

The Edible Prairie Journal

Culinary Discoveries from Land to Kitchen

Number 11 2008



Pulses

+

The Last Word... *First*

“What’s the next big thing in food?” our foodie friend, Gail Hall, asked us the other day. (You may remember Gail’s article in the previous issue of *The Edible Prairie Journal* on her visit to a New Zealand dairy farm.) Gail teaches cooking classes, organizes culinary tours, does speaking engagements, and sits on a few boards with many of Alberta’s movers and shakers in the agricultural realm. She knows her stuff and has her finger on the pulse of food issues both locally and across the country. She had a few ideas of her own, but was curious if we had caught wind of any she hadn’t noticed.

We noted that many of the major, global trends had taken on a local flavour here on the Prairies. The “eat local” movement is going strong here: the number of farmers’ markets keeps expanding, restaurants proudly highlight local products, and participation in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs – a pre-paid box of whatever is fresh and local delivered right to your doorstep weekly – is catching on.

We Prairie foodies still love to eat our way across Europe or other exotic destinations, but right in our own backyards the agritourism and culinary tourism infrastructure is developing. At *The Edible Prairie Journal*, we’re keeping our eye on the clusters of culinary activity along the Cowboy Trail in Southern Alberta, in Saskatoon, and in the Peace Country.

“Locavores” like us will continue to be aware of how many “food miles” our dinner has travelled, and more people will become aware of the impact that our eating patterns have on our environment. Calgary’s Forage Foods already lists the food miles — from “farm to Forage” — of the local products it sells. Edmonton’s Bon Ton Bakery has switched over to wind-generated energy for its bakery.

The ethical considerations of how our food is gathered, produced, and prepared will come to play a larger role in our food choices. Consumers will notice added labeling to meat, dairy and egg products along these lines, everything from how animals are raised to how they are slaughtered.

One thing we hope is that eaters will be less concerned with food fads and just be more interested in what is tasty and nutritious (rediscover beans, peas and lentils on pages 6 through 9). We’ll rediscover the joys of cooking and spending time at the table together (teach kids about food and let them stretch their wings in the kitchen, pages 3 to 5). Celebrate the everyday act of cooking, even if it starts off as a project to clean out the fridge or freezer, as it often does for our incredibly ambitious friend Julie van Rosendaal (page 16). Then again, we’ve also witnessed the recent arrival of \$15 cups of coffee at boutique coffee shops such as Transcend Coffee in Edmonton and Café Artigiano in Calgary, as coffee enters a fascinating “maturation” as a specialty product (pages 13 to 15).

Perhaps the most exciting new trend we’ve noticed is one that has started right here on the Prairies, but that is rippling out to other parts of Canada. (Take that, Vancouver and Toronto!) Original Fare is a coalition of independent restaurants banding together in order to preserve the unique culinary identity of our cities and communities. Watch for an article about this in our Summer 2008 issue.

But THE next big thing in food? We’re looking out for it too. Maybe you’ve spotted it and we’d love to hear your opinions on food trends — global or uniquely Prairie-based — that are traveling across your plates. Call us, write to us, or leave us a comment on our website’s centre column, The Daily Digest at www.edibleprairie.ca.

Enjoy this issue.
Jennifer and Terry
Publishers,
The Edible Prairie Journal

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The Edible Educator

Slow Food Kids

in a Highspeed World

by Twyla Campbell

Two years ago my family and I attended an event sponsored by Slow Food Edmonton. We were completely unaware of the Slow Food movement and were simply lured to the event by the promise of locally brewed beer and a feast of Alberta-raised wild boar. As we talked to various members of the “convivium” that day, however, we were happy to hear their philosophy about food paralleled our own.

Slow Food began as a movement in Italy in 1986 with a poetically charged manifesto calling for the revival of the kitchen and the table as centres of pleasure, culture and community; for the invigoration and proliferation of regional, seasonal culinary traditions; and for living a slower and more harmonious rhythm of life. In the early 1990s, both Edmonton and Calgary sprouted “conviva,” and the Slow Food celebrations of our locally grown and produced foods have been the centre of many of the annual events. These were our kind of people!

Over-processed food has long been absent from our family’s life, shopping at farmers’ markets is often the highlight of our weekends, and we try to teach our four kids about the benefits of fresh ingredients and locally raised products. We haven’t seen the inside of a fast food restaurant in years; in fact, we threaten our kids with the prospect of fast food if they misbehave.

Mind you, I never used to think that way. I couldn’t imagine it was possible to live without fast food in an age of self-induced over-scheduling, where fast food restaurants are seemingly quite often a parent’s salvation. But that thinking changed when I met the man I call my fellow foodie and “spousal unit.” Steve and I recognized that our mutual love of cooking naturally carried over into caring about what we fed our kids.



Paige Campbell looking every bit the professional preparing a family meal.

I admit it. We’re food fanatics. Because we are always on one food excursion or another, the whole family has learned the importance of fresh food and quality ingredients. Cooking has become a way of life in our household and our kids have become quite skilled in the kitchen. By apprenticing in the kitchen, our culinary crew has learned slicing and dicing techniques, the difference between sea salt and table salt, and tosses around culinary terms like cold-pressed oil and *chiffonade*. Not only is it educational, it’s also fun.

“With all the knowledge we possess in this modern day and age, obesity in children is on the rise. Many are at risk for heart disease, but as parents, we can do something about it.”

Admittedly, we’ve needed to be creative in getting them to participate. Last night, my eight-year-old stepdaughter helped cook Paella. Every few minutes, between chopping vegetables and measuring spices, she’d turn her head and eye the old ship’s bell mounted on the kitchen cabinet, making sure it was still there and within reach of ringing. As an incentive to helping cook a meal, whoever cooks gets to ring the bell that summons the rest of the crew for dinner. He or she who cooks, rings the bell and gets out of cleanup duty, but he who ringeth without cooking, does kitchen clean up all by himself. (So far, only one person has been charged and tried for unlawful ringing!) As a result, we have children vying to be sous-chef come mealtime. It is also a relief to know they can cook for themselves when they venture out in the world on their own.

Having the kids select the ingredients at the market and participate in the cooking has helped us to resurrect the lost tradition of spending time together as a family. In a world where text messaging has become the method of communication and “personal digital assistants” keep reminding us how organized we are, we slow our world down each night by gathering at the table. One of the most anticipated moments of our family mealtimes has become the rating of the food. It’s humbling when a 10-year-old gives your Thai salad a “four out of ten” because he feels the “flavours are clashing.” Likewise, it’s also gratifying to get the coveted “10” on something like an elk tenderloin, expertly seasoned and skillfully grilled on the barbecue. Rating the food works for two reasons: the kids learn how the dishes were prepared, and just as importantly, they learn how to give and receive criticism, which is as valuable a skill as the cooking itself. And being honest in complimenting your brother or sister on his or her meal is a very noble trait when the opportunity to trash your sibling would often be more tempting I’m sure.

But if it seems like we’re singing Kumbaya during supper hour and skipping through canola fields, I assure you—it’s not all June-and-Ward Cleaver-evenings at the table. Steve and I have admittedly stretched the limits of our children’s attention-spans as they’ve suffered through lectures on truffle oil, and we have seen their eyes roll during history lessons on vanilla and paprika. When we told them to trust us with an olive oil blind taste-test they tried to run when we brought out the blindfolds. That said, we know the indoctrination is working. The other day, my daughter came home horrified, saying she ate “grey steak” at a friend’s house. At 13, this kid knows her steak and can grill a medium rare filet mignon with her eyes closed.



Son, Mitchell Cooper may soon be Chef Mitchell if he continues to hone his culinary skills and gradually grow into his chef uniform.

With all the knowledge we possess in this modern day and age, obesity in children is on the rise. Many are at risk for heart disease, but as parents, we can do something about it. Getting kids excited about creating tasty, yet healthy, dishes is an easy method of education, an education with innumerable physical and social benefits. This past Mother’s Day I was treated to an incredible four-course meal, homemade and prepared by four young and eager chefs. I was proud of our crew. More importantly, they were proud of themselves. You couldn’t wipe the smiles off their faces for days.

In the meantime, if I play it right, I can have dinner cooked for me five out of seven days of the week. And if I help out, I can ring the bell and get out of doing dishes too. Not a bad return for such a small and delicious investment!

72 Market Street Meatloaf

We asked Twyla to ask her kids for a recipe to include with this article. They chose their favourite “family recipe,” a meatloaf recipe from the once famous, but now defunct, 72 Market Street restaurant in Venice, California. This was a great choice because meatloaf is such a family-style recipe, and it’s always great to have “the ultimate” recipe for such a staple. This recipe, perfect for kids to participate in the preparation of, is a very slightly adapted version of how the Cooper / Campbell family found it in the *L.A. Times* Food Section.

Meatloaf:

- 3/4 cup (175 mL) onion, minced
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) green onions, minced
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) celery, minced
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) carrot, minced
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) green peppers, minced
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) sweet red pepper, minced
- 2 teaspoons (10 mL) garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons (45 mL) butter
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) salt
- 1/4 teaspoon (1 mL) cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) white pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) half and half cream
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) ketchup
- 1 1/2 pounds (680 g) lean ground beef
- 1/2 pound (225 g) lean ground pork
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) dry bread crumbs

Gravy:

- 4 shallots, minced
- 2 tablespoons (30 mL) butter
- 1 sprig thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Dash crushed black pepper
- 1 cup (250 mL) dry white wine
- 1 cup (250 mL) veal or beef stock
- 1 cup (250 mL) chicken stock
- Salt & pepper, to taste

Heat oven to 350° F (180° C).

In a large skillet, sauté the onion, green onions, celery, carrot, green pepper, red pepper, and garlic in butter until the vegetables are tender and liquid is absorbed. Cool and reserve.

In large mixing bowl, combine the salt, cayenne, black pepper, white pepper, cumin, and nutmeg. Add this to the vegetable mixture in the skillet. Stir in the cream, ketchup, beef, pork, eggs, and bread crumbs. Mix well.

Form into loaf and place on greased baking sheet or in 9-by-5-inch (23-by-13 cm) loaf pan. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes in the preheated oven.

While the meatloaf cooks, sauté shallots in 1 tablespoon (15 mL) of butter with the thyme, bay leaf and black pepper. Add white wine and simmer over high heat until reduced to a glaze. Add beef stock and chicken stock and simmer over high heat until reduced by 1/3 or 1/2. Stir in remaining 1 tablespoon (15 mL) butter. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir until butter melts and blends into the sauce. Remove and discard bay leaf. Makes about 1 cup (250 mL) of gravy.

When the meatloaf is done, let it rest outside of the oven for about 10 minutes. Pour off the excess fat. Slice and serve with gravy. Makes 6 to 8 servings.



Twyla Campbell (above) and her husband Steve Cooper put on one of the highlights of Slow Food Edmonton each year. “Northern Night” is a celebration of the unique cuisine of Canada’s North.

A version of this article originally appeared in *Slow Canada*, the national newsletter of Slow Food. It appears here courtesy of Twyla Campbell. An epicurean explorer and wine enthusiast, Twyla is a freelance writer and the Food Editor of *Lifestyle Alberta* magazine. Along with contributing regularly to *Opulence* Magazine, Twyla’s articles about food, family and travel have also appeared in *Slow Food Canada* and Edmonton’s *City Palate*. Raised the Slow Food-way on fresh ingredients, this former farm-girl has been cooking since the age of nine. Her ongoing mission is to teach her kids food survival in a fast-paced world.

Eat your View

Pulses, Another Global-Local Crop

We find it very interesting that the foods we grow in abundance on the Canadian Prairies are so often overlooked elements of our local food culture. Take the pulse family for instance – lentils, chickpeas, dried beans, and dried peas.

Instead, lentils have always conjured up exotic spice-heavy Indian dishes or fragrant North African and even Mediterranean dishes. Chickpeas were linked with Mediterranean and North African cultures, as well as East Indian stews and curries. Beans maybe hit closer to home, if the refried beans of Mexico, the rice and bean variations of the Caribbean, Latin America, and the American South, or Boston's famous baked beans counted as "close to home." Split peas, at least, resonated nationally, in hearty, pork-studded French-Canadian split pea soups. But by and large, pulses, had always seemed exotic and transported our minds to cuisines and cultures a world away.

That was until earlier this year, when the Winnipeg-based Pulse Canada group started to get the word out that Canada is the world's top exporter of pulses. Pulse Canada is an industry association that unites the efforts of various provincial pulse associations and the Canadian Special Crops association for research, industry development, promotion and marketing of pulses in Canada and internationally.

It seems we grow more pulses than any country other than India, and because they consume so much internally and we don't, Canada exports pulses to over 150 countries. This \$1 billion industry annually is now is the fifth largest crop produced in Canada by volume after wheat, barley, canola and corn. More than 2.3 million hectares are seeded to pulse crops each year.

Maybe, we thought, it was time to take a closer look at this local product.

Pulse Canada; phone (204) 925-4455
www.pulsecanada.com



Image from Pulse Canada

Peas *Pisum sativum*

We grow primarily yellow and green field peas in Canada, and to a smaller extent, varieties named maple, marrowfat, and Austrian winterpeas. These types of peas are exclusively sold as dried, dehulled peas, used whole, split or ground into pea flour. (As such these "pulse" peas are distinguished agriculturally from fresh peas – those peas that we buy as fresh, frozen or canned peas, and in a sad irony of the global food trade, come to us without fail from China.) Peas, in fact, are a native food from Southeast Asia, but they manage to grow beautifully in southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and even in northern Alberta's Peace Country.

Because of the high protein content, perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of these vegetables that makes them so valuable, peas are also an important animal feed crop domestically.

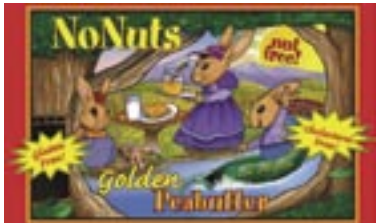
Lately, the cows and export markets are not the only ones getting the domestic pea crop. Food manufacturers are starting to incorporate pea flour, pea protein and pea fibre in foods from gluten-free baked goods to peanut butter substitute.

Pulse: from the Latin *puls*, meaning thick soup or potage, pulses are the edible seeds of plants in the legume family such as pea, lentil, bean and chickpea.

Source: Pulse Canada.

NoNuts Golden Peabutter – Mini-profile

In 2003, NoNuts Golden Peabutter burst onto the scene with its nut-free, gluten-free spread. It looked like peanut butter, it tasted like peanut butter and it could be used exactly as peanut butter in recipes too. It took the top honours at that year's Canadian Grand Prix New Product Award, the Oscars of new grocery products.



Made in Legal, Alberta, by Norman and Caryll Carruthers under their company Mountain Meadows Food Processing (2004) Ltd., NoNuts Golden Peabutter is still the only product of its

kind in Canada, and maybe the world. It wasn't their invention, rather another Legal pulse farmer, who was trying to make a locally grown and produced hummus (a Middle Eastern and Mediterranean puréed chickpea dip). "But we can't grow chickpeas here," explains Norman, of Legal's central Alberta climate and soil. "So instead he used a type of golden brown peas and ended up with a product that tasted and looked like peanut butter." Rather than just another hummus product in the marketplace, peabutter had the distinction of being completely unique and was a miracle-food to people with the very serious peanut allergies. However, the originator couldn't make a go of it, and that's when the Carruthers stepped in. They bought the company out of receivership and breathed life back into this unique product. No Nuts Golden Peabutter is sold in most major grocery stores across Canada and in many specialty grocers.

Without any additives, colorings or preservatives, it's a fairly straight-forward food. The special golden brown peas – which according to the Carruthers look very much like a peanut in colour when they are hulled – are the main ingredient. The peas are grown in and around the Legal area, then they are turned into peabutter with the addition of canola oil, icing sugar and a vegetable oil right at the Mountain Meadow Foods plant in Legal. "One of the by-products of the peabutter," adds Norman, "is our golden pea flour. It's an excellent wheat-flour substitute." He then notes that pea flour, which is about 22% protein, is a higher protein source than wheat flour, which ranges from 11 to 15% protein content. A local butcher is using it in the place of wheat flour in her sausages, making them gluten-free and higher in protein.

NoNuts Golden Peabutter can be used anywhere you would use peanut butter, from sandwiches for lunch to cookies to Thai foods that call for peanut butter in the sauces. It has a two-and-a-half year shelf life and can be kept in the cupboard, but for maximum freshness, Caryll recommends keeping it in the refrigerator.

Mountain Meadows Food Processing (2004) Ltd.; phone (780) 961-2470 www.peabutter.ca



Image from Pulse Canada

Lentils

Lens culinaris

About 10 different types of lentils are grown in Canada: large green, split large green, medium green, small green, red split, dehulled red, red, Spanish brown, French green and beluga. Lentils are another Southwest Asian crop, and because of their drought-tolerance and heat-tolerance, they grow well on the Prairies. Saskatchewan produces over 95% of the lentils grown in Canada every year, but again, these lentils are grown for over 100 countries. We currently hold the title as the world's largest exporter of lentils to the world.

In the kitchen, lentils are very versatile and handy. Unlike dried peas and beans, they don't require the lengthy pre-soak. They just need a quick rinse and then they can be cooked in gently boiling water for 20 to 45 minutes depending on the variety and size.

Red Lentil and Apricot Soup

We love this easy-to-make but elegant and sophisticated soup. It's from a fabulous recipe compilation cookbook called *The Best American Recipes 2000: The year's top picks from books, magazines, newspapers, and the Internet* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

- 3 tablespoons (45 mL) olive or canola oil
- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 1/3 cup (80 mL) dried apricots, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) dried red lentils, rinsed and picked over
- 5 cups (1.25 L) chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 3 plum tomatoes (or any kind of medium-sized) tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) dried thyme
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons (30 mL) fresh lemon juice

In a large, heavy pot, heat the oil over medium heat and sauté the onion, apricots, and garlic. Do not let them brown. Add the lentils and broth, bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the tomatoes, cumin, thyme, and salt and pepper. Simmer for 10 more minutes. Stir in the lemon juice and let the soup stand off the heat for a few minutes. Transfer the soup to a blender or food processor and purée. Return the soup to the pot and keep hot for serving. Adjust the seasonings to taste and serve. Serves 6 to 8.



Canada's largest bean crop is the white pea bean (navy bean). Canada also grows significant quantities of beans such as pinto, cranberry, black, dark red kidney, light red kidney, great northern, Dutch brown, pink, and small red. Small quantities of azuki, kintoki, and oetbo beans are grown under contract.

Image from Pulse Canada

Beans

Phaseolus vulgaris

Beans are the Americas' indigenous pulse, and beans were the important source of protein in Pre-Columbian diets. They are one-third of the culinary trio known as the Three Sisters, a clever combination of food plants traditionally grown together as companions. Corn provided the tall stalks to support the climbing beans, in return the beans "fixed" nitrogen back into the soil, and corn is a nitrogen-hungry plant. The low, leafy squash plants would provide the ground cover, and therefore weed control as well as shading the soil to help with moisture retention.

Perhaps because of our protein-loaded meat-based diets on the Prairies, beans just don't seem to make it onto our plates as often as they should. While about half the beans in Canada are grown in Southern Ontario, white pea beans, pinto, black, dark red kidney, great northern and cranberry are grown in a swath in southwestern to southern Manitoba. A small pocket in southern Saskatchewan grows pinto, black, and small red, and southeastern Alberta produces pinto, great northern, small red, black, and pink beans.

Mocha Pinto Chippers

Jennifer's sister-in-law, Julie McDonald, is a fabulous cookie baker. Julie remembered this recipe from *The Search for the Perfect Chocolate Chip Cookie* by Gwen Steege (1988 Storey Communications Inc.) and we simply had to include our adapted version of it. It's not the first recipe we've seen that uses puréed beans in baking. The beans add a nice texture and keep the cookies incredibly moist for well over a week.

- 1 14-fluid ounce (398 mL) can pinto beans, unsalted, well drained and rinsed
- 2 cups (500 mL) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons (7.5 mL) instant coffee granules
- 3 tablespoons (45 mL) cocoa powder (unsweetened)
- 1 cup (250 mL) quick-cooking rolled oats
- 1 cup (250 mL) unsalted butter, divided
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) granulated white sugar
- 1 cup (250 mL) brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) honey
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) vanilla
- 2 1/2 cups (625 mL) semi-sweet chocolate chips, divided
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped dried fruits such as apricots, golden raisins, or dates (optional)

Preheat oven to 350° F (180° C).

Purée drained pinto beans in blender, food processor, or food ricer into a smooth paste. Makes about 1 cup (250 mL).

In large bowl, combine flour, baking soda, salt, instant coffee granules, cocoa, and oats. Set aside.

In an electric mixer on low speed, cream the butter by mixing it for about 1 minute until it is light coloured and fluffy. Gradually add white and brown sugars and honey, and turn the mixture to high speed if using a whisk attachment or medium speed if using a paddle attachment. Beat for about 5 minutes until the mixture is again light and fluffy. Add egg, vanilla, and bean purée. Mix to blend thoroughly.

Stir in dry ingredients, and mix until completely blended. Gently stir in 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) of the chocolate chips and chopped dried fruits (optional).

Drop by tablespoonfuls onto lightly greased baking sheets. Flatten slightly with back of spoon. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes. Bake slightly longer for firmer, crisper cookie. Remove to wire racks to cool.

Melt remaining 1 cup (250 mL) of chocolate chips in a double-boiler until melted. Drizzle the chocolate using a pastry bag or just by using a spoon to drizzle the chocolate across cookies in a zigzag pattern. Allow chocolate to set before storing cookies. Makes 5 dozen cookies.



Mouth-watering Mocha Pinto Chippers, just out of the oven. Got milk?



Image from Pulse Canada

Chickpeas

Cicer arietinum

We must admit, we were unaware that there were different types of chickpeas until we found out that Canada can grow as much as 450,000 tonnes of “desi” and “kabuli” chickpeas (a.k.a garbanzo beans) in a triangular zone that straddles southern Alberta and southern Saskatchewan and points northward. The latter are also known as garbanzo beans among other names.

Even among the pulses, chickpeas stand out for their high-protein content, and they are an important source of protein for vegetarians. Chickpeas are cooked and eaten warm or cold in varying dishes from salads to falafels. Gram flour, or besan, is made from the brown, small chickpeas and is used in South Asian cuisines, like those of India. Flour is also made from the larger, white garbanzos and is used in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern food cultures.

With gluten-intolerance seemingly on the rise, flours made from chickpeas, as well as pea and bean flours are becoming more mainstream in our local food cultures. Gluten-free pastas made from lentil and chickpea flour are filling that niche. Already these Prairie-grown foods are sliding into our food culture, not as identifiable staples as they are in Asian and Mediterranean cuisines, but as ingredients in processed foods. Many food manufacturers looking to improve their foods’ nutritional bottom-lines are boosting levels of complex carbohydrates, protein, and fiber by adding pulses or pulse products.



Gardeners and farmers alike know that pulses are nitrogen fixers. They’re nature’s way of replenishing the nitrogen in the soil that most other crops use and deplete over time. Rotating planting of pulses in fields is a natural, time-tested, and clean way to keep the soil vital and productive.

Image from Pulse Canada TBD

Wild Rice and Chickpea Salad

This recipe actually comes from a dessert cookbook called *The Pastry Queen: Royally Good Recipes from the Texas Hill Country’s Rather Sweet Bakery & Cafe* by Rebecca Rather and Alison Oresman (Ten Speed Press, 2004). It’s a Texan recipe – you can tell by the hit of hot pepper sauce at the very end – but it struck us as a very Prairie recipe too, with its use of wild rice and chickpeas. It’s the perfect salad for a potluck or picnic because it’s so tasty (yet healthy) and you can make it a day ahead.

- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) wild rice, rinsed
- Kosher salt or sea salt
- 2 1/2 tablespoons (35 mL) freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons (30 mL) red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons (30 mL) Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) honey
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) curry powder
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 can (14 fluid ounces / 398 mL) chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 8 ounces (225 g) smoked ham, diced
- 8 small scallions (green onions), thinly sliced (white and light green parts only)
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) golden raisins, or dried cranberries or other dried fruit
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Hot Pepper sauce, such as Tabasco Sauce or Frank’s Red Hot Sauce

Fill a large saucepan (the rice will double in size) 3/4 full of water and bring to a boil. Add the wild rice and 1 tablespoon (15 mL) salt and simmer over medium heat until the rice is tender but still firm to the bite, about 45 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water.

Whisk together the lemon juice, vinegar, mustard, honey, cumin, curry powder, and cayenne in a large bowl. Add the oil and whisk until combined.

Add the chickpeas, ham, scallions, raisins, and wild rice. Toss well. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and hot pepper sauce. Serve at room temperature. This salad can be refrigerated overnight. If so, let it come to room temperature before serving. Serves 6.



Prairie Producer

The Gimli Fish Market

A Profile of Karen Olson

Karen Olson, owner and operator of the Gimli Fish Market in Winnipeg, informs us that in the tangled web of commercial fishing lore, it's considered bad luck to have women aboard a fishing vessel on the opening day of the season. That said, Karen goes out on her brothers' boats precisely because she is the good luck charm. "I went out once on opening day and we did well," Karen laughs. "So then I would always go out on opening day and closing day."

Karen's grandfather, Páll (Paul) Kristinn Olson, was born in Manitoba to New Iceland pioneers who settled in Gimli in 1875, on the western shores of Lake Winnipeg. He started the family commercial fishing tradition that carries on to this day.

Most days, Karen is busily running her three bustling retail fish stores, the original store on Dufferin Avenue in Winnipeg's north end, the Pembina Highway location, and the just-opened St. Mary's Road store in the south side of town. We've come to the Dufferin store, to buy some Winnipeg Goldeye, that classic shiny-bronze coloured fish that is so beloved by Winnipeggers and Manitobans but that is hard to find even a province or two away. We're also hoping to learn about this iconic product and the fishing family so connected with it.

Every year, 3.2 million kilograms — over 7 million pounds — of fresh water fish are caught in Lake Winnipeg, the world's 10th largest fresh water lake. The lake supports about 800 commercial fishermen, a few of whom — but very few, Karen tells us — are fisherwomen.

Karen easily rattles off the 13 species of fish commercially caught on the lake: pickerel (walleye), sauger, lake whitefish, northern pike, yellow perch and lake trout, white sucker, tullibee, carp, burbot, lake sturgeon, goldeye, and white bass. Then there's the golden caviar from the whitefish when they are spawning. Northern pike are painstakingly filleted and packaged for high-end restaurants in France. Pickerel by and large is shipped whole to the US she informs us. "Silver bass, white bass and pickerel are exported to Asia. Lake whitefish has traditionally been sold to the Jewish communities in the US, but the demand seems to be dwindling." (Whitefish can be used to make Gefilte Fish.)

Karen also clues us into the global reality of this local product. "People want boneless fish, and lake fish are bony. There's no way around that. So whitefish and pickerel are now being frozen here and shipped to China, unfrozen there, deboned, refrozen and shipped back to Canada!"

That's one reason we're interested in goldeye. This fish remains truly a local phenomenon, and it often goes under the name of Winnipeg Goldeye as a result. (It is also called smoked goldeye, but the "smoked" is a given as goldeye is always eaten smoked, never unsmoked.) To learn more, we ask Karen if she can give us a tour of her Gimli Fish Market store.

Karen buys the goldeye from her brothers. We joke how convenient that is, but Karen assures us even these intra-family transactions are highly regulated because it's a commercially regulated product. "It's so regulated that husbands have to have a license to buy from their wives," she laughs.

The fish shimmer a sunset orange, and their eyes glow deep goldenrod. The yellow eye is natural, but the reddish-orange hue is not, Karen tells us. The fresh goldeye are cleaned and brined in a mixture of cold water, salt, red dye and brown sugar. The dye added is purely a cosmetic tint, and we ask if she has ever thought of leaving it out? "We've done non-dyed goldeye, and we can't sell it to save our lives," she exclaims. "We've tried it no fewer than five times. But the darker red it is, the better it sells." And the dye is costly, she explains, so it actually makes the goldeye more expensive.

After the brining process, the fish go into the hot smoker. We smell the lovely woody smell of the smoker in action. There's a batch of goldeye in the smoker and finished batches are drying on racks nearby. "It's a computerized smoker, so it's a no-brainer," Karen explains as we ooh and ahh over this high-tech gismo, which can smoke a batch in about four hours. Her brother, Kris, has a smoker in Gimli, and it's an old-fashioned wood smokehouse. It takes around 10 hours of smoking in that. Some fishermen smoke their goldeye for days. It all depends on the size of the fish and how much smoke flavour you want. But Karen likes her foolproof computerized smoker. "There was a lot of unpredictability with a wood smoker," she confesses.

At its best, goldeye is a soft, but firm-fleshed fish with a slightly smoky flavour, but it's more delicate than most smoked trout and hot-smoked salmon that we've tasted. In fact, for some, it lacks the buttery richness of a smoked trout or salmon, but to many Winnipeggers and those from the Interlake region of Manitoba, it's a cherished local delicacy.

Despite the fact that it's smoked, like any fish, Karen tells us freshness is key. And so Karen smokes batches throughout the week for maximum freshness for her customers. "It's best in the first four-to-five days, but you can keep it for up to seven days," she says, adding that you need to keep it refrigerated. Karen eats goldeye with cream cheese on wheat crackers at room temperature. Terry's mom used to pour a bit of milk over the whole goldeye, and would then bring it to a simmer in the oven for family dinners. And it was always served with a side of coleslaw.

Karen also gives us the tip that goldeye is much easier to debone if you let it come up to room temperature for about 30 minutes out of the refrigerator. Also, beware of imitators, she warns. "Smoked tulabee is known as 'poor man's gold-eye.' But tulabee have no teeth. Make sure you can feel the

teeth, and then you know it's goldeye." Or, just buy it from a third-generation Interlake-region New Icelander, like Karen, and ask for it by name.

Store locations: 596 Dufferin Avenue, phone (204) 589-3474; 625 Pembina Highway, phone (204) 477- 6831; Suite 5 – 1604 St. Mary's Road, phone (204) 256-3474



Top to bottom: The fishing fleet at dock in the Gimli harbour – the larger vessels in the background are used for fishing for weeks at a time and the smaller boats in the foreground are used by fishermen who fish daily; the computer-controlled Sure Flow smoker at the Gimli Fish Market; freshly smoked delectable goldeye drying on racks; and Karen Olson, the driving force behind Gimli Fish, pictured in her Dufferin Avenue store.



Getting to where the fish are: the odd-looking vehicle to the left is a Bombardier *Muskeg*, used on snow and ice and equipped with an ice auger that is used for winter fishing; below, a more identifiable form of transportation: Karen's brother Kris aboard his fishing boat at dockside in Gimli.

Smoked Goldeye and Wasabi filling:

- 4 ounces (125 g) cream cheese (Winnipeg cream cheese, or otherwise)
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) sour cream
- 2 teaspoons (10 mL) wasabi paste, or finely chopped horseradish
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) celery, finely chopped
- 8 to 10 ounces (250-300 g) goldeye, skin and bones removed, crumbled

Beat cream cheese till creamy and smooth. Lightly beat in sour cream and wasabi. Carefully stir in celery and goldeye. Serve in appetizer-size profiteroles (shells). Serve slightly chilled or at room temperature. Makes 48 appetizer shells and 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) of filling.

New Iceland-style Smoked Fish Appetizers

This serving suggestion for smoked lake fish, including goldeye, is from Kristin Olafson-Jenkyns' *The Culinary Saga of New Iceland: Recipes from the Shores of Lake Winnipeg* (Coastline Publishing, 2001). In her book, Kristin suggests steaming the goldeye to warm and debone it. We admit that some of the recipe items were mysteries, such as "mustard dill," but after a few minutes of research we found the recipe for Scandinavian Mustard Dill in the most recent edition of *The Joy of Cooking!* (The recipe is below.)

Wrap goldeye loosely in foil with 1/4 cup (60 mL) water. Steam in a pre-heated 400°F (200°C) oven for approximately 15 minutes. Debone the fish while warm (retain the tail and fins for presentation).

Arrange steamed and deboned smoked fish, thinly sliced dark breads such as Icelandic Brown, and crackers on serving platters. Complement with your preference of tomato butter, dilled cream cheese, mustard dill (see recipe below) and horseradish sauces in small bowls. Guests prepare their canapés by spreading the tomato butter or dilled cream cheese on the bread and laying fish on top or by placing the fish directly on the bread and spooning a little of the mustard dill or horseradish sauce over it. Cocktail picks and forks may be provided for simply dipping the fish.

Scandinavian Mustard Dill Sauce

While this recipe doesn't appear in our 1950's edition of *The Joy of Cooking*, it does appear in the most recent edition, the 75th anniversary edition, renewed and re-released in 2006 by Scribner publishers.

- 6 tablespoons (90 mL) Swedish or Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) snipped fresh dill
- 2 to 4 tablespoons (30 to 60 mL) sugar
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) fresh lemon juice or red wine vinegar, or to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Generous pinch ground cardamom

Whisk ingredients together in a medium bowl until smooth. Cover and let stand for 2 to 3 hours to allow the flavours to develop. Serve at room temperature or chilled. The sauce will keep, covered and refrigerated, for up to 2 days. Makes a generous 1/2 cup (125 mL).

Profiteroles with Smoked Goldeye and Wasabi

This recipe is from the Manitoba Canola Growers Association. We love the international flair – profiteroles! wasabi! – as well as the local Winnipeg angle with the cream cheese and goldeye. If goldeye is not readily available, a local smoked trout or char is a good substitute. If wasabi paste isn't in your pantry, but horseradish is abundant in your garden (or at your farmers' market), then grate the same amount and use that instead. The metric conversions are courtesy of the Manitoba Canola Growers Association.

To make the Profiteroles:

- 1/2 cup (125 mL) canola oil
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) hot water
- 1 cup (250 mL) flour
- 4 eggs

Preheat oven to 425° F (220° C).

Bring canola oil and water to a boil in a heavy pot. Add all the flour at once and stir until dough forms a ball. Remove from heat. Beat in eggs one at a time.

Spoon 1 tablespoon (15 mL) mound of dough onto parchment lined cookie sheet. Bake for 15 minutes; turn down heat to 325o F (163o C) and bake for another 18 to 20 minutes. Shells should be hollow and a light golden colour when done. Cool.



Fork in the Road ... Terry and Jennifer brake for coffee

This Spring we hit the road in search of the “Third Wave of Coffee” here on the Prairies. The “Third Wave” is a term, coined a few years back, and it is used to describe those coffee houses, cafés and roasters – usually independents – where coffee is viewed as an artisan product. The path from coffee farmer to consumer is entirely traceable, and the perfect cup of coffee is pursued at any price.

The “First Wave” of Coffee began during the post-war boom of quick, easy-to-prepare foods. Coffee came pre-ground in a can, and it was an unknown mixture of beans from all over the coffee-growing world. Higher quality Arabica beans were mixed in with lower quality Robusta beans to bring the mix up to a happy mediocre. And this coffee was most often brewed in percolator, later in a drip coffee pot, but never extracted through an espresso-maker.

The “Second Wave” began in the late 1960s with places like Starbucks. (Yes, Starbucks used to be an independent one-off coffee shop in Seattle’s Pike Place Market.) “Second Wave” coffee shops began to offer premium-grade Arabica beans primarily and began introducing various roasting levels from dark, smoky roasts to light roasts. Small, regional coffee roasters made us aware that coffee was a perishable product once roasted, and really should be consumed within a week. Beans were freshly ground to order and North American coffee drinkers were also introduced to the concept of espresso-extracted coffee. We learned the lingo of ordering our personalized half-decaf, skinny, extra-foam cappuccinos. Most importantly, bit-by-bit, cup-by-cup, the origins of the beans were starting to matter.

The term the “Third Wave” was purportedly coined by a Seattle-based barista Trish Skeie in 2005 to describe what we’re seeing now at the leading edge of coffee in North America. The “terroir” of coffee (the regional characteristics from the soil, climate, and growing conditions), like wine, means that coffees have subtle differences that can be discussed ad infinitum amongst coffee connoisseurs. “Third Wavers” ask for their coffee by the name of the farm where it was grown, rather than by the type of roast. Coffee traceability, artisan roasting and brewing techniques, fair-pricing (reaching right to the farm labourers level) and the enjoyment of a cup of specialty coffee at any price have all become hallmarks of this “Third Wave.”



Espresso free-pour art: that way of making intricate designs in the espresso drinks with the foamed milk just with the art of pouring. No toothpicks to draw the designs are allowed.

Transcend Coffee

Transcend Coffee is a destination coffee spot in Edmonton. Tucked away in South Edmonton among appliance stores and industrial businesses, you won’t find it unless you are looking for it. Yet at any hour of the day that it’s open, there is a steady stream of customers approaching the counter for a bag of freshly roasted beans to take home or to have an expertly drawn cup of coffee from either the high-end espresso machines or the Clover coffee brewer (more on that later.) There’s a vibe at Transcend that is hard to describe, but really it comes down to the fact that this is a clubhouse for people who are really passionate about their coffee.

The owner, Poul (pronounced Paul) Mark, left his law practice to open a café wine bar with a coffee roaster on-site. The wine bar part of it didn’t materialize, so instead he concentrated on the coffee aspect of the business and Transcend opened its doors in July 2006. About his journey from barrister to barista, all Poul has to say is that “a bad day at the roastery is better than a great day at the law office.”

At Transcend, it all starts with the little green bean. Yes, green. Through coffee importers who are committed to the same quality and ethical goals as at Transcend, Poul has been able to access some of the finest Arabica beans, similar to award-winning lots of wine that are sold at exclusive auction to the highest bidders. Buying this way gives the growers a market for their products that they could not get on the commodity market. In return, coffee connoisseurs in Edmonton get to taste the best coffees in the world.



Poul Mark made a great idea called Transcend Coffee a reality in 2006.

The beans are then roasted in small, 15-pound batches, to transform these premium green beans into their glossy brown-black roasted state. Transcend will even custom roast to a client's exact order, allowing coffee fanatics to truly personalize their coffee experience. And that's just what goes on in the back-of-the-house at Transcend.

Poul lured Andrew Legg away from Vancouver (a highly caffeinated city, indeed) to be the chief barista and "Chief of Culture" at Transcend. At the 15-seat coffee bar, Andrew and crew expertly pull syrupy dark espresso extractions from their Synesso and La Marzocco espresso machines for the steady stream of coffee lovers. (They compete regularly at barista competitions.) And when they're not pulling perfect espressos, they're brewing up cups of coffee for customers in the store's Clover coffee machine to order. Clovers are hand-made brewing machines, a sort of semi-automatic single-cup French press that you can program down to the water temperature, brewing time and other matters of coffee-making science. The result is that each cup is brewed individually, precisely and perfectly. There are only about 250 of these \$11,000 Clovers in existence at the moment. The recent purchase of the Clover company by Starbucks might make these even more rare.

In early 2008, Transcend opened its Coffee Lab. Here coffee lovers attend regional coffee tastings (much like wine tastings), coffee-roasting demonstrations, and really get a chance to get into the depth of the coffee world.

Transcend Coffee is located at 9869 - 62 Avenue, Edmonton; phone (780) 430-9198. Check out their website at www.transcendcoffee.com.

Java Jive Coffee Roaster

We have to mention that Edmonton is home to another great local roaster, Java Jive Coffee Company. It has actually been around for decades, fueling the University of Alberta coffee crowd for over 30 years with individually sourced and freshly roasted coffees well before the "Third Wave." The roastery is located at 9929-77 Avenue, Edmonton; phone 432-9148.

Three Bananas

Also in Edmonton, Three Bananas is the coffee shop of choice for the downtown crowd. Three Bananas gets its beans through the well-known premium direct-trade bean and specialty roaster, Chicago-based Intelligensia Coffee (don't worry, they arrive within three days maximum of roasting). Three Bananas is located in Sir Winston Churchill Square, 9918 - 102 Avenue, Edmonton; phone (780) 428-2200, www.threebananas.ca.



The "coffee lab" at Transcend Coffee; the hand-made Clover brewing machine; Clover's clever shipping box graphics; a perfectly pulled, syrupy dark espresso.



Caffè Artigiano

“If you can’t sell a \$15 cup of coffee in downtown Calgary these days, where can you sell it?” our friend and fellow foodie, dee Hobsbawn-Smith cannily commented as we sat in the newly opened Caffè Artigiano in the financial district of downtown Calgary. The fact that Caffè Artigiano, which has six locations in Vancouver, was coming to Calgary had created a buzz even before the location was secured. By the time Caffè Artigiano finally opened its doors on February 14, the Calgary coffee crowd was salivating.

In keeping with its name, this is an Italian-style coffee house and bistro. Caffè Artigiano doesn’t roast on-site, but it sources its beans “through a local artisan roaster” who travels to farms all over the world to meet directly with the farmers, and this establishes direct person-to-person relationship that ensures that the beans Caffè Artigiano purchase are grown sustainably, picked with care and at the optimal time, and in return, that premium prices are paid directly to the farms.

A very nice piece of free-pour art from the barista; and food writer dee Hobsbawn-Smith trying the French-press special coffee at Caffè Artigiano in Calgary.



We decided that for \$15 a cup, we would share, but dee picked up the bill. (Thanks dee!) The coffee is an award-winning coffee lot, the best of the best beans, grown at Hacienda La Esmeralda in Panama. This lot comes from a “vintage year,” the 2007 crop, and bidding at auction for the cream of the crop of this farm’s coffee reached \$130 per pound, unroasted. By the time it reaches Caffè Artigiano, its roasted, retail price is \$135 per half-pound. We declined to order half-pound bag, but it made the \$15 cup we had just ordered seem a bargain.

Most of the service is commissary-style at Caffè Artigiano, but \$15 coffees are delivered to your table in a shiny silver French-press carafe with eight-ounces of “black gold.” It also comes with a small bottle of sparkling mineral water — “to cleanse your palate.”

So the question is...was it good? Yes, of course. La Esmeralda is unlike any other cup of coffee we’ve ever tasted. Immediately, dee swore that the floral, orange blossom notes struck her. I (Jennifer) tasted something more earthy and “meaty.” (I later found out that my senses were not playing tricks on me, and “meatiness” is one of the known flavour characteristics in coffee according to a coffee tasting chart I stumbled upon about a week later.) The flavours transformed as the temperature of the coffee cooled, and we earnestly sipped and discussed the nuanced aromas and tastes as we emptied the cup.

The manager of the Calgary location, Joachin Quian, a trained wine sommelier, joined us as we were sipping, scribbling notes, and taking pictures. As a transplanted Vancouverite, he is still adjusting to the work-hard, play-hard rhythm of Calgary. (Just wait until he experiences his first Stampede Week!) Joachin says that the caffè has been bustling. Indeed, it’s mid-afternoon on a weekday, and there are almost no empty chairs in this 30-seat place – and they’ve been selling, on average, about six cups of the La Esmeralda a day.

Caffè Artigiano is located in the Centrium Building, 332-6th Avenue SW, Calgary; phone (403) 699-9855, www.caffeartigiano.com.

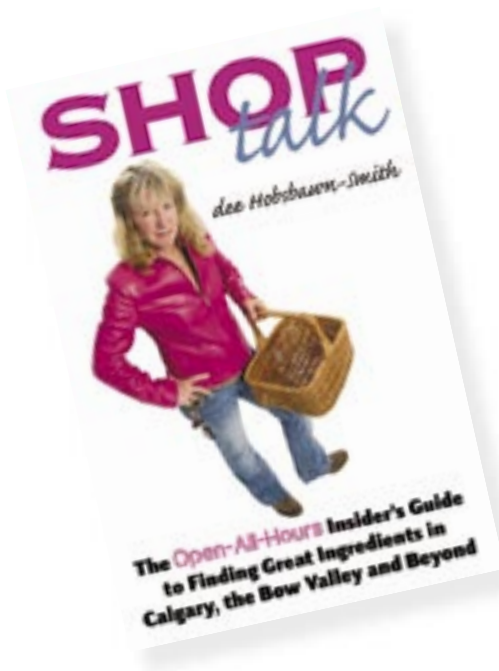
Phil & Sebastian

Calgary’s other “Third Wave” coffee stop is at the Calgary Farmers’ Market (open Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Phil & Sebastian Coffee Company also has a Clover and other must-have espresso machines with a very dedicated coffee-lovin’ following. H6, 4421 Quesnay Wood Drive SW; phone (403) 612-2266; www.philsebastian.com.

Museo Coffee + Espresso

Lastly, we have it on good authority, from the “geeks” at www.coffeegeek.com that Museo Coffee + Espresso is the Saskatoon source for good artisan coffee. It’s located in the Mendel Art Gallery, 950 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon; phone (306) 651-3933. www.museocoffee.com.

A Prairie Cooks Roundup



Shop talk: The Open-All-Hours Insider's Guide to Finding Great Ingredients in Calgary, the Bow Valley and Beyond

by dee Hobsbawn-Smith.
(Last Impression Publishing,
\$23.95)

We first met dee almost a decade ago on one of her annual Foodie Tootles, a day-trip to various Calgary-area producers and farmers in a very bumpy old yellow school bus. Our group of adventure-seeking foodlovers went from place to place, met some of South Calgary and the Foothills' areas most interesting food producers, and tasted some incredible local products that day. Since that day, the food scene has grown by leaps and bounds and now Calgary is one of North America's great food cities. (Mark our words!) And our inveterate foodie friend, dee, has kept step with all the changes, new products, great grocery stores, farmers' markets and specialty purveyors, whether it's on a Foodie Tootles tour, or when she's writing another cookbook, teaching cooking classes and writing her weekly food column, *The Curious Cook*, for the *Calgary Herald*.

Now dee has distilled all this insider information – 25 years worth of cooking and eating in the Calgary area – into her new book, *Shop Talk*, which is scheduled to launch just as we go to press. This will be an indispensable guide for any foodie who forages for ingredients in greater Calgary. *Shop Talk* is a black-and-white inside, softcover, just-the-facts-ma'am guide, that has been meticulously researched and cross-referenced to make it easy to find exactly what you're looking for. Yes, this is an ingredient source guide-book, not a cookbook...that part is up to you.

Dinner with Julie www.dinnerwithjulie.com

Calgary-based cookbook author, CBC Radio contributor, food writer and really good cook, Julie van Rosendaal, is already one-third of her way through an ambitious web-based project to chronicle what she and her family is having for dinner each and every night. That's right, every day Julie posts a recipe, photo and a short piece of writing about what she made that day for a lunch, breakfast, dinner or midnight snack.

We love this website because it's chock-full of practical and delicious recipes, many of which begin as attempts to use up ingredients Julie has lingering around in her fridge or pantry. But there are also some very inspiring food adventures, like the day that Julie successfully made homemade mozzarella cheese.



The ever-energetic and creative
Julie van Rosendaal.

This website is not just worth frequent visits for the recipes, but Julie's sense of humour in her posts reassures us that cooking is not about perfection and culinary triumphs, and sometimes whipping together a "leftover casserole" is just the smartest way to go. Julie writes about the same cooking anxieties and short-comings we all have. (No, we all don't have dinner planned, prepped and in the oven by 5 p.m. everynight.) It's also a frank look into the hard work that being a freelance food writer, cooking instructor, cookbook author and working mother really is. So check out this site, and pass it around, especially to those friends who think that being a food writer is a glamorous job, or who harbour a desire to write a cookbook. Or check it out, just if you want some inspiration for dinner? Or just need some company in the kitchen. www.dinnerwithjulie.com