakes

2 eggs
2 large russet potatoes, shredded
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup grated onion
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
Vegetable oil for frying

Place potatoes in large bowl of water. Squeeze out water and drain on paper towel.

In medium bowl, place eggs, flour, onion, salt and pepper, and mix well. Add potatoes and mix well.

In large heavy skillet, heat 1/4 cup oil over medium-high heat. Spoon batter by 1/4-cupfuls onto hot skillet, flattening each with back of spoon. Fry until golden, about 3-5 minutes; flip and cook 3 more minutes. Repeat for remaining pancakes, adding oil to the skillet as needed. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately. Serves 4 to 6.



My favourite dinner

Prime rib can only be described as beautiful. I love the crispy outer layer. I can taste red wine fused with the drippings, mashed potatoes and garlic baked to sweet perfection and tangy lemony Caesar salad. And with simple puff pastry, you can wrap the leftovers into a spectacular prime rib pie. Yum!

Prime rib with red wine reduction

1 3-rib prime-rib roast of beef, tied
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper
1 1/2 cups red wine

Let roast stand at room temperature for about 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 450°F.

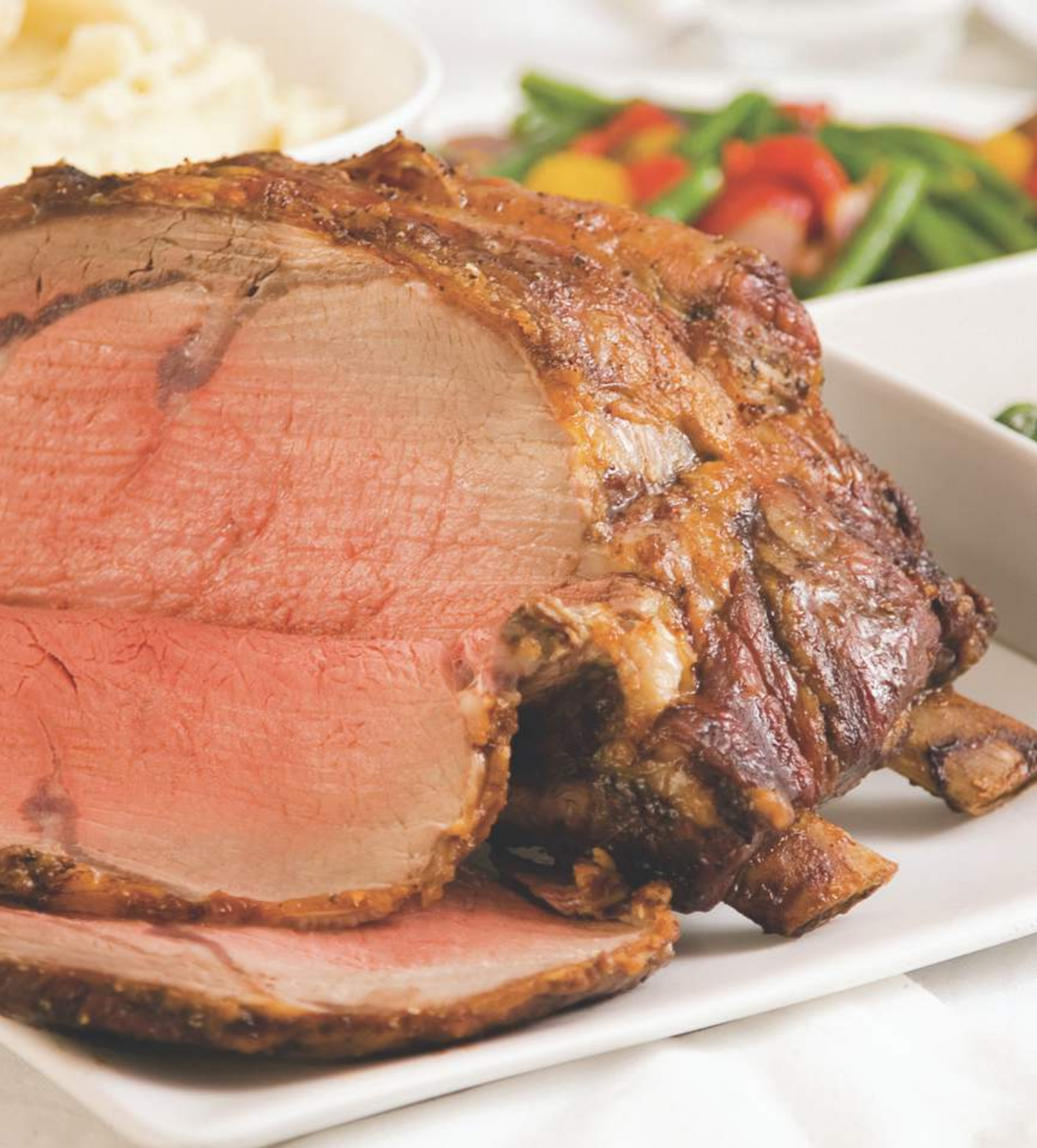
Season entire roast with salt and pepper.

In large roasting pan without rack, place roast fat side up and bake on lowest oven rack for 20 minutes. Reduce heat to 325°F, and without opening the oven door, cook for 1 1/2 more hours. Temperature should read 115°F when done. Return to cook if not done and check temperature every 10 minutes.

Remove roast from oven and rest for 30 minutes. Do not cover, as crisp exterior will get soggy.

Make red wine reduction by place roasting pan with drippings directly onto stove over medium-high heat. Add wine and whisk while bringing to boil. Whisk to incorporate all caramelized and crispy brown bits stuck to pan. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until reduced by half. Season with salt and pepper.

Cut twine from roast and remove bones by sliding sharp knife between meat and bones. Slice roast and serve with red wine reduction. Serves 4-6.



Prime rib with red wine reduction



Creamed spinach

1 large package spinach
3 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup milk
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper
1 teaspoon sugar

Freshly grated nutmeg and sour cream for serving

Blanch spinach in large pot of boiling water. Quickly remove and squeeze out liquid. Reserve liquid. Set aside.

In medium skillet over medium heat, melt butter, add flour, and cook for 1 minute. Gradually whisk in milk. Season with salt, pepper, and sugar. Thin with reserved spinach liquid if desired. Stir in spinach. Turn onto serving platter, sprinkle with nutmeg and top with sour cream. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Garlic mashed potatoes

6 Yukon gold potatoes
1 whole head garlic
1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup heavy cream
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut top off garlic head and discard. Drizzle olive oil onto garlic head and wrap with foil. Bake about 30 minutes.

Boil potatoes in large pot of salted water for 15 to 20 minutes, until tender. Drain potatoes, squeeze in baked garlic and mash. Add butter, cream and salt and pepper and mash well. Serves 4.

Green beans

1 pound green beans, frenched
1 red onion, chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
1 yellow pepper, chopped
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Blanch beans in large pot of boiling salted water. Drain and immerse in ice bath. Drain and set aside.

In large bowl, toss beans, onion and peppers with olive oil and sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Place on parchment-lined baking sheet and roast 10 minutes. Remove from oven and turn onto serving platter. Serves 4.

Caesar salad

2 heads romaine lettuce, chopped
1 cup Parmesan, finely grated
2 cups homemade croutons

Dressing

2 cloves garlic, minced
4 anchovy fillets, minced
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon mayonnaise
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper, to taste

For dressing, in medium bowl, combine all ingredients and whisk well to combine.

In large bowl, place lettuce and toss with dressing. Add Parmesan and croutons and toss again. Turn onto serving platter and top with Parmesan shavings. Serves 4.

cooking turkey, just my dad and I

Last Thanksgiving with my mother out of town I decided to try my skill at turkey. It had been a while since I cooked a whole turkey. I searched cookbooks and on-line sources until I found "Perfect turkey."

I called my dad, to tell him the news, "If you make dinner, I'll buy the turkey", he said. So with recipe in hand we set out to find the biggest, freshest turkey. My friends Frieda and Sheryl dropped by. Everyone had a 'best way to cook turkey' story. I felt intimidated. It seemed complicated, but I was determined to create my own.

For my mother to be away is a rarity, so this was new to me, just my dad and I, and it was nice. So there we were preparing the turkey and putting it into the oven and with him as my coach, of course the recipe had to be altered.

It was surprisingly easy and after dinner the vote came in...Juicy and spectacular just like my mom's!

(we all decided never to tell her)



Perfect roast turkey

Perfect roast turkey

1 20-pound fresh whole turkey, giblets and neck removed and reserved
1 1/2 cups butter, softened
1 750-ml bottle dry white wine
2 tablespoons coarse salt and 2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
Cheesecloth, cut into 4 extra-large squares

Rinse turkey with cool water, pat dry with paper towels, bring to room temperature.

Preheat oven to 450°F. Place oven rack on lowest level.

In large bowl, combine butter and white wine and place cheesecloth in bowl to soak.

Place turkey, breast-side up, on rack of large roasting pan. Fold wing tips under turkey and season generously with salt and pepper, inside and out. Fill cavity with stuffing and tie legs together loosely with kitchen string. Fold neck flap under and rub turkey with butter and sprinkle with more salt and pepper.

Lift cheesecloth out of liquid, squeeze slightly and spread evenly over entire turkey, pushing sides in around the turkey into the pan.

In separate bowl, combine wine with butter to use as basting liquid; set aside.

Place turkey, legs first in oven and cook 30 minutes. Remove and baste cheesecloth. Place back in oven and reduce oven temperature to 350°F. Cook 2 1/2 more hours, basting every 30 minutes using up all basting liquid.

Remove turkey from oven and discard cheesecloth, removing carefully so as not to remove skin. Baste turkey with pan juices and return to the oven, breast side first. Cook 1 more hour, basting with pan juices after 30 minutes.

Remove turkey from oven, insert a thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh. The temperature should reach 180° and turkey should be golden brown. If not fully cooked, baste again and return to oven to cook another 20 to 30 minutes.

Reserving roasting pan for gravy, transfer turkey to serving platter and rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour before serving.

Giblet stock

Giblets and neck from turkey (discard liver)
4 tablespoons butter
1 onion, chopped
1 celery stalk with leaves, chopped
1 small leek, chopped
1 bay leaf
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper

Rinse giblets and neck; pat dry.

In medium saucepan, cook onion, celery and leek with butter for about 10 minutes. Place in medium pot with 4 cups water, bay leaf, giblets, and neck, and bring to boil, then reduce to simmer about 45 minutes. Strain and set aside to use in gravy.

The Gravy

Pan juices
1 cup dry white wine
3 cups giblet stock (see above)

Over medium heat, place turkey roasting pan and add wine and stock, and whisk constantly until slightly thickened. Pour very hot gravy over rested sliced turkey to serve. Serves 10.

Classic stuffing

12 tablespoons butter
4 onions, finely chopped
16 celery stalks, finely chopped
10 large fresh sage leaves, finely chopped
6 cups chicken stock
2 loaves stale white bread, cubed
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper
2 cups flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

Melt butter in large skillet over medium heat; add onions and celery, and cook about 10 minutes. Add sage and cook 3 minutes. Add 1/2 cup stock, stir well and cook until liquid is reduced by half.

Place onion mixture to large bowl and add all remaining ingredients, including remaining stock. Toss well. Serves 4-6.

Winter vegetables

1 pound carrots, roughly chopped
1 pound parsnips, roughly chopped
1 large sweet potato, roughly chopped
1 small butternut squash, roughly chopped
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Toss vegetables in large bowl with olive oil, and salt, and pepper. Place on parchment-lined cookie sheet and bake for 25 minutes, turning once during cooking. Serves 4-6.

Friends Over

Spicing it up Indian style

My friend Ron stopped by to spice things up and share a few of his Mother's best recipes. No need for curry paste, he said. The secret to Indian is really quite simple, all you need in addition to regular pantry spices is curry powder, ground turmeric and ground cumin.

Curried chicken with potatoes and chickpeas

4 chicken breasts, cubed
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons garlic, minced
1 teaspoon thyme/ chopped
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons coarse salt
1 tablespoon curry powder
1/4 cup coconut milk
4 medium potatoes, cubed
1 16-ounce can chickpeas
1 medium onion, chopped
3 tablespoons curry powder
3/4 cup water
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Combine soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, 1 teaspoon garlic, thyme, black pepper, salt, and curry powder, and mix well. Add chicken and coat evenly; cover and place in refrigerator to marinate overnight.

In medium mixing bowl, combine water and curry powder; mix into thick paste.

In large skillet over medium heat, cook onions and garlic 5 minutes. Add curry paste and cook 1 minute or until paste begins to stick to pot slightly.

Add chicken and stir; cover pot and reduce heat to medium. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Remove chicken from pot and set aside, leaving sauce. Add potatoes and coconut milk to pot; add enough water to just cover potatoes. Bring to boil, then reduce to simmer and cook 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add chickpeas and cook 10 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serves 4-6.



Pan-fried curried pickerel fillets

Pan-fried curried pickerel fillets

4 pickerel fillets, medium sized
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper
2 tablespoons curry powder
1/2 teaspoon thyme, chopped
1 tablespoon garlic, minced
1 teaspoon parsley, chopped
2 tablespoons vegetable oil for frying
1/2 cup all-purpose flour

In medium bowl, place soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper, curry powder, thyme, garlic, and parsley and mix well. Place pickerel into large storage dish and coat evenly with marinade. Refrigerate overnight.

Place flour in large dinner plate and dredge pickerel pressing firmly into flour on both sides.

Heat vegetable oil in large skillet over medium-high heat and fry fillets for 2 minutes each side, or until golden.

Fish is cooked when flesh is white and flakes easily.

Tamarind chutney

3 tablespoons tamarind paste (see below)
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground fennel
2 teaspoons garlic, minced
1 jalapeno pepper, minced

Tamarind paste

4 ounces dried tamarind
1 cup hot water

In small pot, bring tamarind and water to boil. Remove from heat, cover, and let cool. Pour mixture into strainer discarding seeds and strings of pod. Reserve paste and set aside.

In medium bowl, place tamarind with all remaining ingredients; cover and chill for 2 hours before serving.

“To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded”

–Ralph Waldo Emerson