BON APPÉTIT

MARCH 1992 $2.75 AMERICA'S FOOD AND ENTERTAINING MAGAZINE



Great Indulgences

An extravaganza of flavor and fun

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Introducing the Por
You should call it
about as much as you

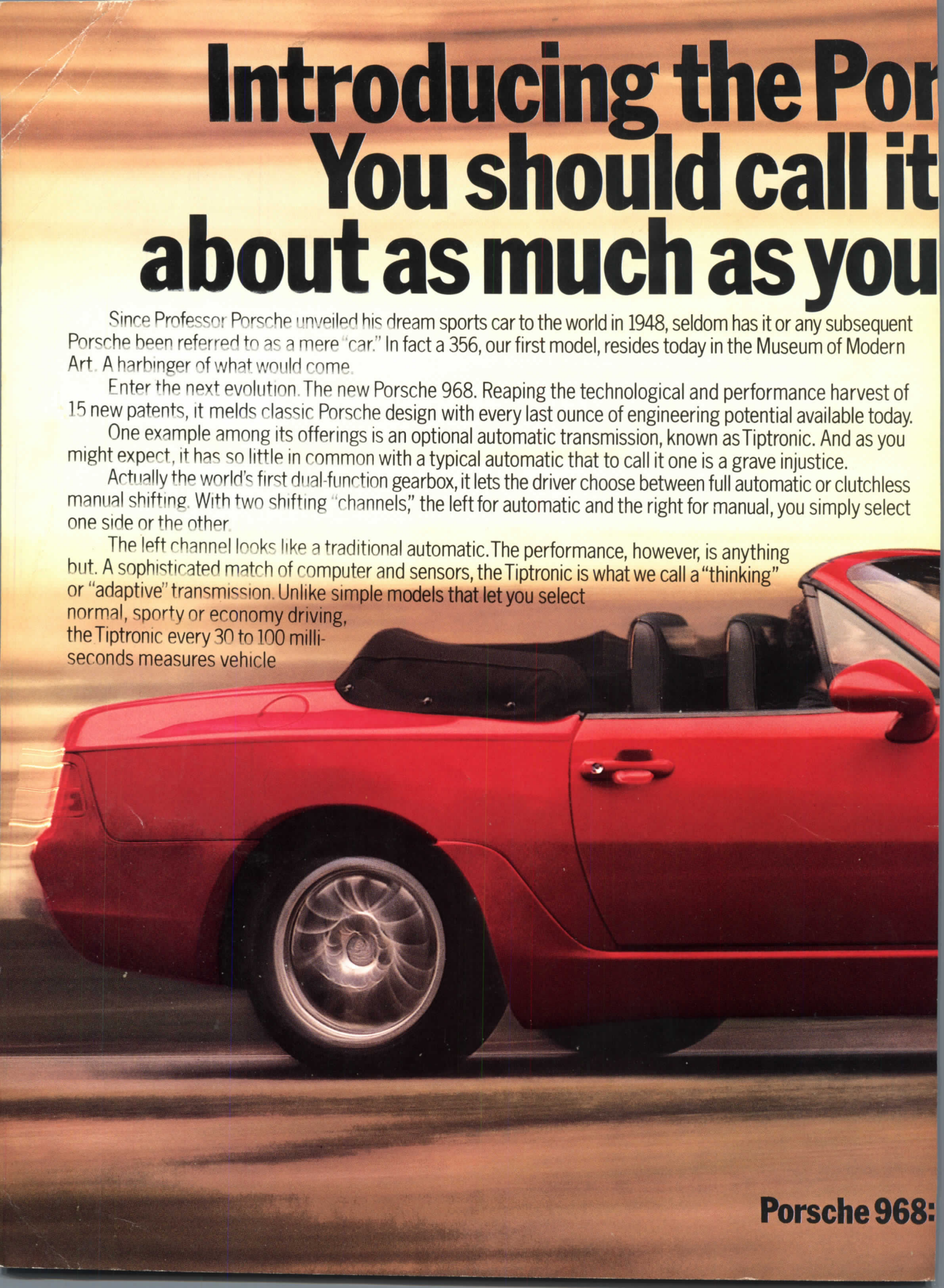
Since Professor Porsche unveiled his dream sports car to the world in 1948, seldom has it or any subsequent Porsche been referred to as a mere "car." In fact a 356, our first model, resides today in the Museum of Modern Art. A harbinger of what would come.

Enter the next evolution. The new Porsche 968. Reaping the technological and performance harvest of 15 new patents, it melds classic Porsche design with every last ounce of engineering potential available today.

One example among its offerings is an optional automatic transmission, known as Tiptronic. And as you might expect, it has so little in common with a typical automatic that to call it one is a grave injustice.

Actually the world's first dual-function gearbox, it lets the driver choose between full automatic or clutchless manual shifting. With two shifting "channels," the left for automatic and the right for manual, you simply select one side or the other.

The left channel looks like a traditional automatic. The performance, however, is anything but. A sophisticated match of computer and sensors, the Tiptronic is what we call a "thinking" or "adaptive" transmission. Unlike simple models that let you select normal, sporty or economy driving, the Tiptronic every 30 to 100 milliseconds measures vehicle



Porsche 968:

sche 968 Tiptronic. an "automatic" should call it a "car."

speed, engine speed, forward and lateral acceleration, even how aggressively you're working the throttle. Then the computer selects from five different shifting programs or "maps," constantly adapting to how you are telling it you want to drive.

Go into a turn hard and let off the accelerator in a typical automatic and the car will upshift, reducing control. The Tiptronic, however, will read the high performance situation and prevent that upshift.

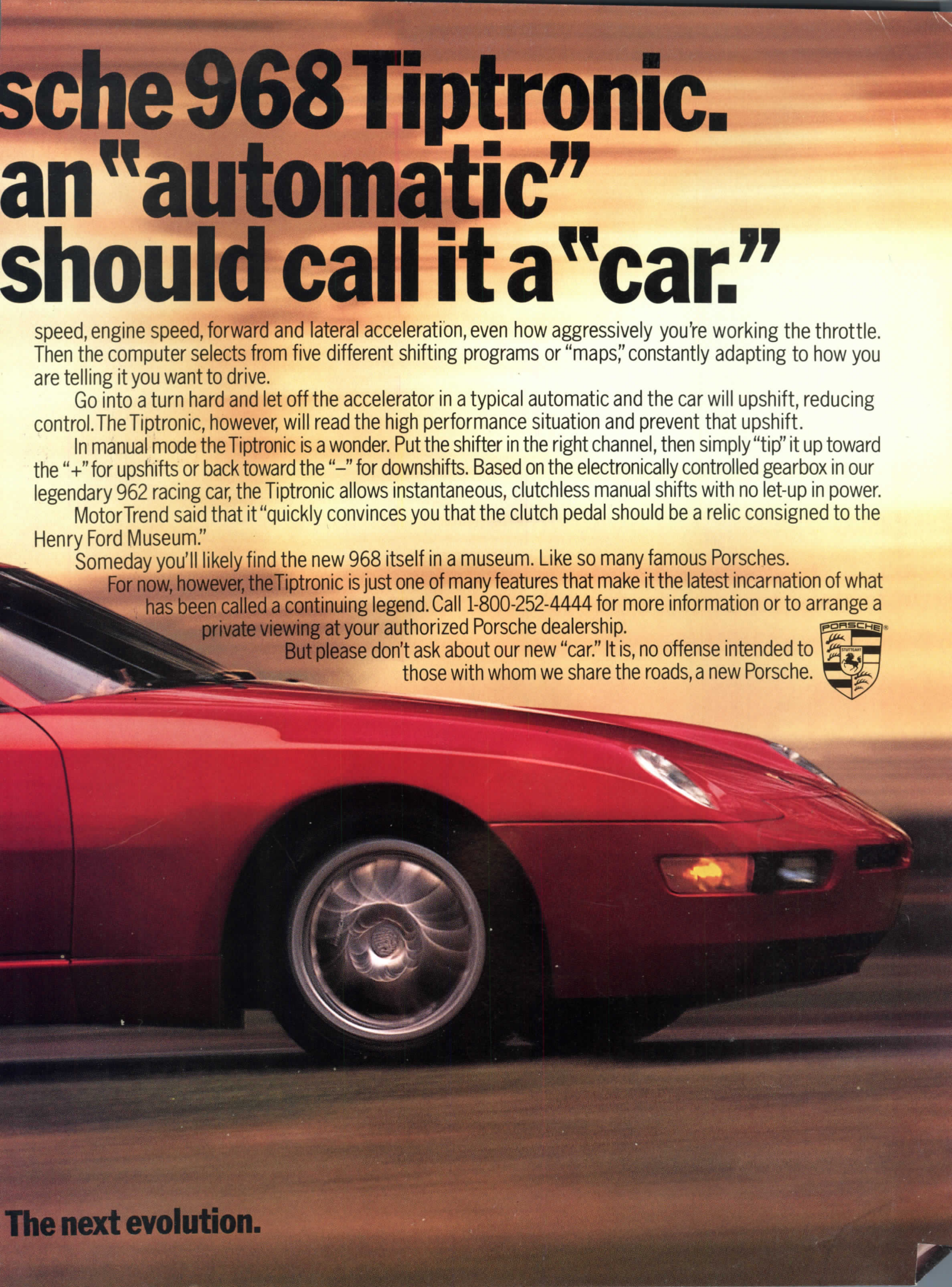
In manual mode the Tiptronic is a wonder. Put the shifter in the right channel, then simply "tip" it up toward the "+" for upshifts or back toward the "–" for downshifts. Based on the electronically controlled gearbox in our legendary 962 racing car, the Tiptronic allows instantaneous, clutchless manual shifts with no let-up in power.

Motor Trend said that it "quickly convinces you that the clutch pedal should be a relic consigned to the Henry Ford Museum."

Someday you'll likely find the new 968 itself in a museum. Like so many famous Porsches.

For now, however, the Tiptronic is just one of many features that make it the latest incarnation of what has been called a continuing legend. Call 1-800-252-4444 for more information or to arrange a private viewing at your authorized Porsche dealership.

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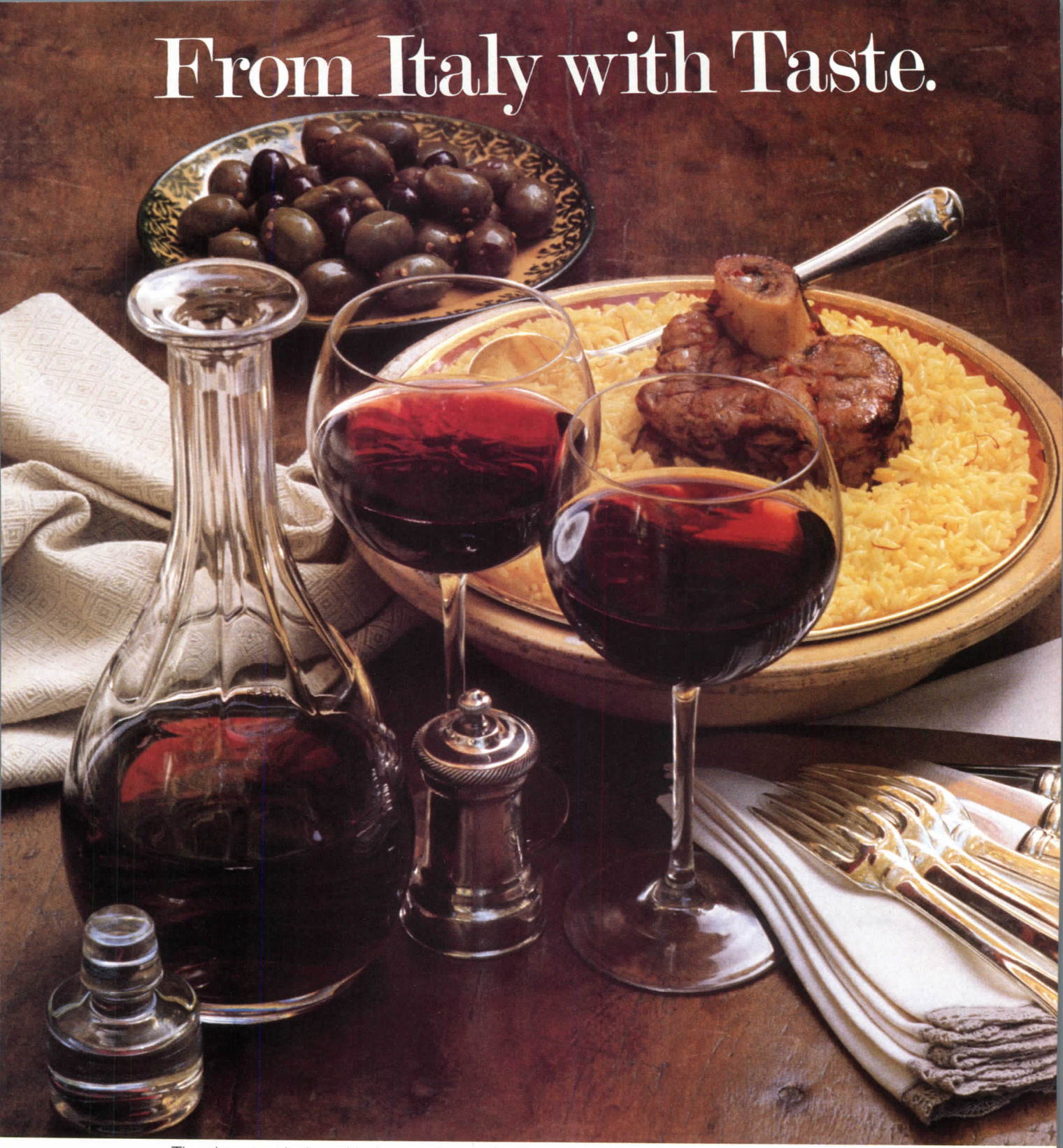
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VINO

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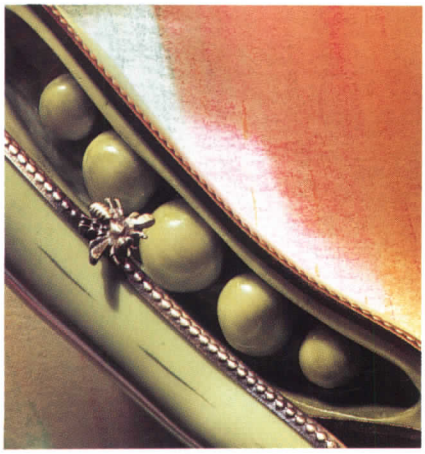
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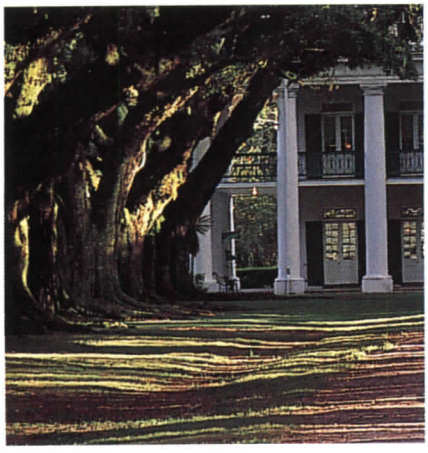
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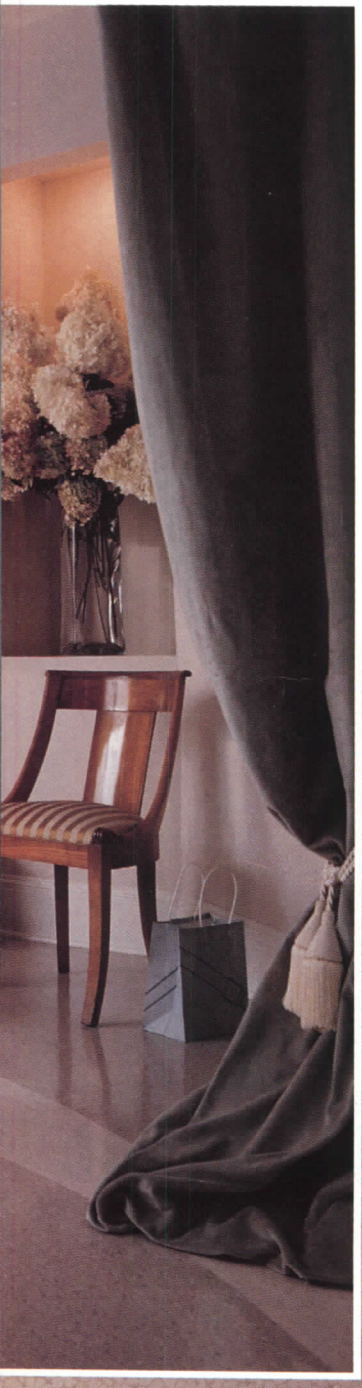
TRAVEL & RESTAURANTS

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ABOUT THE COVER:
This dazzling cheesecake is from "The Big Orange" (page 70). Photography by Lannen/Kelly; food styled by Karen Gillingham.

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EACH MONTH, ON THE COVER OF THIS magazine, we are bold enough to promise our readers something special. And, since no one here is running for political office, we can fairly be expected to deliver on our promises.

For March, we promise an issue full of "Great Indulgences." To illustrate the thought, we present a close-up look at a bright, beautiful orange cheesecake. Now here's the critical question: Is this really a "great indulgence"?

You can decide that for yourself after examining the recipe on page 73; your response will probably depend on how you feel about cheesecake in general and oranges in particular. For some, the answer will definitely be "Yes." For others, a simpler orange preparation might be indulgence enough. (If so, you'll find several nearby.) For still others, oranges might not be the ticket, or you might just like them au naturel. For myself, I like the fresh, pulpy juice of the orange, well chilled, and with just a soupçon of good vodka . . .



ILLUSTRATION BY HILARY MOSBERG

The point is that the word "indulgence" means many things to many people. Our *Bon Appétit* prejudices aside, it does not have to mean food. In the sixteenth century, for example, the word had mostly a religious connotation, and a negative one at that—so negative that a squabble over religious indulgences led to the Protestant Reformation, among other things. (But it should be noted that Martin Luther's distaste for the religious sort of indulgence did not prevent him from enjoying his *Kalbfleisch mit Spätzle*. One man's meat is another man's poison, to paraphrase the old Roman philosopher, and one man's heresy is another man's lunch.)

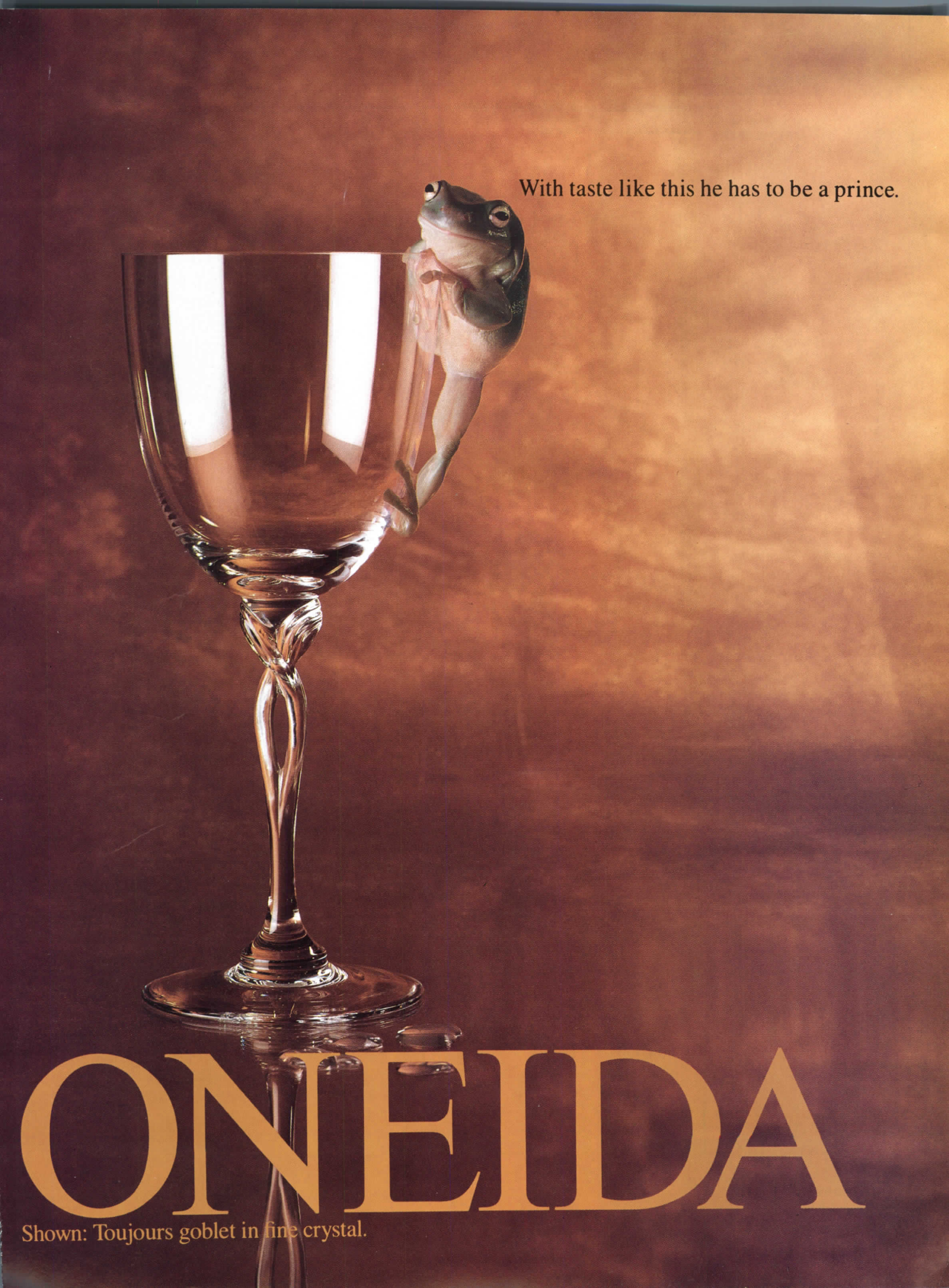
Luckily, however, our field is not history and religion, but food and entertaining, and the indulgences we offer are not likely to lead to revolt or excommunication, or anything more serious than a debate over which one to try first.

Your preferred indulgence may be a special-occasion luxury, such as caviar (page 24), a super-premium Cognac (page 34), or a stay at England's greatest manor house (page 102). It may be something more simple and homey, such as our easy Italian menus on page 48, a perfect omelet for two (page 108) or a look at the Old South comforts of Louisiana's by-the-bayou inns (page 90). You may want to dress up and throw an Academy Awards party like the one on page 78, or you may want to go casual and have a warming soup served in one of the beautiful tureens shown on page 88.

Whatever your choice, remember that indulgence does not mean overindulgence. There can never be too much of a good thing, but there can be too much at one sitting. Martin Luther frowned on gluttony, too.

But I'll bet he would have *loved* our orange cheesecake. So go ahead: Indulge yourself!

—William J. Garry


With taste like this he has to be a prince.
ONEIDA
Shown: Toujours goblet in fine crystal.

R.S.V.P.

FAVORITE RESTAURANT RECIPES

CAFE TU TU TANGO IN COCONUT Grove, Florida, makes a simple and delicious frittata with spicy sausage, potatoes and onions. It's just the type of dish I'd make for Sunday brunch.

Stephanie Hill
Tulsa, Oklahoma

CHORIZO, ONION AND POTATO FRITTATA

8 SERVINGS

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
- 2 pounds russet potatoes, peeled, cut into ¼-inch-thick slices
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 8 ounces bulk chorizo sausage
- 12 eggs

Heat 1 cup oil in heavy large skillet over high heat. Add potatoes in batches and cook until tender and golden brown, about 8 minutes per batch. Transfer to paper towels using slotted spoon.

Pour off all but 1 tablespoon oil from skillet. Add onions and sauté over medium-low heat until translucent, about 10 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Add sausage and sauté until cooked through, crumbling with back of spoon, about 5 minutes. Transfer sausage mixture to large bowl using slotted spoon. Add potatoes to sausage mixture and toss together. *(Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Cover and let stand at room temperature.)*

Preheat broiler. Beat eggs in medium bowl to blend. Pour over potato mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in 12-inch nonstick broilerproof skillet over high heat. Add egg-potato mixture. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook until eggs are almost set, running large rubber spatula around sides to keep frittata from sticking, about 10 minutes. Broil frittata until top is just set, about 4 minutes. Slide frittata out onto plate. Cut into wedges and serve.

Bon Appétit welcomes comments and will make an effort to obtain previously unpublished restaurant recipes on request. Please be sure to include the complete address of the restaurant in your letter. The material becomes our property and will not be returned. Because of the volume of mail received, we are unable to answer all inquiries; letters of general interest will be printed in this column as space allows. Address mail to R.S.V.P., *Bon Appétit, 5900 Wilshire Boulevard*, Los Angeles, CA 90036.

WHEN MY HUSBAND AND I WERE in Dana Point, California, we asked the locals which restaurant was the best. The answer was always the same: Ristorante Ferrantelli. They were right—everything from the service to dessert was exceptional. We would love to have the recipe for the spinach salad with prosciutto dressing.

Sandy Mackman
Parkland, Florida

SPINACH SALAD WITH PROSCIUTTO DRESSING

4 SERVINGS

- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped prosciutto (about 1½ ounces)
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 6 tablespoons dry white wine
- 6 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 10-ounce bag fresh spinach, stemmed
- 2½ cups sliced mushrooms
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (about 2 ounces)

Heat oil in heavy small skillet over medium heat. Add prosciutto and garlic and sauté 3 minutes. Add wine, lemon juice and sugar and simmer 5 minutes. Transfer to bowl and cool completely. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Combine spinach, mushrooms, walnuts and cheese in large bowl. Toss with enough dressing to season to taste.

ONE OF THE FINEST DESSERTS I'VE ever tasted is the cranberry-apple crisp at Joe's Bar & Grill here in Manhattan. It was served with a generous topping of whipped cream. Could you ask them to share the recipe?

Anne Fasler
New York, New York

CRANBERRY-APPLE CRISP

6 SERVINGS

TOPPING

- ½ cup all purpose flour
- ⅓ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 7 tablespoons chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- ⅓ cup coarsely chopped walnuts

FRUIT

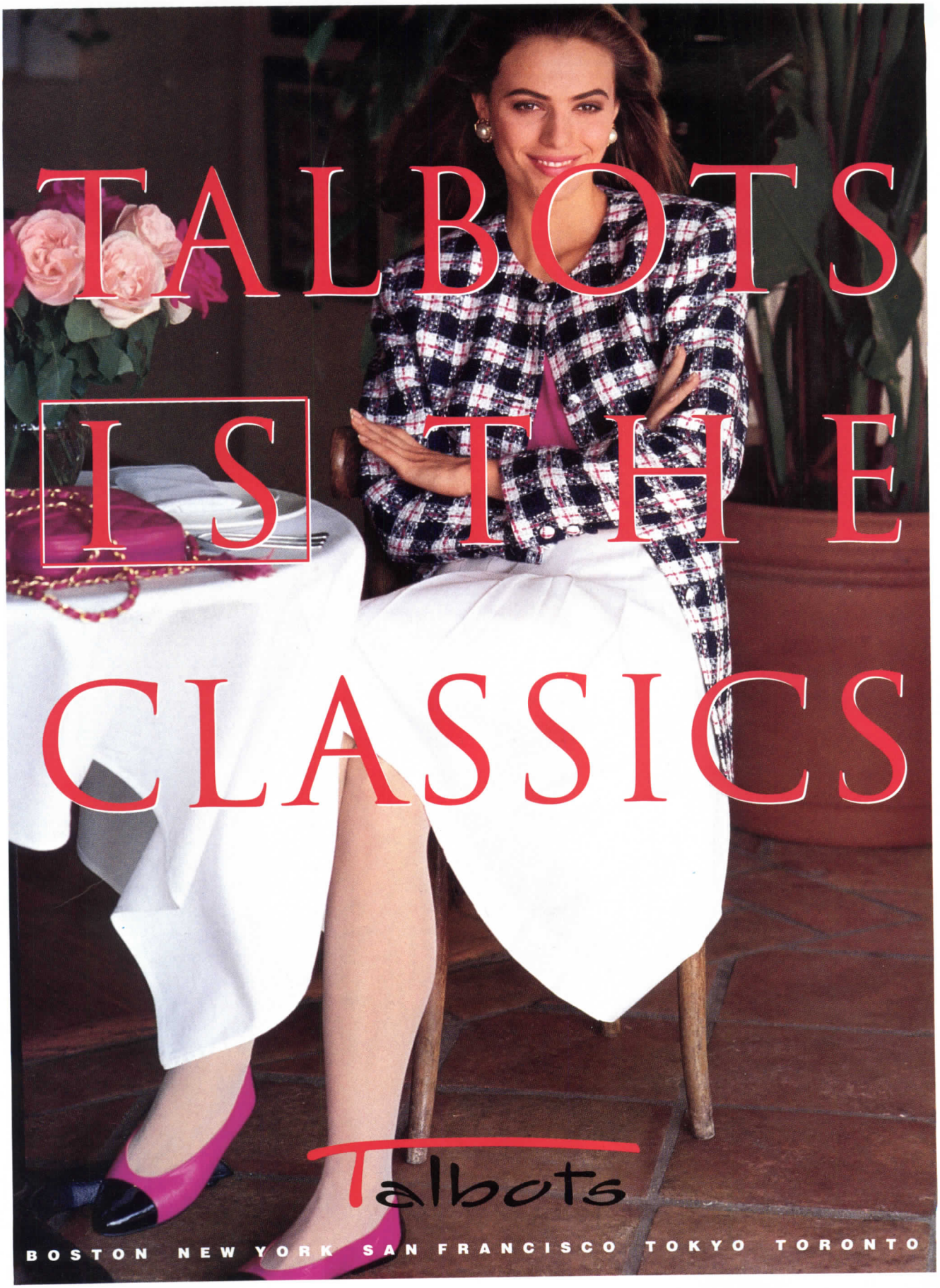
- 1½ cups orange juice
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons grated orange peel
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- 4 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, cut into ¼-inch-thick slices

Sweetened whipped cream

FOR TOPPING: Mix first 5 ingredients in processor. Add butter and cut in using on/off turns until mixture begins to form clumps. Transfer to bowl. Mix in nuts. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)*

FOR FRUIT: Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter 8x2-inch square baking dish. Combine first 4 ingredients and 1½ teaspoons cinnamon in heavy medium saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Add cranberries and cook until beginning to pop, about 5

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 18}



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MK

minutes. Drain berries, reserving cooking syrup. Boil cooking syrup until reduced to 1 cup, stirring occasionally, about 8 minutes. Set aside. Combine cranberries, apple slices and remaining 1 teaspoon cinnamon in large bowl. Toss to combine. Transfer half of fruit to prepared dish. Crumble half of topping over. Cover with remaining fruit. Crumble remaining topping over. Bake until apples are tender and topping browns, about 45 minutes. Cool slightly.

Rewarm cooking syrup. Scoop crisp into bowls. Top with dollops of whipped cream. Drizzle syrup over and serve.

EVERY OTHER YEAR I VISIT MY SISTER who lives in Paris. One of our favorite places is a bistro called Le Petit Marguery; the owners are charming and the food is superb. I am hoping *Bon Appétit* can persuade them to share their recipe for sea bass with lentils.

Janice Pearl
Savannah, Georgia

Sea Bass with Lentils and Olive Oil

4 SERVINGS

1⅓ cups lentils

3 tablespoons butter
1 onion, chopped
1 leek (white part only), sliced
1 celery stalk, sliced
1 garlic clove, pressed
5 cups chicken stock or canned broth
1 bouquet garni (1 bay leaf, 1 thyme sprig, 3 parsley stems)

4 8-ounce sea bass fillets with skin (1½ to 2 inches thick)
¼ cup peanut oil

¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup dry white wine

Place lentils in large saucepan. Add enough cold water to cover by 3 inches. Let stand 6 hours. Drain.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, leek, celery and garlic and sauté 10 minutes. Add chicken stock and bouquet garni and bring to boil. Add lentils, reduce heat and simmer mixture until tender, stirring occasionally, about 50 minutes. Remove bouquet garni. Stir in remaining 1 tablespoon butter. Set lentils aside.

Season sea bass fillets to taste with salt and pepper. Heat peanut oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Place fillets skin side down in skillet. Cook until opaque, turning once, about 6 minutes per side.

Meanwhile, combine olive oil and wine in heavy small saucepan. Cook over low heat just until heated through.

Spoon lentils onto plates. Top with fillets. Pour olive oil mixture over.

THERE IS A TERRIFIC RESTAURANT IN Greenwood, Indiana, called Pipers American Café. They make a chicken dish with sautéed pears in cream sauce that melts in your mouth. I'm sure your readers will like this hearty dish as much as I did.

Shelley King
Indianapolis, Indiana

New England Chicken

8 SERVINGS

4 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into ¾-inch-wide strips
All purpose flour (for dredging)
2 pears, peeled, cored, cut into ⅛-inch-thick slices
1 bunch green onions, coarsely chopped
¾ cup apple brandy or brandy
½ cup apple cider
1 cup whipping cream

Freshly cooked rice
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Heat 2 tablespoons vegetable oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Dredge chicken in flour; shake off excess. Add to skillet in batches and sauté until cooked through, about 4 minutes. Transfer chicken to plate. Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in same skillet. Add pears and green onions to skillet and sauté 8 minutes. Add brandy and apple cider and boil until liquid is reduced to glaze, about 8 minutes. Add whipping cream and simmer until thickened to sauce consistency, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add chicken and stir to heat through.

Spoon rice onto plates. Top with chicken and sauce. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve.

RECENTLY, FIVE COUPLES MET IN San Francisco to attend a surprise fiftieth birthday party. The dinner was held at Fleur de Lys, a lovely and elegant restaurant. Although our entire meal was excellent, I was particularly impressed by the Burgundy sorbet I had for dessert. How does chef-owner Hubert Keller prepare it?

Jean A. Fiorito
Spring, Texas

Burgundy Cinnamon Sorbet

MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS

2¼ cups red Burgundy wine
1¼ cups water
⅔ cup sugar
4 3-inch-long cinnamon sticks

Combine all ingredients in heavy medium saucepan. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Increase heat and bring to boil. Remove from heat. Cover and let steep 45 minutes. Strain mixture through sieve into bowl. Cover and refrigerate until cold.

Transfer sorbet mixture to ice cream maker and process according to manufacturer's instructions. Freeze sorbet in covered container until firm, about 30 minutes. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead; keep frozen.)*

—Compiled by Sarah Tenaglia

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†*All-new fully electronic automatic transmission.* **Source: Car and Driver 11/91 versus 9/91. For more*

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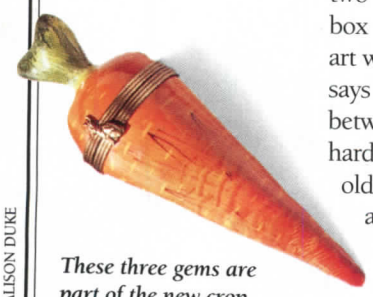
Collectibles:

Treasures from Limoges

SMALL PORCELAIN BOXES IN SUCH FANCIFUL SHAPES AS hearts, traveling trunks, even ladies' shoes, have been prized by collectors in Europe since the seventeenth century. Once called *tabatières,* or snuff containers, they were originally made for nobility. In those days, inhaling snuff was considered an elegant habit, and the container itself was seen as a symbol of fashion and wealth. It is said that certain noblemen possessed a different box for each day of the year.







These three gems are part of the new crop imported by Rochard.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALISON DUKE

The earliest French porcelain boxes were produced in the Parisian suburb of St. Cloud around 1730. But by the nineteenth century, craftsmen in the town of Limoges, in the southwestern region of Limousin, had become the leading designers of these "fantasy" boxes. "It is a very specific art," says Chantal Rouhier, owner of Limoges Imports. "Only those pieces created from local clay mixtures can be called Limoges."

Fashioned of hard-paste porcelain, the containers are shaped in plaster molds and then fired in a kiln. Each creation is hand painted, with the colors "fixed" to the porcelain by successive firings. The boxes have brass hinges and fasteners in a variety of shapes.

The Limoges artisans sign every piece they make, and no two containers are alike. "Each box is considered a small work of art with a great investment value," says Rouhier. Current boxes cost between $80 and $300; you can hardly put a price tag on many older ones—they're in museums all over the world.

Despite their popularity in Europe, the keepsakes were not introduced to the United States until the early 1950s. The pioneer was Charles Martine. A native of France, Martine made frequent trips to Limoges, where he supervised the sculpting, painting and designing of the pieces. In time other U.S. distributors, such as Rochard and Limoges Imports, added their own distinctive variations. For example, the signature designs from Limoges Imports often feature either a tiny lady bug or a bee painted on each piece.

One American admirer of Limoges boxes is Raylene Meyer, wife of Bruce A. Meyer, president of Geary's, a specialty store in Beverly Hills. "Everyone has a favorite gift that they give their friends. Mine are these little porcelain boxes." Of course, Raylene is not opposed to *receiving* them either. "A friend surprised me with a chocolate soufflé box because I'm a chocoholic."

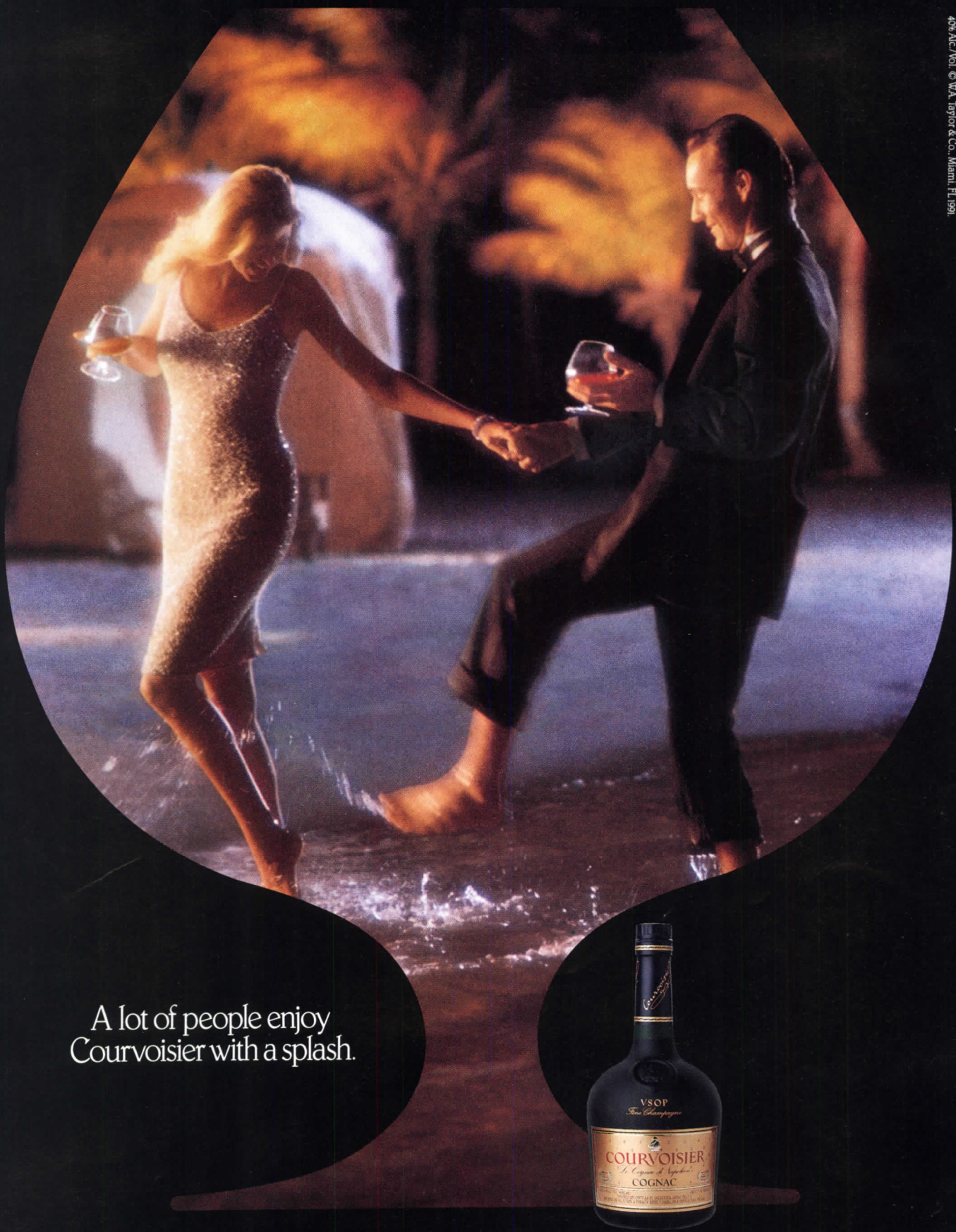
The addition of Limoges fruits and vegetables reflects a current trend by designers. "Long ago, you wouldn't have found so many foods created in porcelain," comments Rouhier. "Now you'll find all manner of fantastic motifs."

—By Gaylen Ducker Grody



Each box features distinctive variations; this pod even has its own peas.

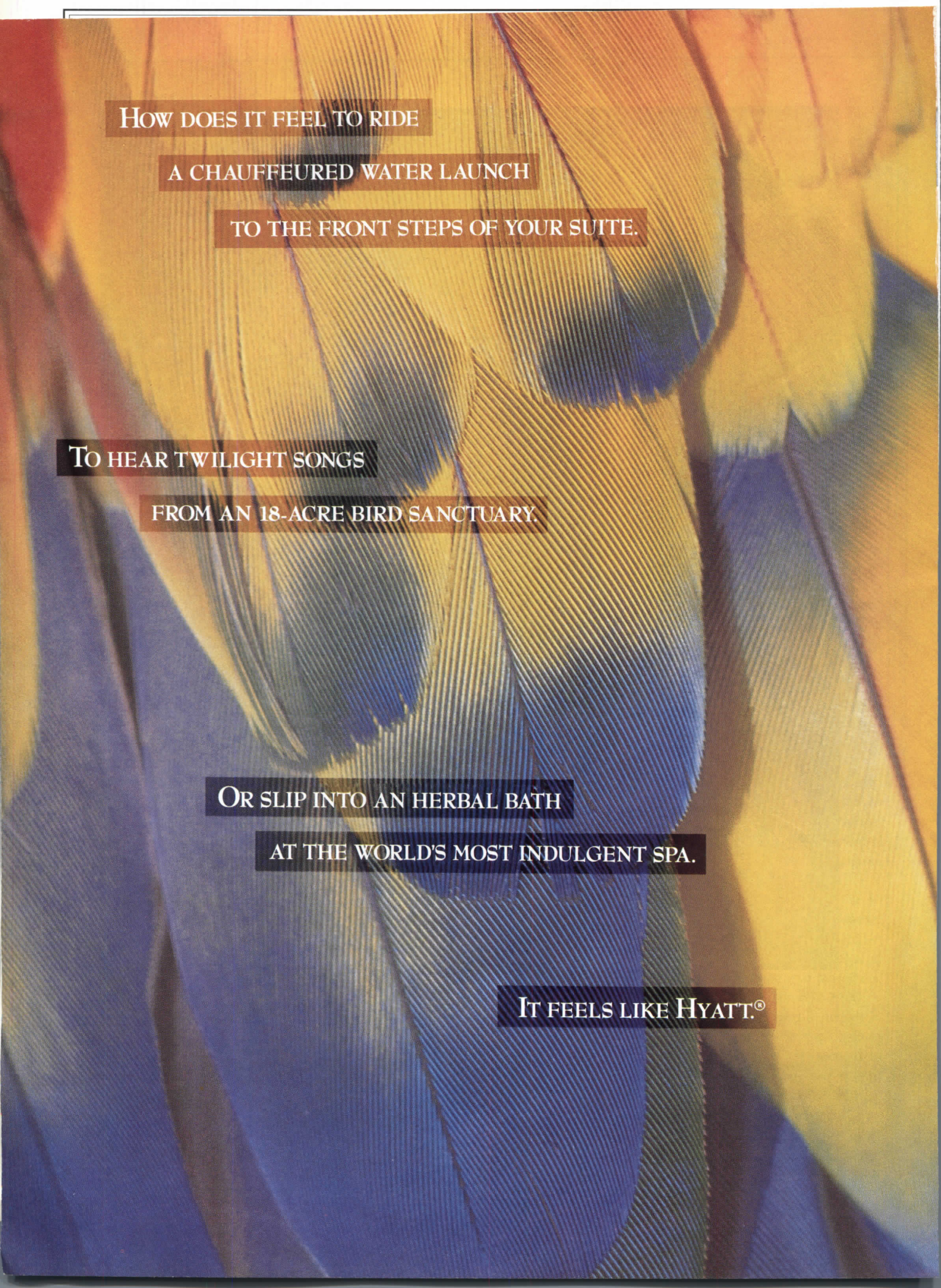
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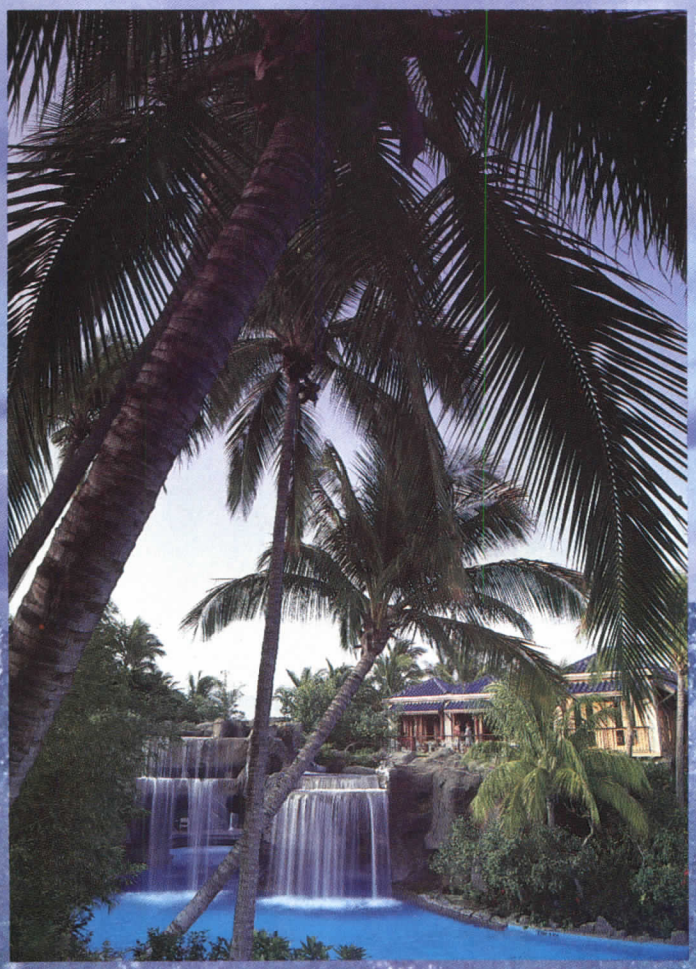
Le Cognac de Napoleon

40% Alc./Vol. © W.A. Taylor & Co., Miami, FL 1991.


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Crumbs on Our Pillows

BY JINX AND JEFFERSON MORGAN

Ingenuity is required even in the practice of vice. HINDU PROVERB

The Puritans, we've always thought, have a lot to answer for. Just imagine, for instance, how they would have reacted to the idea of breakfasting in bed. Such self-indulgence would have been sternly denounced by our straitlaced ancestors.

Even today there are those who consider a meal consumed in a reclining position to be unsettling, and possibly a sign of moral and physical decay. They are usually the same fanatics who resolutely forgo the pleasures of sipping hot chocolate under the quilt on a chilly morning to leap out of bed and set off on a four-mile jog. Some people have no gift for sloth.

Yet breakfasting in bed has long been an accepted practice in Europe. In fact, Winston Churchill did much of the strategic planning for World War II propped up in bed with a brandy close at hand. Although he seldom rose before noon, he managed to help change the course of history from that cozy command post.

Jeff, a man of similar disposition, resents any interruption that calls him from the covers before, as he puts it, his "juices are set." He is, one would think, the ideal candidate for breakfast in bed. Yet he finds bed trays capricious inventions and, when combined with hot coffee, as risky as speculating in junk bonds.

For people with steadier nerves, the perfect antidote to the feeling that they've been slogging through the trenches too long is a selection of plump pillows, the Sunday paper and a delicious breakfast in bed. It can be restorative even if you have to hop out of the covers to prepare it. (In some cities you can avoid the preparation step by arranging for a caterer to arrive at your door with Champagne, a bouquet of roses, the newspaper and a completely cooked breakfast. Now *that's* what we call living.)

No matter what else is on the menu, good coffee is a must. The method you choose for brewing your perfect cup is strictly between you and your conscience. There are percolator people, those devoted to drips, some who swear by vacuum pots and others who contend that the best cup of coffee they ever tasted was boiled with a bunch of eggshells over a campfire. It's a debate we'd walk a mile to avoid.

While the coffee is brewing (or perking, dripping or boiling), the rest of the menu must be considered. It's our experience that the sound of a blender whipping up a gin fizz can brighten any morning. Some people regard the use of a blender to make a fizz as sacrilegious. Not us, in fact we count the



ILLUSTRATION BY GAYLE KABAKER

invention of the blender as a high point of the Industrial Revolution.

Once the fizz is attended to, our thoughts turn to the main course. Although breakfast in bed is always a special occasion, breakfast today can't compare to the gargantuan feasts that once were commonplace. Take, for instance, the meal enjoyed by the president of a railroad in the 1880s, served to him in his private car and documented soon after in a letter to his wife.

> There was a nice pair of trout Cook had caught before coming on board this morning, with three rashers of bacon alongside. A couple of good mutton chops, the kind with the kidneys, to follow, with fried potatoes and fried tomatoes, and a batch of hot biscuits with honey, and some muffins with raisins in I didn't care much for, and a platter of fried eggs with ham on the side. Finished off with a stack of griddle cakes and sausage (not as good as your sausages, Annie) with maple syrup. Cook sent out to see if I wanted apple pie. I was near to full, but I had a piece, not to hurt his feelings, with cheese and lemon sauce. Very good.

Today, this is not the sort of meal one would choose to undertake in bed (or anywhere else for that matter). Although our idea of breakfast would be considered but a nibble by the railroad magnate, we think it is delicious and appropriately self-indulgent for the occasion.

Jeff's Gin Fizz

2 SERVINGS

- 2 cups ice cubes
- ½ cup gin
- ½ cup whipping cream
- ¼ cup sweet and sour mix
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon orange flower water*
- Ground nutmeg

Blend first 6 ingredients in blender until smooth. Pour into glasses. Sprinkle with nutmeg.

**A flavoring extract available at liquor stores and in the liquor section of some supermarkets.*

Sage and Maple Sausages

MAKES 4

- 2 bacon slices, chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ¾ teaspoon dried thyme, crumbled
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh sage or 1 teaspoon dried, crumbled
- ½ teaspoon curry powder
- ½ pound bulk pork sausage
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Sauté bacon in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat until almost crisp, about 3 minutes. Add onion and thyme and sauté until onion is tender, about 5 minutes. Mix in maple syrup, sage and curry powder. Place sausage in bowl. Add onion mixture and mix together. Form sausage mixture into four 3-inch round patties. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.)*

Heat oil in heavy medium skillet over medium heat. Add sausage patties and fry until cooked through, about 5 minutes per side.

Apple French Toast

2 SERVINGS

FRENCH TOAST

- 2 large eggs
- ⅓ cup half and half
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 3 ¾-inch-thick egg bread slices

APPLES

- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 apples, peeled, cored, cut into ½-inch-thick wedges
- ¼ cup dark rum

FOR FRENCH TOAST: Whisk first 5 ingredients in medium bowl to blend. Arrange bread slices in 9-inch square baking dish. Pour egg mixture over, turning to coat. Let stand 20 minutes.

MEANWHILE, PREPARE APPLES: Melt 4 tablespoons butter in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Mix in sugar. Add apples and cook until syrup turns deep golden brown, stirring frequently, about 15 minutes. Add rum and bring to boil, scraping up any browned bits. Set aside.

Melt remaining 2 tablespoons butter in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add bread slices and cook until deep golden brown, turning once, about 12 minutes.

Cut bread slices diagonally in half and divide between plates. Bring apple mixture to simmer. Spoon over French toast and serve.

No matter what else is on the menu, good coffee is a must.

Wild Rice of Minnesota

TEXT BY SCOTT SMITH
RECIPES BY JEANNE THIEL KELLEY

IT'S NOT A RICE, NOR IS IT STILL TRULY WILD. WHAT THE Chippewas of northern Minnesota first called *manomin,* or "the good berry," is actually the seed of a tall, slender aquatic grass *(Zizania aquatica)* that grows in lakes and streams of the Upper Great Lakes region. A shoreline dweller, the plant requires precise conditions—silty sediment and just the right water type and levels—to survive.

By about A.D. 800, Native Americans had established seasonal camps near the dense, marshy stands of what we now call wild rice. Starting in late August and continuing through September, they would set out each day in birchbark canoes to gather by hand enough rice to last the harsh winters.

Today, the traditional wild-rice harvest remains largely unchanged. One person uses a long pole to push the canoe through the rice beds while the other wields two sticks, called "knockers." The first is used to pull the grass stalks over the canoe, the other to knock the kernels into the boat.

Once ashore, the "green" rice is dried, parched in kettles over a fire and finally winnowed to remove the hulls. The labor-intensive process is in large part the reason that wild rice has always been one of the most expensive grains.

The Native Americans' near monopoly on wild rice ended in the late 1960s, when the University of Minnesota bred a strain of the grass that could grow in carefully controlled paddies. For the first time the state's farmers could raise "wild" rice and harvest it with modern, mechanized methods.

The resulting increase in production was great for consumers: Prices plunged, and the year-to-year supply—always in doubt until the harvest was in—was finally assured. But the effect was devastating to the Chippewas.

The new "paddy" rice, the Chippewas will tell you, is no match for the real thing. "Our rice has a much different flavor," says Margaret Smith, a member of the Chippewa tribe and cofounder of the Ikwe Marketing Collective, an organization designed to help preserve the historic industry. "Parching it over a fire gives it a nuttier, smokier taste. It cooks up faster, too"—in 15 to 20 minutes versus 30 to 45 minutes for paddy rice.

The two also look different: Paddy rice is almost a uniform brown-black in color; hand-harvested rice ranges from blond to brown to black. When cooked, both kinds of kernels butterfly open to reveal a cream-colored interior. And both are rich in carbohydrates, low in fat, and loaded with protein.

Whether you use the paddy-grown variety or hand-harvested wild rice, you'll find that it lends a distinctive, complex flavor to all kinds of dishes, from salads to soups to savory main courses.

(Find hand-harvested wild rice in specialty shops and natural foods stores. Or, for a list of Native American mail-order sources, contact Manitok Wild Rice, Box 97, Callaway, MN 56521; 800-726-1863.)

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 32}



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The new Prelude Si. Voted one of Car and Driver's Ten Best Cars.

How many writers does it take to change your car?

Every year, the writing staff at *Car and Driver* magazine performs the enviable task of selecting the top ten new automobiles. And every year, for the last decade, it has chosen a Honda. Two or three on some occasions.

The new Prelude Si has made this year's Ten Best no exception. Then again, it's truly an exceptional car. The sleek new body is wider and lower to the ground for better roadholding. Bumpers have a flexible face that withstands bumps. While large triangular taillights are cleanly shaped and easy to see.

There are no sharp edges on the inside. Only smooth surfaces that flow from one point to the next. A blacked-out instrument panel wraps neatly around the dash into plush door panels. Sculpted seats curve around you.

Besides the comforts of air conditioning and a driver's side airbag, you'll find plenty of power. As in power windows. Power door locks. And a power sunroof that glides open or tilts up to let in fresh air. There is even a high-power stereo system with six speakers. It has a power antenna, naturally.

You will notice more power than ever before in front of the cabin. A new 2.3 liter, fuel-injected engine generates 160 horsepower, with a greater range of torque.

Of course, you can't judge an engine by horsepower alone. An engine has to run smoothly and efficiently. Which is why there are unique built-in balance shafts to quiet vibration, and a sophisticated knock-sensing system that controls ignition timing automatically at all speeds.

As long as you have the horsepower, you might as well put it to good use. A refined five-speed transmission, new double-wishbone suspension and anti-lock braking system help you do exactly that. Just ask the *Car and Driver* guys.

The new Honda Prelude Si is "one of the best driving experiences available." But don't just take our word for it. They're the ones who wrote it. HONDA

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Wild Rice and Chicken Salad with Tarragon

2 TO 4 SERVINGS

- 1 14½-ounce can chicken broth
- ½ cup wild rice (about 3 ounces)

- 2 cups diced cooked chicken (about 9 ounces)
- 1 large celery stalk, diced
- ½ large crisp red apple, diced
- 1 green onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh tarragon or 2 teaspoons dried, crumbled
- 2½ tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ tablespoons tarragon vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Pinch of sugar

Combine broth and wild rice in small saucepan. Bring to boil. Cover and simmer over medium-low heat until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 50 minutes. Transfer to medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate until well chilled.

Add chicken, celery, apple, green onion and tarragon to wild rice. Whisk remaining ingredients to blend in small bowl. Pour over wild rice mixture and toss well. Season with salt and pepper.

Brown and Wild Rice with Sausage and Fennel

2 MAIN-COURSE OR 6 SIDE-DISH SERVINGS

- 2 cups water
- ½ cup wild rice

- 8 ounces sweet Italian sausage, casings removed

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 12-ounce fennel bulb, trimmed, diced
- 1 large red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ teaspoon chopped fennel seeds
- 2 large leeks (white and pale green parts only), chopped
- 3 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1⅓ cups long-grain brown rice
- 2 14½-ounce cans low-salt chicken broth

Simmer water and wild rice in small saucepan 20 minutes. Drain.

Heat heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Fry sausage until cooked through, breaking up sausage with fork, about 4 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer sausage to large bowl.

Add 2 tablespoons oil to same saucepan. Mix in fennel, bell pepper and fennel seeds and sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Add to sausage. Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in same saucepan. Add leeks and garlic and sauté until tender and golden, about 8 minutes. Add brown rice and stir 1 minute. Mix in broth and wild rice. Season with pepper. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 40 minutes. Add hot rice to sausage mixture and toss well. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.)* Serve hot.

Mixed Grain and Wild Rice Cereal

Prepare a batch of this breakfast dish and store it in the refrigerator. Then simply reheat single servings in the microwave.

8 SERVINGS

- 8 cups water
- ½ cup wild rice

- ½ cup pearl barley
- ½ cup steel-cut oats (Irish oatmeal)
- ½ cup bulgur wheat
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup chopped pitted dates
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Simmer 2 cups water and wild rice in small saucepan 20 minutes. Drain.

Preheat oven to 375° F. Butter 2½-quart ovenproof dish. In prepared dish, mix wild rice with remaining 6 cups water. Stir in all remaining ingredients. Cover loosely with foil and bake until grains are tender, water is absorbed and cereal is creamy, stirring occasionally, about 1½ hours.

Wild Rice and Mushroom Soup

4 SERVINGS

- 1 14½-ounce can chicken broth
- ½ cup wild rice

- 1 ounce dried shiitake mushrooms
- 1½ cups hot water

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon dried rosemary, crumbled
- ¼ teaspoon dried thyme, crumbled
- 1 8-ounce russet potato, peeled, diced
- 2 cups beef stock or canned beef broth

- ¾ cup (about) milk
- 2 tablespoons Madeira

Combine chicken broth and rice in small saucepan. Cover and simmer over medium-low heat until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 50 minutes.

Meanwhile, soak mushrooms in 1½ cups hot water until soft, about 20 minutes. Drain mushrooms, reserving soaking liquid. Cut off mushroom stems and discard. Thinly slice mushrooms.

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and sauté until tender and golden brown, about 5 minutes. Transfer to small bowl. Melt remaining 1 tablespoon butter in same pan. Add onion, garlic, rosemary and thyme and sauté until onion is very tender, about 10 minutes. Mix in potato, beef stock and reserved mushroom soaking liquid. Cover and simmer until potato is very tender, about 15 minutes.

Transfer soup to blender in batches and puree until smooth. Return to saucepan. Stir in wild rice, mushrooms, ¾ cup milk and Madeira. Cover and simmer 15 minutes to blend flavors. Season with salt and pepper. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Return soup to simmer.)* Thin with additional milk if desired.

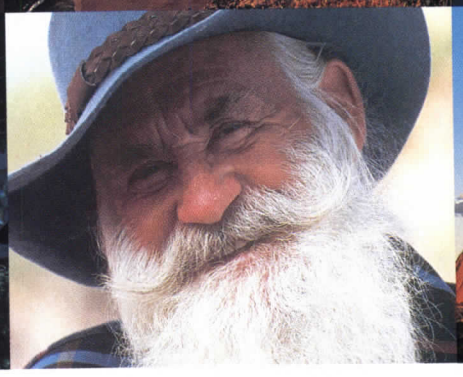
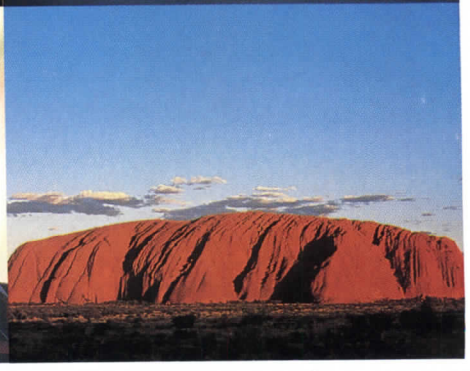




Fair Dinkum* Australia.





***fair dinkum/** —*Colloq.* —*adj.* 1: true, genuine, dinkum ‹are you fair dinkum?› —*interj.* 2: assertion of truth or genuineness ‹it's true, mate, fair dinkum› 3: Come have a fair dinkum great time in Australia.

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Cognac: Beyond VSOP

BY ANTHONY DIAS BLUE

THERE IS COGNAC, AND THERE IS COGNAC. I CAME upon this important fact of life late one night in a small bar on the Quai de la Tournelle in Paris. My friend, feeling expansive, ordered himself a glass of Cognac poured from a decanter of hand-blown crystal. I was about to follow suit when I noticed that the price was way beyond my means. I opted for a considerably less expensive VS Cognac made by a lesser producer.

When sampled side by side, there was no doubt about the family resemblance of these two Cognacs, but it was like comparing a mother and her young child. One was mature, refined, complex and elegant; the other was much simpler, and essentially unformed.

VS Cognacs like the one I had, along with VSOP (medium priced; aged for five to ten years) and XO Cognacs (more expensive; aged 15 or 20 years), are the top sellers in America, and they certainly deliver value for the price. But there is another category—above even the XO—that has developed quite a following. These are the "super-premiums," expensive, practically hand-crafted Cognacs that are worth treating yourself to on occasion. You'll find them in restaurants, hotel lounges and bars with increasing frequency, and that's a good way to sample some before you decide to splurge on a bottle to keep at home.



As with any deluxe product, the price is determined mainly by the amount of work that goes into making it. Super-premium Cognacs are no exception. Besides the "man hours," there are two other things that separate VS Cognac from super-premium Cognac: quality of fruit and duration of the aging process. The first aspect depends largely on where the grapes come from within the delimited Cognac region. The premier vineyards are located in the chalky-soiled districts of Grande Champagne, Petite Champagne and Borderies. The best Cognacs are distilled from the wines of these noble districts.

Age is even more important, for it is during its tenure in oak that Cognac makes the journey from fire to finesse. The finest Cognacs are blends of brandies that come from the best vineyards and that have been aged for an exceptionally long time. It's just that simple.

Most Cognac houses buy already-made brandies from some of the more than 20,000 small farm distilleries that pepper the Charente landscape. This young brandy is stored in separate lots in large warehouses. Most of these lots are aged for three or four years in oak casks, then blended into the firm's least expensive Cognac.

The best lots are monitored closely and allowed to age for much longer. They are tasted at least once a year by the master blender, who

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 36}

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATHRYN RUSSELL

FOR ACCESSORIES INFORMATION, SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

THE ONLY WAY TO FOLLOW A MEAL THAT TOOK HOURS TO PREPARE IS WITH THE PORT WINE THAT TOOK CENTURIES TO PERFECT.



Cockburn's® Port: Imported by Frederick Wildman and Sons, Ltd., New York, NY © 1991.

In 1815, the House of Cockburn's opened its doors in Portugal and soon gained a reputation for producing the world's finest vintage and wood-aged port wines.

And from our very same vineyards, comes Cockburn's Special Reserve. A mellow, yet distinctive, port that is artfully blended and patiently aged with the same meticulous care we give our most exclusive blends.

Experience Special Reserve for yourself. In the time that it takes to savor your very first sip, you'll understand why it's a most exceptional alternative to other after-dinner drinks.



COCKBURN'S SPECIAL RESERVE
THE GRAND FINALE

then decides whether they have reached their full potential or warrant further aging.

One morning I sat under the ancient chestnut trees outside Hennessy's *paradis* (the warehouse reserved for storing the oldest Cognacs) with Maurice Fillioux, then master blender. An aide from the warehouse came out carrying a wooden tray with two dozen samples neatly lined up. By the end of the morning Fillioux had chosen some to be blended into current releases of VSOP or XO, while others were sent back to the paradis to continue their maturation.

The lots of the highest quality were earmarked for inclusion in Hennessy's super-premium Cognac, **Paradis,** named for the quiet, dark inner sanctum where it is matured. Yann Fillioux, Maurice's nephew and his successor as Hennessy master blender, describes this exceptional Cognac: "Although quite delicate, Paradis is very complex," he states. "Hennessy XO, though younger, is in many ways an easier brandy to appreciate. Paradis is a Cognac for connoisseurs, and tasting it is an intellectual experience."

Paradis and a few other super-premiums are simply the finest brandies made. And yes, the prices *are* lofty: The current cost of a bottle of Paradis is $235, quite a bit when compared with the firm's VSOP ($44) or XO ($110).

Although the big Cognac houses make their money on Three Star and VS brandies (synonymous terms for bottlings aged less than five years), their reputation is made on super-premiums. Each of these special bottlings represents the ultimate expression of the "house style." Paradis reflects the smooth, round, almost fruity Hennessy style. **Extra Perfection de Rémy Martin** ($350) epitomizes the smoky, lush character that is typical of Rémy's Cognacs. **Martell Extra** ($315) provides a vivid picture of the dry, spicy, woody style of this great house. And **Initiale Extra** ($225) is a showcase for the elegance, length and finesse of the Courvoisier style.

Several small houses also offer exquisite limited-edition brandies. One of the finest examples comes from the Ferrand family, which has been producing Cognac since 1702. Only two hundred bottles of **Ancestrale** ($395) are released each year, and it is made principally from distillations performed in 1920, 1921, 1923 and 1924. The Cognac is smooth and luscious with enormous depth and a long, toasty finish.

Another noted family-owned firm is Delamain, which makes only small lots of Grande Champagne Cognacs and sells no brandies less than 25 years old. Delamain's finest is **Réserve de la Famille** ($380), which comes from a single cask of unblended Cognac that has been aged for 55 to 60 years in oak. It is elegant, intense, refined, balanced and remarkably complex.

How do you best enjoy such a splendid product of man and nature? "It is not to be drunk with ice or orange juice," says the firm's director, Alain Braastad-Delamain, with a smile. "Just place one ounce in an appropriate snifter, warm it in your palm, smell it and dream on it."

WINE-BUYING GUIDE

The Top 10

Here are your best bests for the month, selected by the Bon Appétit *Wine Tasting Panel.*

1990 Paul Jaboulet Aîné, Parallèle "45," Côtes du Rhône ($7.50). Smooth and fresh red wine with lovely fruit and great balance.

1990 Flora Springs Wine Company, Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley ($9.25). Soft and spicy with a fresh, smooth texture.

1989 Caymus Vineyards, Zinfandel, Napa Valley ($10). Lush raspberry, lovely fresh flavors and round, tangy fruit acid.

1989 Acacia Winery, Pinot Noir, Carneros ($14.50). Crisp and tangy with bright cherry fruit and lush texture.

1987 Marco De Bartoli, Bukkuram, Moscato di Passito, Pantelleria, Italy ($18 for 375-ml bottle). A spicy and smooth dessert wine with lush, lovely flavors and excellent texture; superb fruit and great balance.

1990 Joseph Phelps Vineyards, Viognier, Vin du Mistral, Napa Valley ($20). A creamy and lush white wine with flavors of vanilla and butterscotch, ripe pear fruit and a long, lingering finish.

1988 St. Clement Vineyards, Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley ($20). Luscious, smoky and ripe, with lots of plum and herb flavors.

1989 Louis Jadot, Auxey-Duresses, Domaine du Duc de Magenta, Burgundy, France ($24). A gorgeous Chardonnay with lush, ripe, buttery fruit balanced by crisp acidity and a clean, lively finish.

1989 St. Francis Vineyards & Winery, Merlot, Reserve, Estate, Sonoma Valley ($25). Lush and deep with remarkable plum and cherry fruit, plus oak, and a long finish.

1988 Anselmi, Recioto dei Capitelli, Recioto di Soave, Veneto, Italy ($31.50). Creamy, sweet and smooth with tones of caramel and spice. Rich and stunning.

COORDINATED *by* JACK R. WEINER.
Listed prices are approximate and may vary from one state to another.

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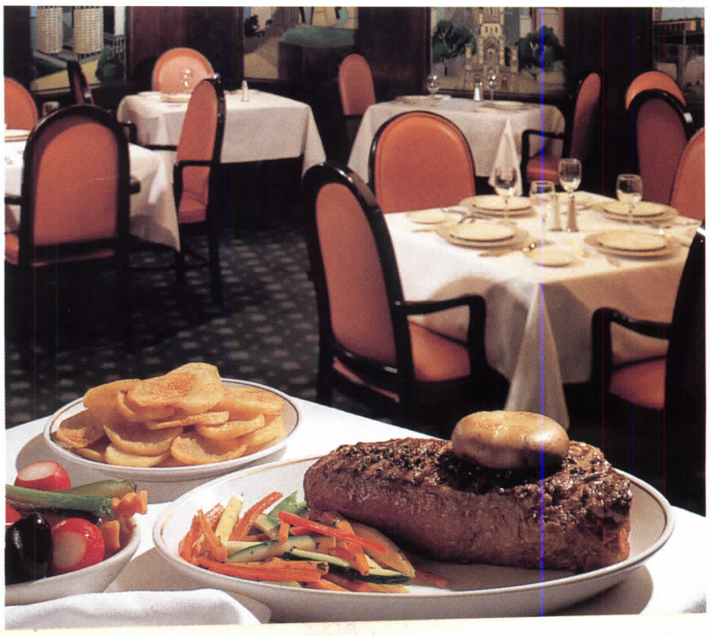


Steak Houses of Chicago

BY ALLEN KELSON

THE UNION STOCKYARDS—THE COLOSSUS OF CARNAGE that made gritty Chicago a Camelot to the Wilson, Swift and Armour dynasties—closed in 1971. Little remains, other than a granite steer's head where the entrance had been, yet Chicago's reputation as a great steak-and-potatoes town lives on, and for good reason.

Even though most of the city's best beef now comes from regional packers scattered across the Midwest, the highest-quality purveyors and most experienced steak-house operators have never left town. The city that was known for steak houses by the dozen now has only a handful that are truly great, but despite an economy that leaves lesser restaurateurs staring wistfully at empty tables, Chicago's superior steak restaurants still have lines at their doors.



RAPHY BY BRUCE VAN INWEGEN

A Chicago native whose childhood dinners included steak two or three times a week, I find that now, in this age of nutritional enlightenment, I seldom buy beef in stores or restaurants. Yet when the urge for a toothsome, tangy strip sirloin or a mellow, juicy slab of prime rib takes on the urgency of an addictive demand, there's no resisting.

A New York-born restaurateur recently said, **"Morton's of Chicago** may be the best steak house in town, but it doesn't feel like a steak house." True enough—for New Yorkers. With its cream-colored stucco walls and carpeted floor, thoroughly modern Morton's feels little like New York's masculine, clubby old-line places. Neither its servers, who perform a tableside show-and-tell with raw meat and potatoes, nor its popular dessert soufflés fit Manhattanite notions of what steak houses are all about. But with 17 restaurants around the country, the Morton's chain probably purchases more prime beef than any other, assuring it of the prime of the prime, aged just enough to develop a rich tang.

Longtime restaurateur Arnie Morton, smitten with The Guinea, a London chop house with a grill open for view by the diners, put that design idea and his "spoken menu" together 13 years ago, opening Morton's in the State Street building that also is home to his big restaurant, Arnie's. He sold the steak house several years ago, but it is still run by the people with whom Arnie Morton started it, and has apparently stayed true to its founder's ideals.

The thick 20-ounce sirloin is unbeatable, and the broiled and baked "Sicilian" veal chop encased in a Parmesan crust remains a juicy, savory, novel creation. The crisp disk of julienne

GOING OUT

lobsters typically run 2½ to 4½ pounds, an order of chicken brings a whole butterflied 2½-pound bird, and the biggest steak is a double porterhouse weighing in at 48 ounces. The Rosemont branch—an outpost in O'Hare's backyard—caters to travelers who have a craving for beef and a couple of hours between planes.

Back in the city, those who find that the lines at Morton's are too long can always cross the street to **Gibsons Steakhouse**—though it often has a waiting list, too. This newcomer, an attractive, fern-bedecked art deco establishment, specializes in very good prime steaks. But its massive portion of three double lamb chops (served with a less-than-imaginative but somehow appropriate bowlful of mint-flavored apple jelly) ranks tops on the bill of fare. Finish, if you have room, with a hunk of good carrot-walnut cake topped with cream cheese frosting.

For something along classic lines, head for The Mayfair Regent hotel, an incongruously posh setting for the **Palm Restaurant.** This place cleverly catches the look and feel of its ancestral 1926 Manhattan chop house. From the sawdust-strewn floors and the walls filled with caricatures to the banter of waiters as they build ever

Getting There

Chicago Chop House
60 West Ontario Street
312-787-7100

Eli's
215 East Chicago Avenue
312-642-1393

A relative newcomer that hints at tradition, the five-year-old **Chicago Chop House** is situated in a snug brownstone across from the Hard Rock Cafe in the heart of the Ontario Street restaurant row. The walls are adorned with old photos enshrining the city's meat packers, mayors and builders, spiced with a more interesting mix of turn-of-the-century street scenes.

The place dishes up fine, dry-aged prime beef to as many as 225 customers at a time, but you don't get the feeling you're in a human feed lot; diners are dispersed through three stories, the rooms are moderately sized and the servers are unpretentious and Midwest-friendly.

Conventional prime rib is always on the menu, but a better choice for lovers of this cut is the nearly daily "special" of a 20-ounce, bone-in slab of prime rib that has been roasted rare, then charred on the grill to a perfect medium-rare. The result is a terrific rib-steak texture and the added flavor of charring, coupled with much of the tenderness of a roast. The steaks, aged a minimum of three weeks, come in several forms, including 48- and 64-ounce porterhouses for sharing, and a one-pound veal porterhouse.

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DZT German National Tourist Office

Lufthansa

Getting There

Chicago Chop House
60 West Ontario Street
312-787-7100

Eli's
215 East Chicago Avenue
312-642-1393

Gibsons
1028 North Rush Street
312-266-8999

Morton's
***City:* 1050 North State Street**
312-266-4820
Near O'Hare Airport:
9525 West Bryn Mawr
Rosemont
708-678-5155

Palm
181 East Lake Shore Drive
312-944-0135

The Saloon
200 East Chestnut Street
312-280-5454

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The 18-ounce strip steak is absolutely first-rate, juicy and tart; though typically broiled, the $15-a-pound lobsters—usually three pounders—are nicely cooked and succulent. Start with good pumpernickel-raisin bread and, as the regulars do, order a plate of "half-and-half": enough fried, thin sweet onion rings and cottage fries to wear down two trenchermen.

A few blocks away, a Chicago tradition is encapsulated in the ground floor of a high-rise apartment building. The captains of industry who have become fixtures at **Eli's The Place for Steak** might not think of themselves as frozen in time, but they are, as surely as if they were part of a museum exhibit. This may be the only place left where men who have made the mistake of not showing up in a jacket after 4:00 P.M. are issued one by the hostess, who seems to have access to a Salvation Army warehouse.

The few changes the restaurant has made over the years appear to have been for the better. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture has lowered its grading standards for prime beef, the meat here has improved. Our strip sirloin was intensely savory and more tangy than we remembered, and a thick veal chop was supernal: lean, yet exceptionally rich and flavorful.

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One of the Second City's newest steak houses, **The Saloon,** has apparently won the hearts of the residents in its posh neighborhood. On the first floor of a deluxe apartment building and catercorner from Water Tower Place, this eatery is set out with inlaid-wood flooring, a ceiling painted with Navajo-style murals, and walls hung with wine and aperitif posters of the twenties and thirties. Opened less than a year ago by a Morton's alumnus and company, its menu meanders from steak house standards, but the focus—and the best fare—are in a meat-and-potatoes mode.

A good way to start is with a half order of barbecued ribs, which the kitchen will separate and portion so that two can feast fastidiously. The spicy, meaty, lean ribs are not seasoned in typical Chicago style (which calls for a sweeter, caramelized, less spicy sauce), but are notable nonetheless. The strip sirloin approaches Morton's for sheer excellence, and the thick veal chop, grilled over wood after a rubdown with savory herbs, is a winner, too. For sides, bacon-scallion mashed potatoes are luscious, and the "crispy potato cake" is an unbuttery—and unbeatable—version of Morton's hash browns.

Allen Kelson has been writing about Chicago restaurants for the last 25 years.

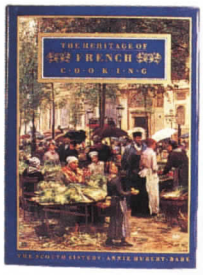


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BON VIVANT

WHAT'S NEW. WHAT'S HOT. WHAT'S GOOD.

FRENCH FEAST



Take a culinary journey with *The Heritage of French Cooking*, coauthored by Annie Hubert-Bare and the Scotto sisters (Random House, 1991). The book's recipes and sumptuous food art are sure to tempt the serious cook and the armchair traveler alike.

IT'S A WRAP

Karen Metz, a former New York cooking teacher, has created the perfect packaging for home-baked goodies: The Baker's Wrap Gift Boxes. Three 10x10x4-inch boxes, with 8-inch cardboard cake circles and gift labels, cost about $8, plus shipping (there are other prints and sizes, too). To order, telephone 703-823-5647.



SWEET THINGS

Rich, flaky *rugulach* are just the right size for when you want a taste of something sweet. Made by Chewys in San Diego, the pastries are filled with a variety of fruits, nuts and spices. A 40-piece assorted gift package costs $40 (shipping included). Call 800-241-3456 to order.





Spot of Tea

The teapots of ceramic artist Sara Wein are a delight for collectors of fine earthenware. Her "Ellipse," though, isn't just for show. This one-of-a-kind teapot can brew up 20 cups. For details, call the Ferrin Gallery in Northampton, Massachusetts; 800-732-7091 or 413-586-4509 (in state).

FOR PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS, SEE PAGE 112.

PEACE OF CHOCOLATE

Not only are these bars the stuff chocolate fantasies are made of, but eating them could also help make the world a better place. Cloud Nine contributes 10 percent of its profits to the conservation of rain forests and an additional 1 percent of profits to the "1% for Peace" organization. The six flavors range from malted milk crunch to sun-dried cherry; each 3¼-ounce bar costs about $1.89. Find them in specialty shops, or call 201-216-0382 to order.





FRUITY MIXERS

Intensely flavored but not too sweet, the sodas from Mad River Traders are a grown-up's answer to soft drinks. Available in ten flavors (cranberry sea breeze is our favorite), they're also terrific as mixers. A 12-ounce bottle costs about 95 cents at Macy's and specialty foods stores. Call 802-253-4535 for a location near you.

COMPILED *by* SARAH BELK

DOUBLE ESPRESSO

A cup of hot espresso is the ideal finish to a rich meal, especially when served in this charming cup and saucer from Portugal. Called "Flores," the set is $18, plus shipping, from The Harrel Shop in Darien, Connecticut; 203-655-1111.

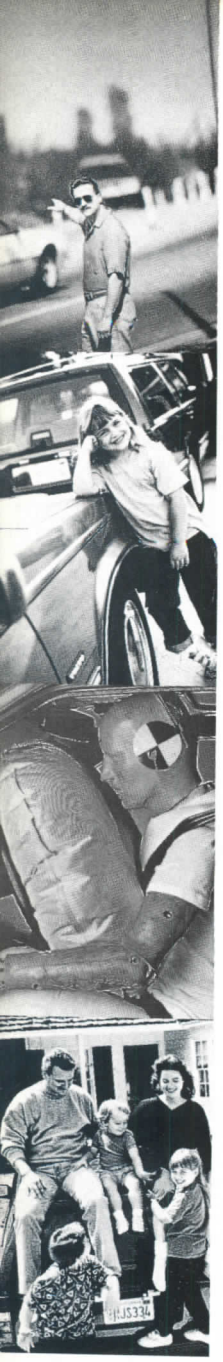
For a delicious "double" espresso, we like these bittersweet espresso crunch candies from Fenton & Lee. The elegant dark chocolate wafers with coarsely ground espresso beans cost $16.50, plus shipping, for 15 packages of six wafers each. Call 503-343-7629 to order.



GLOWING FUTURE

We predict a lively dinner party when you start by lighting these Good Fortune pyramid candles. Come dessert, a capsule with a fortune inside will be revealed. Two 2¼-inch-tall candles are $16, plus shipping, from Tops Malibu (other sizes and styles are available); 310-456-8677.





It was only 2:00 PM and Keith Heavenridge already knew the rest of his day wasn't going to turn out like he had planned. Heavenridge was already late for a 1:45 meeting. Leaving his office, he saw that his car was blocked by his wife's Volvo.

"I have to admit I was a little annoyed at the time," he recalls. "Instead of waiting for her to move it, I decided to take the Volvo."

This action would take on greater meaning thirty-five minutes later. Because as Keith was turning onto Sunset Boulevard, a twisting, turning, four-lane highway with no median to separate traffic, another car came flying around a blind turn and, crossing four lanes and speed bumps, lost complete control, hitting the Heavenridge Volvo GLE wagon head on.

"I don't even think I took my foot off of the gas," says Heavenridge. "He came out of nowhere. All I remember is this crunching feeling to the very core of my body."

"I went down to the impound where the tow truck had taken the car after the accident," Cecily Heavenridge remembers, "and when I got to the car, I couldn't believe it. My stomach got all knotted. I mean there was nothing left of the front of the car. Nothing. It was crunched right up to where Keith was sitting.

"I know in my heart I would have been a widow raising three kids if he had not been driving my car that day."

"The front of the car collapsed like an accordion just like I had read it would," Keith Heavenridge says. "The air bag went off. The first few moments I just sat there, doing an inventory of my condition. I was a little shaken up, my wrist hurt from banging the windshield, but that's about it. I then opened the door, got out and walked over to check on the other driver."

Beginning with Volvo's unique safety cage construction developed in 1944, to crumple zones and child safety innovations, to today, on 700 and 900 series cars, a side impact protection system years ahead of government requirements, Volvo design engineers have introduced 47 new safety features to their vehicles in almost as many years.

"An experience like this teaches you that you can be the safest driver in the world and because someone else is not paying attention or because of the circumstances at a given point in time, you can get into an accident," Heavenridge says.

There are 34,000,000 accidents each year in this country and over 40,000 deaths. To look at these statistics is at the same time frightening and deceiving. Because at a distance, numbers become anonymous and accidents only happen to "other people."

Keith Heavenridge knows how false this sense of security can be. As he stands by Sunset Boulevard recounting his accident, another one almost takes place. Tires screech. Horns blare.

He just shakes his head and walks away.

Each year, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety studies the occupant death rates in thousands of accidents.* In its April 1991 study of 1984-88 models, the car with the lowest fatality rate was the Volvo 240 wagon. Each year IIHS has been analyzing accident statistics, Volvo has been at the top or near the top in their respective model categories. No car manufacturer can guarantee you will survive an accident. No company can say you won't have an injury. But statistics show and crash tests demonstrate that some cars can offer more protection than others.

"I thought of how close we had come with Keith's accident to being alone," Cecily Heavenridge says. "I never want to be in that position again. Since then, we've bought two more Volvos."

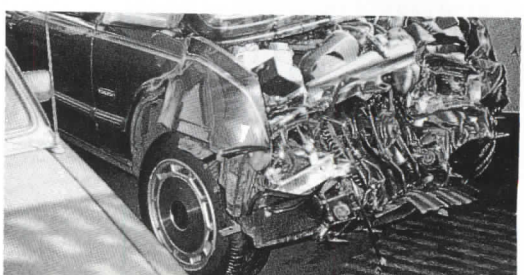
There are certain moments in your life when your entire world becomes crystal clear. When all your priorities are in order. For Keith Heavenridge, that moment came on January 3, 1990 at 2:35 PM.

It is now almost two years later. Keith Heavenridge is having his picture taken for this advertisement. In another room in his house, his son, David, nine years old, picks up a photo taken of his father's crumpled Volvo after the crash.

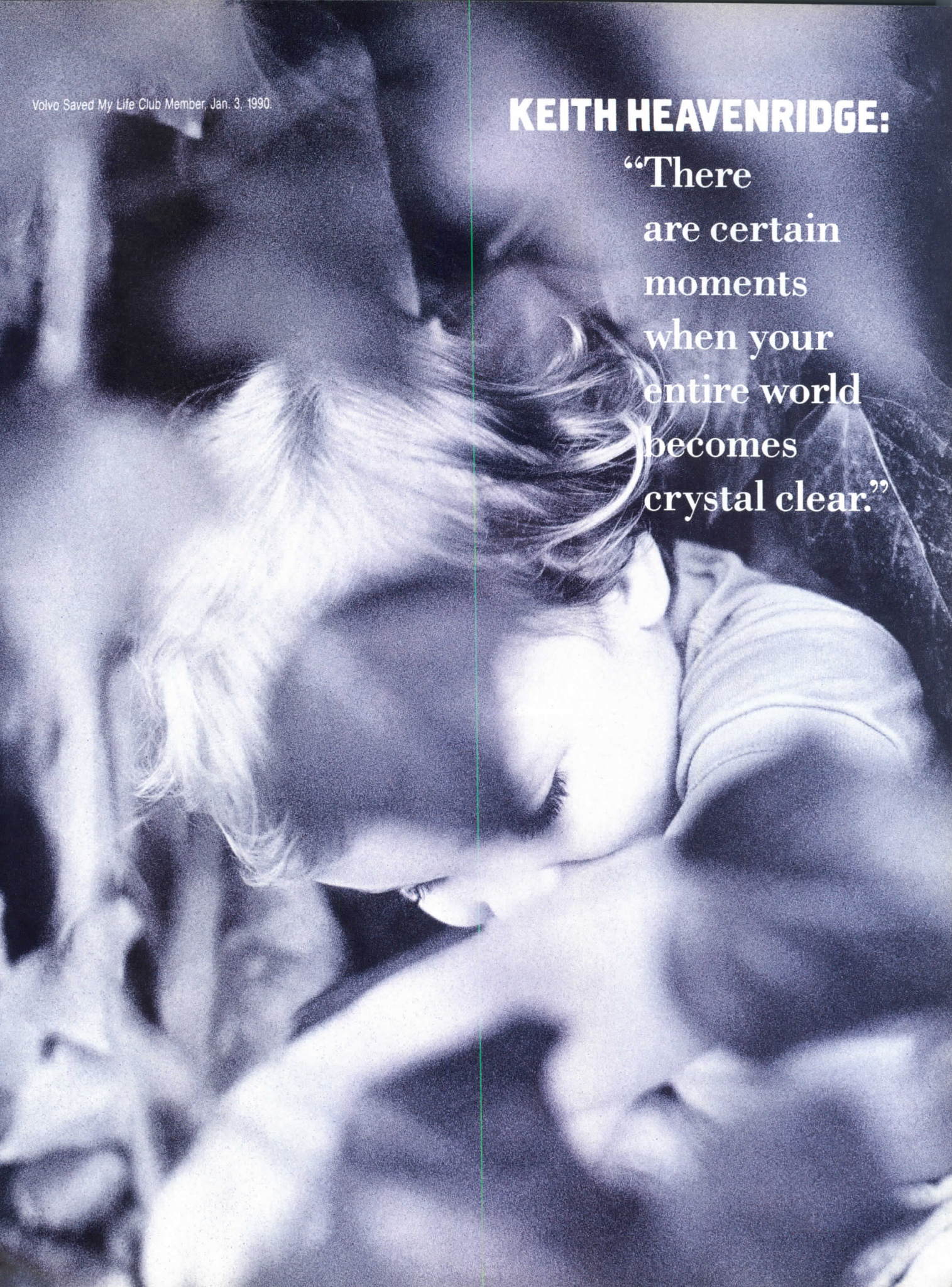
"My dad was in this car."

Drive safely.

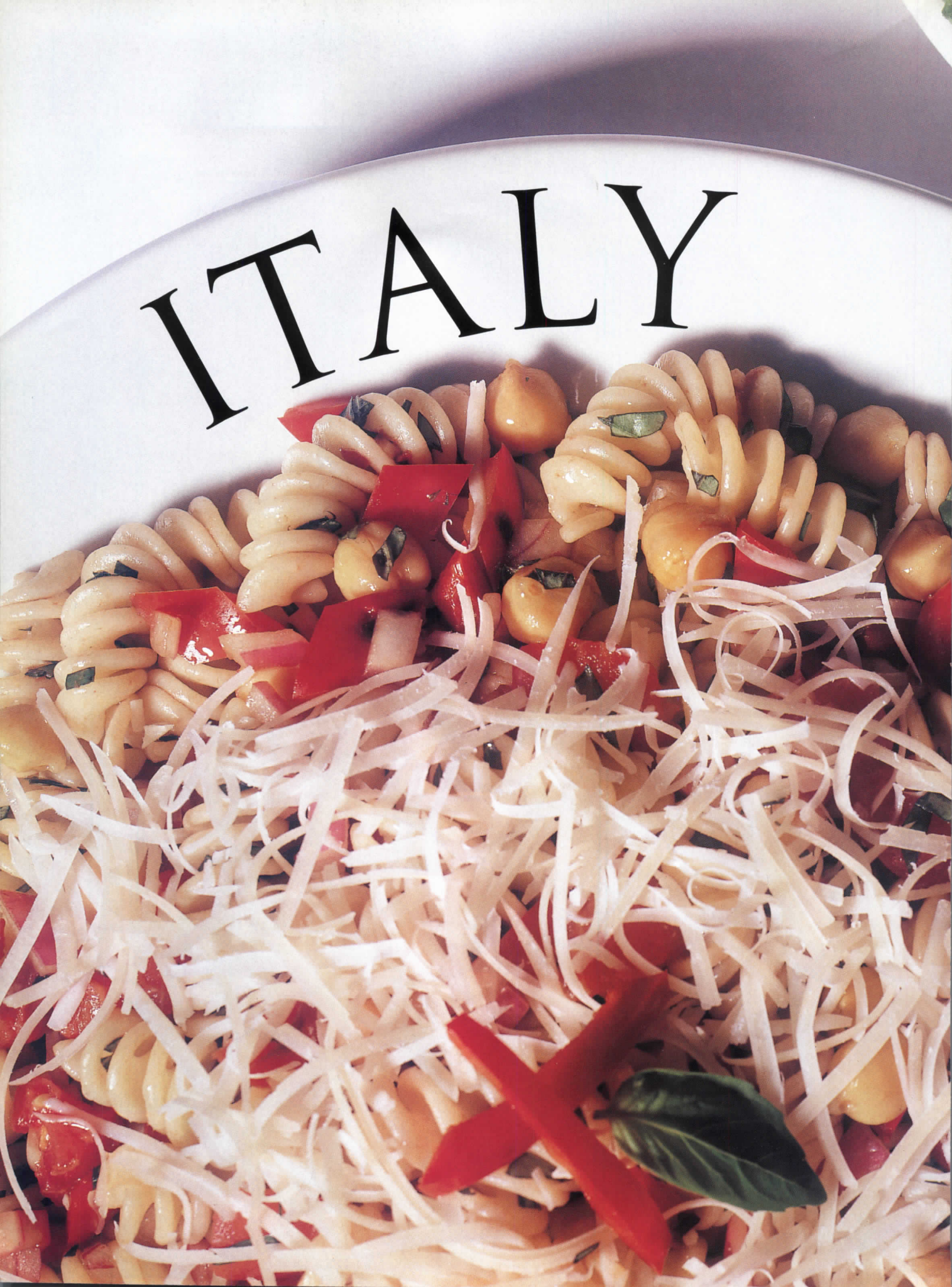
VOLVO

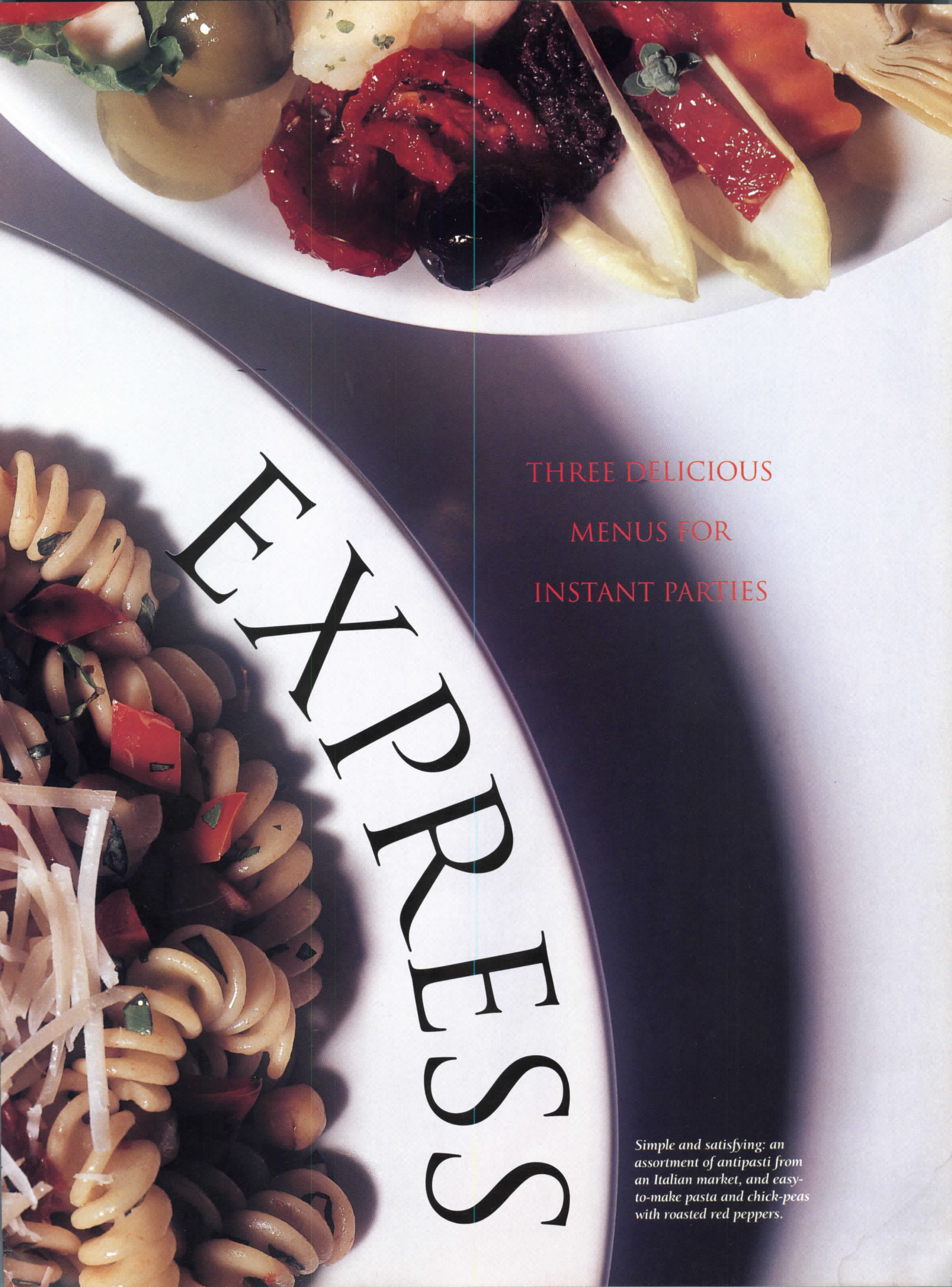


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*Study published April 1991 of 134 biggest selling 1984-88 model year cars during 1985-89 calendar years.


Volvo Saved My Life Club Member, Jan. 3, 1990.
KEITH HEAVENRIDGE:
"There are certain moments when your entire world becomes crystal clear."

ITALY





EXPRESS

THREE DELICIOUS MENUS FOR INSTANT PARTIES

Simple and satisfying: an assortment of antipasti from an Italian market, and easy-to-make pasta and chick-peas with roasted red peppers.







BY LYNNE ROSSETTO KASPER

HANDS DOWN, no contest and without a doubt, the Western world's all-time favorite food is Italian. Not so sure? Pick a dish, any dish—like pasta, pizza, polenta, risotto, *bruschetta, focaccia,* grilled vegetables, slow-cooked stews—and you're sure to see my point. This is food that's honest, generous and deeply satisfying. The long peninsula and its two biggest islands embrace at least 20 different regional cuisines, but all have one thing in common: food that keeps us coming back for more. {CONTINUED ON PAGE 52}

Quick seafood supper: grilled green onions and asparagus to start, followed by braised fish with tomatoes and basil and steamed new potatoes.

PHOTOGRAPHY *by* KATHRYN KLEINMAN

These three menus are superb examples of that diversity. A casual meatless menu with a centerpiece dish of pasta and chick-peas was inspired by sunny holidays in Tuscany and Liguria. Another menu was suggested by elegant seaside dining in Lombardy and features braised fish in a tomato-basil sauce. The third, from Lazio and Rome, has a rich lamb main course and is reminiscent of nineteenth-century Italian aristocratic dining.

These easy recipes are hard to beat for the sheer pleasure of cooking good, soul-satisfying food. And even if you're skidding into the kitchen only a little ahead of your guests, fear not. Set out aperitifs, put a little Vivaldi on the CD player and a dish of celery sticks and radishes on the coffee table, and let everyone unwind. Don't hesitate to invite those so inclined to join in on the preparations. Part of the spirit that gives Italy's food such appeal carries over to sharing in the cooking as well as the eating.

Menu for Eight

ANTIPASTO PLATTER

WHITE VERDICCHIO DI MATELICA

MINERAL WATER

PUNT E MES

DRY VERMOUTH

PASTA AND CHICK-PEAS WITH ROASTED RED PEPPERS

MERLOT FROM FRIULI

PEAR GRANITA

BISCOTTI

ESPRESSO

Pasta and Chick-Peas with Roasted Red Peppers

Start the evening with a Tuscan antipasto: On a large platter, arrange items from an Italian deli, such as caponata, *olive paste, sun-dried tomatoes, diced fresh mozzarella and marinated vegetables. Instead of serving bread or crackers, surround the entire assortment with Belgian endive spears and romaine lettuce leaves.*

8 SERVINGS

- 1½ 15-ounce cans chick-peas (garbanzo beans), rinsed, drained
- 2 medium red onions, diced
- ¼ cup plus 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar
- 5 red bell peppers, diced
- 1 cup diced drained seeded canned Italian plum tomatoes
- 1 cup chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 large garlic cloves, minced

- 1½ pounds fusilli or rotini pasta
- 2 cups freshly grated Parmesan

Combine chick-peas, onions and balsamic vinegar in large bowl. Set aside.

Preheat broiler. Combine bell peppers, tomatoes, ¾ cup basil, oil and garlic in another bowl. Spread mixture evenly over heavy large baking sheet. Broil until peppers soften slightly and skin just begins to turn black, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Add to chick-peas.

Meanwhile, cook pasta in pot of rapidly boiling salted water until tender but still firm to bite. Drain. Add to bowl; toss well. Mix in 1 cup Parmesan. Sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup basil. Serve, passing remaining Parmesan separately.

Pear Granita

A light and refreshing frozen dessert.

8 SERVINGS

- 1½ pounds (about 4) ripe Bartlett pears, peeled, quartered, cored
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ cup diced candied pineapple (about 3 ounces)
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon peel

- ⅓ cup finely chopped unsalted pistachio nuts
- 8 fresh mint sprigs

Combine first 6 ingredients in food processor. Blend until smooth. Transfer mixture to 9x13-inch baking dish. Freeze until granita is frozen around edges and center is still slushy, about 3 hours. Using fork, stir mixture well, breaking up frozen edge pieces. Continue freezing, stirring every hour, until granita is consistency of shaved ice, about 3 hours. *(Can be made 1 day ahead. Keep frozen. Before serving, blend in processor to break up ice.)*

Spoon granita into bowls. Garnish with pistachio nuts and mint sprigs.

Menu for Six

ROMAN BROTH WITH PARMESAN CHEESE THREADS

LAMB CHOPS IN SWEET-AND-SOUR SAUCE

OVEN-CRISPED POTATO FOCACCIA

STEAMED GREEN BEANS

TAURASI FROM CAMPANIA OR ROSSO DI BRUNELLO

FRESH STRAWBERRIES IN ASTI SPUMANTE

ESPRESSO

Roman Broth with Parmesan Cheese Threads

Parmesan-egg threads accent this soup laced with nutmeg and wine in a variation of stracciatella alla romana.

6 SERVINGS

- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 7 cups chicken stock or canned low-salt broth

⅔ cup dry white wine
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 green onions, sliced

Beat eggs to blend in small bowl. Whisk in Parmesan and lemon juice. Bring stock, wine and nutmeg to boil in heavy large pot. Boil rapidly 1 minute. Remove from heat. Immediately pour egg mixture over broth. Using fork, slowly stir egg mixture to form short threads. Season with salt and pepper. Ladle broth into bowls. Sprinkle with green onions.

Lamb Chops in Sweet-and-Sour Sauce

The sauce is inspired by an old Roman recipe originally created for wild boar. Accompany the lamb with steamed green beans and bottles of Taurasi or a Rosso di Brunello. For dessert, have bowls of sliced strawberries doused in Asti Spumante. Finish with steaming cups of espresso.

6 SERVINGS

⅔ cup chopped pitted prunes
1½ cups dry red wine
⅔ cup balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar

12 1½-inch-thick lamb loin chops
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, halved, sliced

1 medium onion, chopped
4 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons firmly packed dark brown sugar
⅔ cup canned low-salt chicken broth
⅓ cup pine nuts, toasted

Combine chopped prunes, dry red wine and vinegar in medium bowl. Let stand 15 minutes to 1 hour.

Sprinkle lamb chops on both sides with cloves and pepper. Let stand 10 minutes. Heat heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons oil. Add half of chops. Sprinkle half of sliced onion over chops. Cook chops to desired doneness, about 3 minutes per side for rare. Transfer chops and sliced onions to platter; cover with foil. Repeat with remaining oil, chops and onion.

Pour off all but 2 tablespoons fat from skillet. Add chopped onion and garlic and sauté until golden, about 5 minutes. Stir in brown sugar and cook until onion mixture thickens and bubbles, about 1½ minutes. Pour prune mixture into skillet and boil until liquid is reduced to glaze, about 8 minutes. Stir in broth and boil until sauce thickens slightly, about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon sauce over lamb. Sprinkle with pine nuts and serve.

Oven-crisped Potato Focaccia

Thin slices of potato and onion combined with orange zest, garlic, herbs and black olives are spread into a large, flat "cake" and flash-roasted.

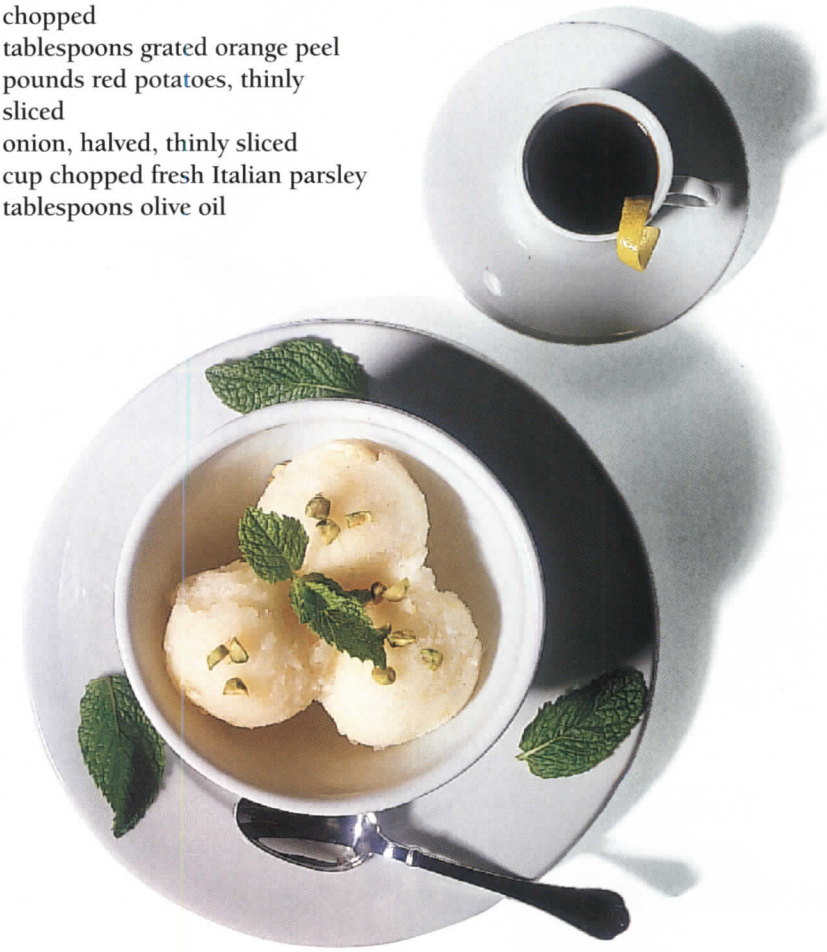
6 SERVINGS

⅓ cup oil-cured black olives, pitted, chopped
3 tablespoons grated orange peel
1¼ pounds red potatoes, thinly sliced
1 onion, halved, thinly sliced
¼ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled
⅛ teaspoon dried crushed red pepper

Combine olives and grated orange peel in small bowl. Mix sliced potatoes, onion, chopped parsley, olive oil, minced garlic, oregano and crushed red pepper in large bowl. Add half of olive mixture and toss well. Season potato mixture with salt and pepper. *(Can be prepared 45 minutes ahead. Cover and let stand at room temperature.)*

Preheat oven to 500° F. Brush 14-inch-diameter pizza pan with olive oil. Spread potato mixture evenly in pizza pan. Bake until potatoes are almost tender, about 15 minutes. Sprinkle remaining olive mixture over potatoes. Bake until potatoes are tender and just golden brown, about 10 minutes longer. Cut into wedges and serve.

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 54}



A refreshing conclusion to the pasta menu: pear ice spiked with lemon.

FOR ACCESSORIES INFORMATION, SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Menu for Four

ANTIPASTO OF GRILLED GREEN ONIONS AND ASPARAGUS

BRAISED FISH FILLETS WITH TOMATO AND BASIL

BAKED POLENTA OR STEAMED NEW POTATOES

MONTECARLO BIANCO

MASCARPONE AND ESPRESSO MOUSSE

ESPRESSO

NOCINO OR GRAPPA

Antipasto of Grilled Green Onions and Asparagus

4 SERVINGS

- 1 pound thin asparagus
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 green onion bunches, trimmed
- 6 cups mixed baby lettuces, torn into bite-size pieces
- 2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat) or preheat broiler. Brush asparagus with 2 tablespoons oil. Grill until brown and crisp-tender, turning occasionally, about 4 minutes. Place on platter. Brush onions with 1 tablespoon oil. Grill until brown and tender, turning once, about 3 minutes. Place on same platter. Season with salt and pepper. *(Can be made 3 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.)*

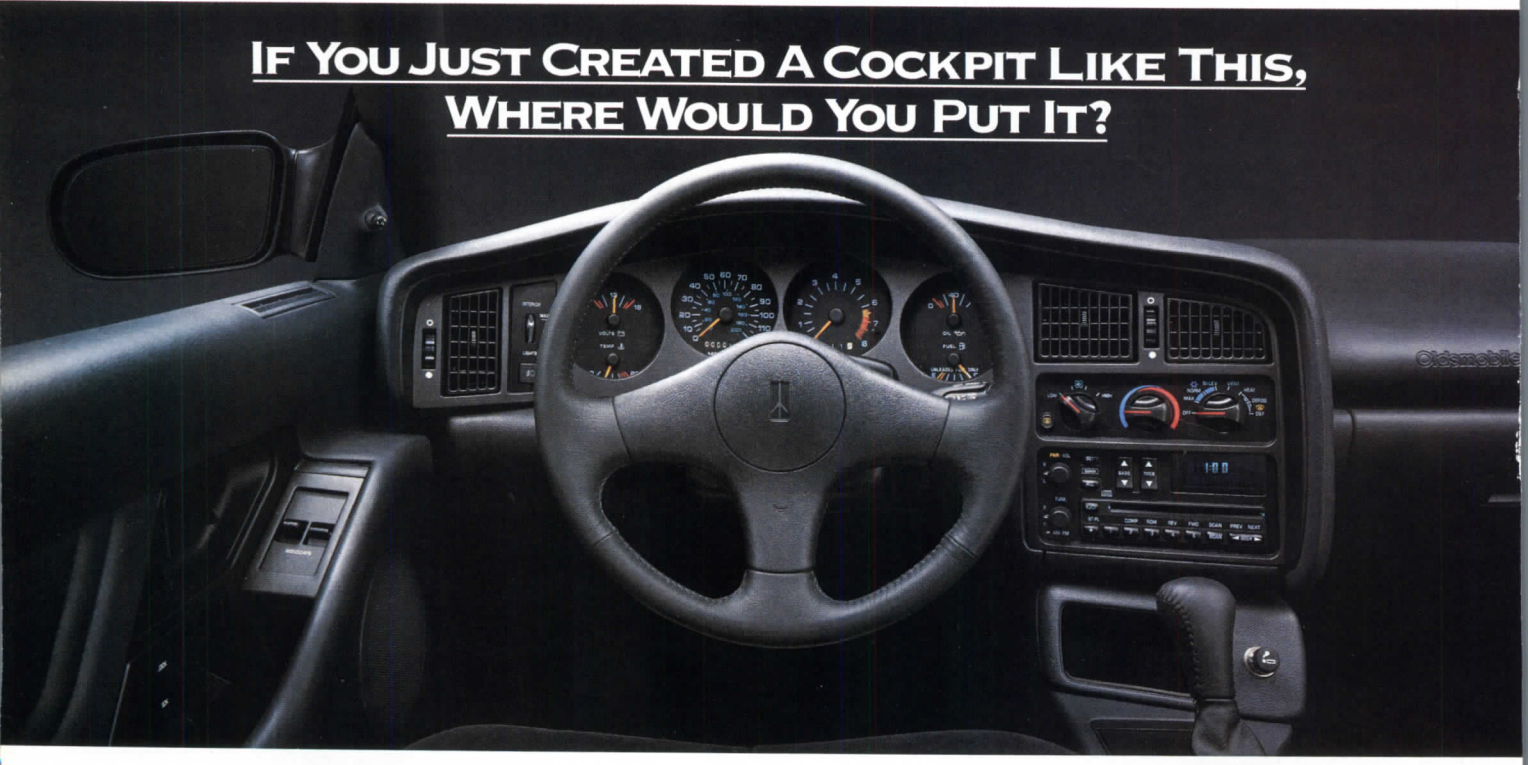
Combine lettuce and chives in bowl. Drizzle with remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil and 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar. Season with salt and pepper and toss well. Arrange asparagus and green onions in center of platter. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar. Spoon salad around asparagus and green onions. Sprinkle with red onion and pine nuts.

Braised Fish Fillets with Tomato and Basil

4 SERVINGS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 1-inch-thick fish fillets (such as sea bass, halibut or swordfish)
- ½ cup chopped fresh basil
- ⅓ cup minced onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ⅓ cup dry white wine
- ⅓ cup canned low-salt chicken broth
- 1 cup canned ready-cut tomatoes with juices
- 2 tablespoons whipping cream
- Basil sprigs (optional)

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Season fish with salt and pepper. Cook until beginning to turn



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golden, about 1 minute per side. Reduce heat to low. Sprinkle chopped basil, onion and garlic over fish. Cover skillet tightly with foil, then lid. Braise until fish is just cooked through, about 8 minutes.

Carefully transfer fish to platter and cover. Increase heat to high. Add wine to skillet and boil until reduced to 1 tablespoon, about 3 minutes. Mix in broth and boil until mixture is reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Stir in tomatoes. Cook until sauce thickens. Stir in cream. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon sauce over fish. Garnish with basil sprigs.

Mascarpone and Espresso Mousse

Mascarpone, northern Italy's delicious fresh cheese, makes this dessert irresistible. Tempt guests with a little nocino *(Italian walnut liqueur) or grappa afterward.*

4 SERVINGS

Vegetable oil
7½ tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons water
⅓ cup slivered almonds, toasted

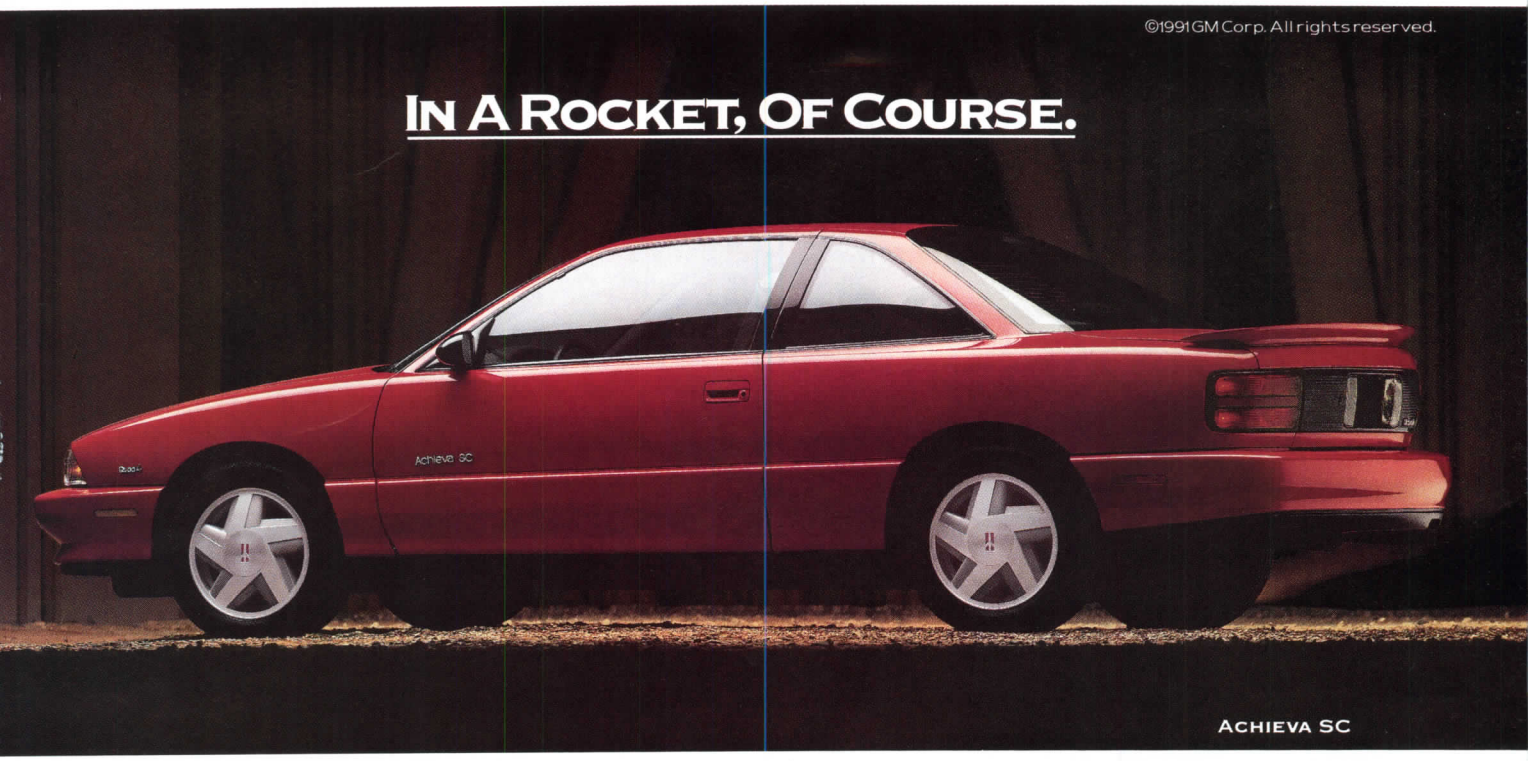
¼ cup cold strong brewed espresso or 2 teaspoons instant espresso powder dissolved in ¼ cup cold water
½ teaspoon unflavored gelatin
1 tablespoon dark rum
1¼ teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup mascarpone cheese*
¾ cup chilled whipping cream
Chocolate curls or shavings (optional)

Line small cookie sheet with foil. Brush foil lightly with oil. Combine 3½ tablespoons sugar and water in heavy small skillet. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Boil without stirring until mixture turns deep amber color, about 2 minutes. Add almonds. Immediately pour onto prepared cookie sheet. Cool praline completely. Chop finely. *(Can be made up to 1 week ahead. Chill airtight.)*

Place espresso in heavy small saucepan. Sprinkle gelatin over espresso and let stand 10 minutes to soften. Stir over low heat until gelatin dissolves. Transfer to large bowl. Mix in rum and vanilla. Cool to room temperature, about 10 minutes. Whisk in cheese and remaining 4 tablespoons sugar. Whip cream to medium peaks in another bowl. Fold cream into espresso mixture. Divide half of mousse among four 1-cup ramekins or bowls. Sprinkle half of praline over mousse. Spoon remaining mousse over praline, dividing evenly. Sprinkle mousse with remaining praline. Chill until set, about 2 hours. *(Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and store in refrigerator.)* Garnish mousse with chocolate curls if desired.

**Italian cream cheese available at Italian markets and some supermarkets.*

Lynne Rossetto Kasper's book on northern Italy's Emilia-Romagna region will be published by William Morrow & Co. in autumn 1992.



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A Saint Patrick's Day

BY GERRI GILLILAND PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM RYAN



Feast

Dinner for Six

BLACK AND TAN

SMOKED SALMON WITH BROWN SODA BREAD

BEEF AND VEGETABLE STEW

COLCANNON

DOUBLE-CRUST LEMON TART WITH BERRIES



WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN IRELAND, we did not wear green clothing on Saint Patrick's Day. We did, however, get the day off from school, attend a special Mass and wear shamrocks. We also did not eat corned beef and cabbage. We did, however, eat many a delicious meal—a lot of them highlighted by smoked salmon and a hearty beef stew. (It makes me wonder why so many people believe that corned beef is traditional Saint Pat's fare.)

I've since traded Ireland for Los Angeles and my school uniform for a chef's toque, but I'll never be able to trade in my fondness for March 17. So this year, like most years, I'll be making some of my favorite dishes from back home for some of my favorite people in L.A. They've already been converted from corned beef and cabbage. Try my menu and you will be, too.

Black and Tan

If you have ever traveled anywhere in Ireland, you know that this beverage is served in virtually every pub in the country. Introduce it to your uninitiated friends at this celebration dinner.

6 SERVINGS

- 3 12-ounce bottles light lager (such as Harp), chilled
- 3 12-ounce bottles Guinness stout, chilled

Halfway fill 6 beer mugs with lager. Pour Guinness stout over lager and serve drinks immediately.

Smoked Salmon with Brown Soda Bread

A plate of smoked salmon with brown soda bread is a calling card in Ireland. In fact, the last thing my mother gave me as I was ending my latest visit home was a whole smoked salmon to bring back to the States. The greens and olive oil give a modern spin to my version of this classic starter.

6 SERVINGS

- 3 cups torn greens (such as red leaf lettuce, frisée and arugula)
- 1 pound thinly sliced smoked salmon (such as Irish, Scottish or Norwegian)
- 2 tablespoons drained capers
- 1 small white onion, thinly sliced
- 24 red cherry tomatoes or pear tomatoes
- 24 yellow pear tomatoes or cherry tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (preferably extra-virgin)
- Lemon wedges
- Brown Soda Bread (see recipe)
- Unsalted butter

Divide greens among plates. Top with salmon. Sprinkle with capers. Garnish with onion and tomatoes. Drizzle with oil. Serve with lemon, bread and butter.

ILLUSTRATION BY LYDIA HESS



Delicious double-crust lemon tart with berries is a beautiful ending to a special Irish party.

Brown Soda Bread

MAKES 1 LOAF

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 4 cups whole wheat flour
- ⅓ cup toasted wheat germ
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 2⅓ cups (about) buttermilk

Preheat oven to 400° F. Sprinkle baking sheet with 2 tablespoons all purpose flour. Mix remaining 1 cup all purpose flour, 4 cups whole wheat flour, ⅓ cup toasted wheat germ, 1½ teaspoons baking soda, baking powder and salt in large bowl. Stir in enough buttermilk to form slightly moist dough. Turn bread dough out onto lightly floured work surface and knead dough until smooth, about 1 minute.

Pat dough into 8-inch round. Transfer dough round to prepared sheet. Using small sharp knife, cut ¼-inch-deep crisscross lines into top of dough round. Bake until bread sounds hollow when tapped on bottom, about 50 minutes. Transfer loaf to rack. Wrap loaf in towel. Cool bread completely before slicing and serving.

Beef and Vegetable Stew

March 17 falls on a Tuesday this year, so I designed this recipe to be a good main course for an after-work party: You can make it Sunday or Monday night and simply reheat before serving.

6 SERVINGS

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 pounds boneless beef chuck, cut into 1½-inch cubes
- 3 onions, chopped
- 1 12-ounce bottle Guinness stout
- 2 cups (about) beef stock or canned broth

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 60}

1 pound carrots, peeled, cut into 1½-inch pieces
1 pound parsnips, peeled, cut into 1½-inch pieces
1 pound rutabagas, peeled, cut into 1½-inch pieces

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in heavy large Dutch oven over high heat. Season beef with salt and pepper. Add ⅓ of beef to Dutch oven and brown well, about 5 minutes. Transfer beef to plate. Repeat with remaining 2 tablespoons oil and beef in 2 more batches. Reduce heat to medium. Add onions to Dutch oven and sauté until translucent, about 8 minutes. Return beef and any accumulated juices to Dutch oven. Add Guinness stout and enough beef stock to cover meat. Cover and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until meat is almost tender, about 1 hour.

Add vegetables to stew and simmer uncovered until beef and vegetables are tender and gravy thickens slightly, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour. Season to taste with salt and pepper. *(Can be prepared 2 days ahead. Cover and chill. Rewarm over medium heat before serving.)*

Colcannon

A traditional dish that combines mashed potatoes, cooked cabbage and onions—Irish comfort food at its best.

6 SERVINGS

4 pounds russet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1½-inch pieces

1 1½-pound savoy cabbage, thinly sliced
1¼ cups water

1 cup milk
1 green onion bunch, chopped
¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
Chopped fresh chives or green onion tops

Cook potatoes in large pot of boiling salted water until tender. Drain. Return potatoes to pot and mash with potato masher. Set aside.

Combine cabbage and water in heavy large skillet. Boil until almost all liquid evaporates, tossing cabbage frequently, about 15 minutes. Mix cabbage into mashed potatoes.

Combine milk, green onions and ½ cup butter in heavy medium saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring to melt butter. Pour over potato mixture and stir to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper. *(Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Cover and let stand at room temperature. Before continuing, rewarm over low heat, stirring frequently.)* Mound mashed potatoes in bowl. Make well in center. Place remaining ¼ cup butter in well. Sprinkle with chopped chives and serve.

Double-Crust Lemon Tart with Berries

Among the most popular desserts at my restaurant, Gilliland's, in Los Angeles. It's one of the first sweets I learned to bake in grammar school. I have the nuns to thank for the delicate crust—they were real sticklers for fine pastry.

6 SERVINGS

FILLING

1 cup sugar
⅔ cup strained fresh lemon juice
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
3 tablespoons grated lemon peel
3 large eggs

CRUST

¼ cup blanched slivered almonds
1¾ cups all purpose flour
¼ cup sugar
Pinch of salt
10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 large egg
1 tablespoon milk
1 tablespoon grated lemon peel
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 egg white, beaten until frothy
Additional sugar
Whipped cream
1 1-pint basket fresh strawberries
1 ½-pint basket fresh raspberries
Fresh mint sprigs

FOR FILLING: Bring first 4 ingredients to boil in heavy large saucepan, stirring to dissolve sugar. Whisk eggs in medium bowl to blend. Gradually whisk in hot butter mixture. Return mixture to saucepan and stir over low heat until mixture thickens and leaves path on back of spoon when finger is drawn across, about 2 minutes; do not boil. Pour into bowl. Cover; chill overnight.

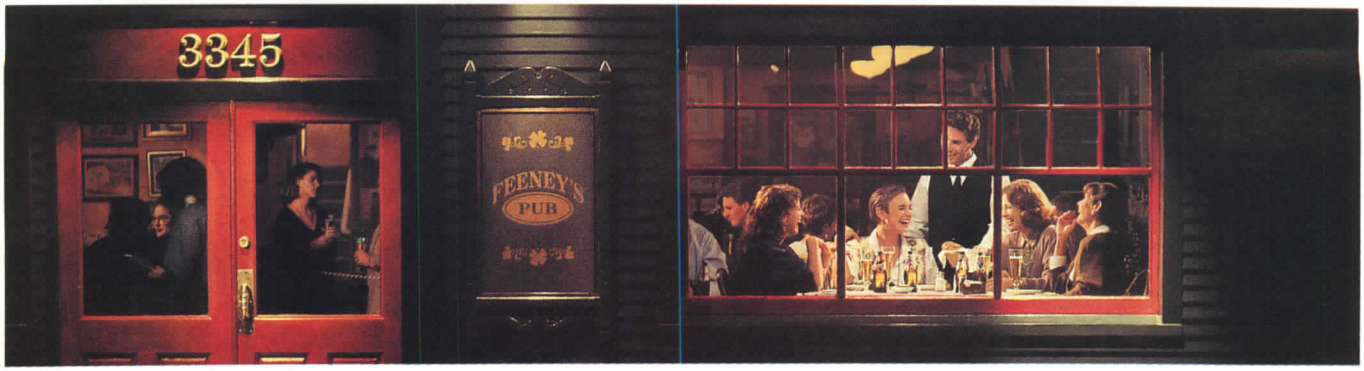
FOR CRUST: Finely grind almonds in processor. Transfer to bowl. Mix in flour, ¼ cup sugar and salt. Blend butter, 1 egg, milk, lemon peel and vanilla in processor until combined. Add dry ingredients and blend in using on/off turns until dough begins to come together. Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface and knead just until smooth. Divide dough into 2 unequal pieces that are ⅓ and ⅔ of entire amount. Flatten each piece into disk. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least 30 minutes. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Let soften slightly at room temperature before rolling if necessary.)*

Preheat oven to 375°F. Roll out larger dough piece between sheets of waxed paper or plastic wrap to 12-inch round. Peel off top sheet of paper. Invert dough into 9-inch-diameter tart pan with removable bottom. Peel off top sheet of paper. Press dough onto bottom and up sides of pan, forming ½-inch-high rim of pastry above pan. Crimp edge. Spoon cold filling into tart shell. Roll out smaller dough piece between sheets of waxed paper to 9½-inch round. Place atop filling in tart. Press dough top and sides together to seal. Fold crimped edge in. Press with fork tines to form decorative design.

Bake tart until top is brown, about 35 minutes. Transfer to rack and let stand 5 minutes. Brush top of tart with egg white; sprinkle with sugar. Bake 10 minutes more. Transfer tart to rack and cool completely. Remove tart pan sides. Transfer tart to platter. Cut into wedges. Top with cream, berries and mint.

A Los Angeles restaurateur, caterer and cooking teacher, Gerri Gilliland was born and raised in Ireland.

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Going NUTS *for* DESSERT

by ELINOR KLIVANS

Walnuts, macadamias, pecans
– and more –
in six terrific recipes



A measure of maple syrup embellishes the classic pecan pie (right). Butter almond tart (above) is a sophisticated take on the macaroon.

PHOTOGRAPHY *by* DAVID BISHOP







Pistachio and White Chocolate Buttercream Cake

A delicious dessert that's even better when prepared one day ahead.

12 SERVINGS

SYRUP

- 5 tablespoons water
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons kirsch (clear cherry brandy)

CAKE

- ⅔ cup shelled unsalted pistachio nuts, toasted (about 3 ounces)
- 8 large egg yolks
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon almond extract

- 5 large egg whites
- ⅔ cup cake flour
- ¼ cup cornstarch

BUTTERCREAM

- 6 large egg yolks
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 1½ cups half and half
- 8 ounces imported white chocolate (such as Lindt), finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon kirsch (clear cherry brandy)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

- 1 cup finely chopped shelled unsalted pistachio nuts

- Nonpoisonous flowers, such as roses and freesias (optional)

FOR SYRUP: Combine 5 tablespoons water and sugar in heavy small saucepan. Bring to boil over low heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat. Stir in kirsch and cool. *(Syrup can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)*

FOR CAKE: Position rack in top third of oven and preheat to 350° F. Butter two 9-inch-diameter cake pans with 1½-inch-high sides. Line bottoms with waxed paper rounds. Butter paper and dust pans with flour.

Finely grind nuts in processor. Using electric mixer, beat yolks in large bowl just until blended. Add ⅓ cup sugar and beat until mixture is thick and light in color, about 3 minutes. Beat in vanilla and almond extracts.

Using clean dry beaters, beat whites in another large bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining ⅓ cup sugar and beat until stiff but not dry. Fold ⅓ of whites into yolk mixture. Fold ground nuts into yolk mixture. Sift flour and cornstarch over yolk mixture and gently fold in. Fold in remaining whites in 2 additions.

Divide batter between prepared pans. Bake until tester inserted into centers comes out clean, about 18 minutes. Cool on racks 5 minutes. Run knife around sides of cakes to loosen. Turn out onto racks and cool. Peel paper off cakes. *(Can be made 1 day ahead. Wrap cakes tightly and store at room temperature.)*

FOR BUTTERCREAM: Whisk yolks, sugar and flour in medium bowl until well blended. Bring half and half to simmer in heavy medium saucepan. Gradually whisk hot half and half into egg mixture. Return egg mixture to same saucepan and cook until mixture boils and is very thick, whisking constantly. Transfer mixture to medium bowl. Add chocolate and stir until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth. Mix in kirsch and vanilla. Press plastic wrap onto surface of pastry cream to prevent skin from forming; cool. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before continuing.)*

Using electric mixer, beat butter until fluffy and light in color. At low speed, add pastry cream ¼ cup at a time, beating after each addition until just blended.

Cut each cake layer horizontally in half. Place 1 cake bottom on platter. Drizzle with ¼ of syrup. Spread 1 scant cup of buttercream over. Repeat layering

Delicate pistachio cake is layered with white chocolate buttercream in an elegant finale.



FOR ACCESSORIES INFORMATION, SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

2 more times with cake, syrup and buttercream. Top with last cake layer. Spread very thin layer of buttercream over top and sides of cake to anchor loose crumbs. Spread remaining buttercream evenly over entire cake. Press chopped nuts onto sides and in 1-inch border around top edge of cake. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover with cake dome and chill. Let stand at room temperature 1 hour before continuing.)*

Garnish center of cake with flowers.

Chocolate Hazelnut Truffle Cake

Start this a day before you plan to serve it.

12 SERVINGS

CAKE

- 1¾ cups cake flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) plus 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1⅓ cups sugar
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup milk, room temperature

SYRUP

- ¼ cup water
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons dark rum or Frangelico (hazelnut liqueur)

GANACHE

- 1¼ cups whipping cream
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, diced
- 12 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup ground toasted hazelnuts

GLAZE

- ½ cup whipping cream
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon light corn syrup
- 8 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 12 whole hazelnuts, toasted, husked

FOR CAKE: Position rack in top third of oven and preheat to 325°F. Butter 9-inch square baking pan with 2-inch-high sides. Line bottom of pan with waxed paper. Butter and flour paper.

Sift first 4 ingredients together into small bowl. Using electric mixer at medium speed, beat butter in large bowl until fluffy. Gradually add sugar, beating until mixture is well blended. At low speed, mix in chocolate and vanilla extract. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in dry ingredients alternately with milk, beginning and ending with dry ingredients.

Transfer batter to prepared pan. Bake until tester inserted into center of cake comes out clean, about 40 minutes. Cool cake in pan on rack 10 minutes. Run knife around sides of pan to loosen cake. Turn out onto rack; cool completely. Peel off paper. Wrap cake and store at room temperature overnight.

FOR SYRUP: Combine water and sugar in small saucepan. Bring to boil over medium heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat; add rum. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and store at room temperature.)*

FOR GANACHE: Bring cream and butter to simmer in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring until butter melts. Remove from heat. Add chocolate and stir until melted and smooth. Refrigerate until mixture is just cool and still soft, stirring occasionally, about 45 minutes. Add vanilla and whisk until mixture lightens slightly in color, about 30 seconds. Whisk in nuts. Let stand at room temperature while preparing glaze.

FOR GLAZE: Bring cream, butter and corn syrup to simmer in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat, whisking to blend. Remove from heat. Add chocolate and stir until melted and glaze is smooth. Dip half of each whole hazelnut into warm glaze. Place hazelnuts on waxed

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 66}

Chocolate and hazelnuts team up in an ultra-rich truffle cake that chocoholics will adore.





paper and let glaze set. Let remaining glaze cool to lukewarm, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes.

Using long serrated knife, cut cake horizontally into 3 even layers. Using large tart pan bottom, transfer 1 cake layer to platter. Place waxed paper strips around bottom of cake to protect platter. Drizzle cake layer with 1½ tablespoons syrup. Spread with half of ganache. Repeat with second cake layer, syrup and ganache. Top with third cake layer. Drizzle with remaining syrup. Pour ¾ of lukewarm glaze over top of cake, spreading evenly. Spread remaining glaze over sides of cake, using any glaze from waxed paper to coat sides completely. Let stand until glaze sets. Carefully remove waxed paper strips. Place 3 whole hazelnuts in each corner of cake. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover with cake dome and let stand at room temperature.)*

Maple Syrup Pecan Pie

8 SERVINGS

CRUST

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- ⅓ cup cake flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) chilled unsalted butter, diced
- 2 tablespoons chilled solid vegetable shortening
- 3½ tablespoons (about) cold water

FILLING

- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups coarsely chopped pecans

- Vanilla Whipped Cream (see recipe)
- Pecan halves

FOR CRUST: Using heavy-duty electric mixer, combine first 4 ingredients in large bowl. Add butter and shortening and mix on low speed until shortening is size of small lima beans. Add water and beat at low speed just until dough holds together. Gather dough into ball; flatten into disk. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate 30 minutes. *(Can be prepared 4 days ahead. Allow dough to soften slightly at room temperature before continuing.)*

Butter 10-inch-diameter pie pan. Roll dough out on lightly floured surface to 14-inch round. Roll up dough on rolling pin and transfer to prepared pan. Gently press dough into pan. Trim dough, leaving ½-inch overhang. Crimp to form decorative border. Freeze until crust is firm, about 30 minutes.

Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350° F. Line crust with foil. Fill with dried beans or pie weights. Bake 15 minutes. Remove beans and foil and bake until crust is set and just beginning to color, about 10 minutes longer. Cool.

FOR FILLING: Increase oven temperature to 400° F. Beat eggs and sugar in large bowl to blend. Whisk in syrup, butter, vanilla and salt. Stir in pecans.

Pour filling into crust. Bake pie 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350° F. Continue baking pie until filling is set, about 35 minutes longer. Cool. *(Can be made up to 8 hours ahead. Cover loosely and let stand at room temperature.)* Pipe cream atop pie; garnish with nuts.

Vanilla Whipped Cream

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

- ¾ cup chilled whipping cream
- 2 teaspoons powdered sugar
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract

Whip cream in large bowl until soft peaks form. Mix in sugar and vanilla. Whip until stiff peaks form. *(Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Cover and chill.)*

Butter Almond Tart

Like a big, chewy almond macaroon.

10 SERVINGS

CRUST

- 2 large egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons cold water
- 1¼ cups all purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ cup (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces

RASPBERRY SAUCE

- 2 10-ounce packages frozen raspberries in syrup, thawed, drained, 2 tablespoons juices reserved
- 6 tablespoons raspberry jam
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

FILLING

- 2 large eggs
- 1 large egg white
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1¼ cups ground blanched almonds
- 2 tablespoons amaretto liqueur
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¾ teaspoon almond extract
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted, cooled
- Powdered sugar
- Whole almonds

FOR CRUST: Beat egg yolks and 2 tablespoons cold water to blend in small bowl. Using heavy-duty electric mixer, beat flour and sugar to blend in large bowl. Add butter and beat at low speed until butter is size of small peas, about 30 seconds. Gradually add yolk mixture, beating just until dough clings together. Turn dough out onto work surface and knead until smooth. Gather dough into ball; flatten into disk. Wrap and refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

Butter 11-inch-diameter tart pan with removable bottom. Roll dough out on lightly floured surface to 14-inch round. Roll up on rolling pin and transfer to prepared pan. Press dough gently into place. Trim dough, leaving ½-inch overhang. Press overhang into pan, forming double-thick sides. Freeze dough in pan until very firm, about 2 hours. *(Can be made 1 week ahead. Wrap tightly; freeze.)*

FOR SAUCE: Puree all ingredients in processor. Strain and refrigerate. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead.)*

FOR FILLING: Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 400° F. Blend eggs, egg white and salt in processor.

With machine running, gradually add ¾ cup sugar and process 2 minutes. Add ground almonds, amaretto and vanilla and almond extracts and process just to blend. Blend in butter.

Spoon filling into frozen crust. Bake 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 350° F and bake until filling is light brown and puffed, about 10 minutes longer. Cool tart in pan on rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Remove pan sides. Arrange whole almonds around edge of tart. *(Can be made 8 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.)* Cut tart into wedges. Serve with sauce.

Caramel Cashew Cheesecake

10 SERVINGS

CRUST

½ cup all purpose flour
¼ cup (½ stick) chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces
2 tablespoons powdered sugar
Pinch of salt
¾ cup roasted unsalted cashews, coarsely chopped

FILLING

4 8-ounce packages cream cheese, room temperature
1¼ cups sugar
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
5 large eggs
2 tablespoons whipping cream

TOPPING

1 cup sugar
3 tablespoons water
¾ cup whipping cream
1 cup roasted unsalted cashews, coarsely chopped

FOR CRUST: Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350° F. Butter 9-inch-diameter springform pan with 2¾-inch-high sides. Using electric mixer, beat flour, butter, sugar and salt until moist crumbs form. Mix in cashews. Press mixture onto bottom and ½ inch up sides of pan. Bake until crust is just golden, about 15 minutes. Cool. Wrap outside of pan with heavy-duty foil. Reduce oven temperature to 325° F.

FOR FILLING: Using electric mixer, beat cream cheese, sugar and vanilla just until smooth. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating after each addition just until blended. Add cream and beat just until cream cheese filling is smooth.

Pour filling into crust. Bake until cheesecake is gently set, about 1 hour. Transfer cheesecake to rack and cool.

MEANWHILE, PREPARE TOPPING: Stir sugar and water in heavy medium saucepan over medium-low heat until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to medium-high and boil until mixture turns deep amber, occasionally brushing down sides of pan with cold water and swirling pan, about 10 minutes. Add cream (mixture will bubble up) and bring to simmer, stirring until smooth. Remove from heat. Mix in cashews. Cool to lukewarm.

Carefully spoon topping over cheesecake. Cover and chill overnight. *(Can be prepared 3 days ahead.)*

Run small sharp knife around edge of cheesecake to loosen. Release pan sides. Let stand 20 minutes at room temperature before serving.

Macadamia Crunch Ice Cream with Mango Sauce

6 SERVINGS

TOFFEE

⅔ cup roasted salted macadamia nuts, coarsely chopped
¼ teaspoon baking soda
⅓ cup sugar
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons (¼ stick) unsalted butter

ICE CREAM

1½ cups whipping cream
1½ cups milk (do not use lowfat or nonfat)
½ cup sugar
6 large egg yolks
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Mango Sauce (see recipe)
Mango slices (optional)
Fresh mint (optional)

FOR TOFFEE: Butter small cookie sheet. Combine macadamia nuts and baking soda in small bowl. Stir sugar, water and butter in heavy small saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves and butter melts, about 2 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Boil until mixture registers 290° F on candy thermometer, tilting pan to submerge thermometer end and stirring constantly, about 3 minutes. Mix in macadamia nut mixture. Immediately pour toffee onto prepared cookie sheet, spreading with back of spoon. Cool. Break into small pieces. *(Can be prepared ahead. Store in airtight container at room temperature up to 1 day or freeze up to 1 month.)*

FOR ICE CREAM: Bring cream and milk to simmer in heavy large saucepan. Whisk sugar and egg yolks to blend in medium bowl. Gradually whisk hot cream mixture into eggs. Return mixture to same saucepan. Stir over medium-low heat until custard thickens slightly and leaves path on back of spoon when finger is drawn across, about 5 minutes; do not boil. Transfer to bowl; stir in vanilla extract. Refrigerate until well chilled.

Transfer custard to ice cream maker and process according to manufacturer's instructions. Add toffee during last 5 minutes of churning. Transfer ice cream to container and freeze until firm. *(Can be prepared 4 days ahead.)*

Scoop ice cream into bowls. Top with Mango Sauce. Garnish with mango slices and mint if desired and serve.

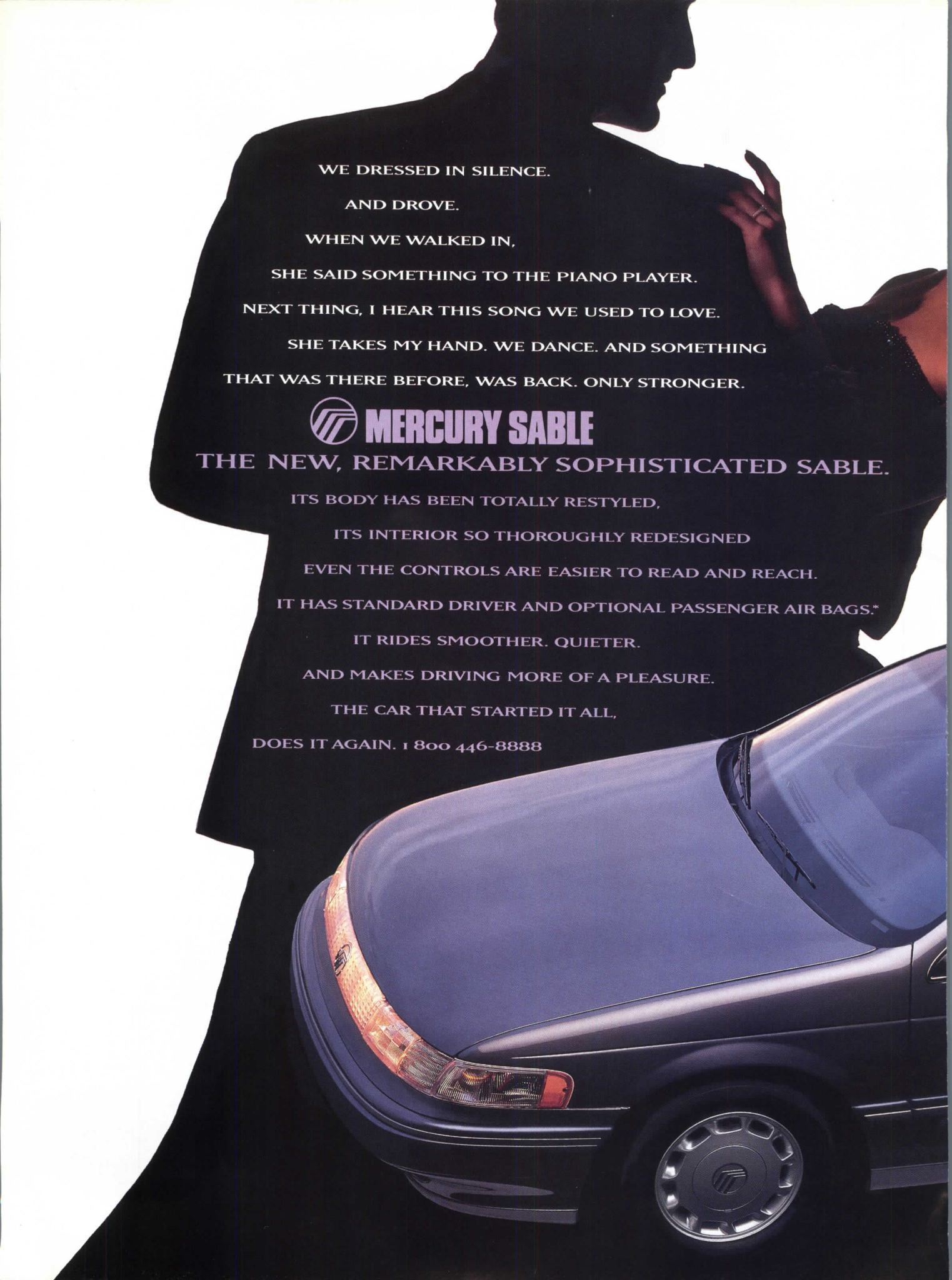
Mango Sauce

MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS

1½ pounds ripe mangoes (about 3), peeled, pitted, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon sugar

Puree all ingredients in processor or blender until smooth. Strain sauce into bowl and refrigerate until well chilled. *(Can be prepared 2 days ahead.)*

Elinor Klivans is the pastry chef at Peter Ott's Restaurant in Camden, Maine.


WE DRESSED IN SILENCE.
AND DROVE.
WHEN WE WALKED IN,
SHE SAID SOMETHING TO THE PIANO PLAYER.
NEXT THING, I HEAR THIS SONG WE USED TO LOVE.
SHE TAKES MY HAND. WE DANCE. AND SOMETHING
THAT WAS THERE BEFORE, WAS BACK. ONLY STRONGER.
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SWEET AND SAVORY RECIPES
STARRING
YOUR MAIN SQUEEZE

The Big Orange

BY LANE CROWTHER

The orange? I know that few of us think of it as anything more than a lunch-box staple or something to be squeezed for a breakfast beverage. Myself included. In the past, I've seldom incorporated oranges in my cooking. Oh, maybe in a dessert once in a while, but never as an ingredient that's key to a recipe. But when I realized that oranges are among the few fresh fruits available in March, I began to think how their bright color and distinct flavor could lend themselves to some pretty terrific dishes, both sweet and savory. And they do; while developing these recipes, I became convinced. Take a look at these six dishes, and you will be, too.

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 72}

PHOTOGRAPHY *by* CYNTHIA BROWN



Orange-Glazed Game Hens

Marinate the game hens overnight. They're served with snow peas (see below).

2 TO 4 SERVINGS

- ¾ cup fresh orange juice
- ½ cup orange honey
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce*
- 2 tablespoons minced orange peel (orange part only)
- 3 large garlic cloves, pressed
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- 2 teaspoons oriental sesame oil
- 2 1½-pound Cornish game hens, halved
- 3 oranges, peeled, white pith removed
- Sesame seeds
- 6 ounces snow peas

Mix first 8 ingredients in large bowl. Add hens skin side down. Cover and refrigerate 24 hours, turning once.

Using small sharp knife, cut between membranes of oranges to release segments. Set orange segments aside.

Preheat oven to 400° F. Transfer hens to shallow baking pan. Place marinade in heavy small saucepan and boil until reduced to ¾ cup, about 12 minutes. Brush both sides of hens with reduced marinade. Arrange skin side up in pan. Roast 5 minutes. Baste hens. Cook 10 minutes longer. Reduce oven temperature to 350° F. Baste hens and cook 10 minutes. Sprinkle hens with sesame seeds and roast until cooked through, about 10 minutes longer. Let stand 10 minutes.

Cook snow peas in pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain. Place 1 hen half in center of each plate. Alternate snow peas and orange segments around hens and serve.

**Available at Asian markets and in the Asian section of some supermarkets.*



Veal Chops with Tomato-Orange-Basil Sauce

The delicious sauce is also very nice with chicken and shellfish.

4 SERVINGS

- ¾ cup fresh orange juice
- ½ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup minced shallots
- 2 tablespoons minced orange peel (orange part only)
- ¼ cup whipping cream
- 5 tablespoons butter
- 4 6-ounce veal loin chops
- 1 cup chopped seeded peeled tomato
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil or 1½ teaspoons dried, crumbled
- Fresh basil sprigs (optional)

Combine first 3 ingredients and 1 tablespoon orange peel in heavy small saucepan. Boil until mixture is reduced to 3 tablespoons, about 10 minutes. Add cream and boil 1 minute. Set sauce aside. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)*

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Season veal with salt and pepper. Sauté veal until

FOR ACCESSORIES INFORMATION, SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

just cooked through, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer to plates; keep warm.

Reheat sauce over low heat. Whisk in remaining 4 tablespoons butter. Stir in tomato, sliced basil and remaining 1 tablespoon orange peel. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle sauce over veal. Garnish with basil sprigs if desired.

Sunshine Cheesecake (Cover Recipe)

This treat (right) is topped with slices of bright oranges. The slices must be cooked very slowly, or the pulp will fall away. Begin preparing the cheesecake one day before you plan to serve it.

10 TO 12 SERVINGS

CRUST

- 1½ 8-ounce bags gingersnap cookies, ground (about 3 cups)
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, melted
- 1½ teaspoons (generous) minced orange peel (orange part only)

FILLING

- 1½ cups fresh orange juice
- 1 3-inch piece unpeeled fresh ginger, thinly sliced (about ⅓ cup)
- 4 8-ounce packages cream cheese, room temperature
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon minced orange peel (orange part only)
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 8 ounces imported white chocolate (such as Lindt), melted
- 4 large eggs

CANDIED ORANGES

- 4 cups water
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 seedless oranges (unpeeled), cut into paper-thin slices

Fresh mint leaves

FOR CRUST: Stir all ingredients in medium bowl until crumbs are moist. Press crumbs onto bottom and 2 inches up sides of 9x2¾-inch springform pan.

FOR FILLING: Preheat oven to 350° F. Boil orange juice and ginger in heavy medium saucepan until reduced to 3 tablespoons, about 12 minutes. Using electric mixer, beat cream cheese, sugar, orange peel and vanilla in large bowl until smooth. Strain reduced orange juice and add to bowl. With mixer running, add chocolate and beat until combined. Reduce speed to low. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating until just combined.

Pour batter into crust. Bake cheesecake until top is dry and sides puff slightly (most of cheesecake will jiggle when shaken), about 50 minutes. Transfer to rack and cool. Cover and chill overnight. *(Can be prepared 2 days ahead.)*

FOR ORANGES: Cover rack with waxed paper. Combine water and sugar in heavy wide shallow pot. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Simmer 5 minutes. Add orange slices 1 at a time. Adjust heat so syrup bubbles only around edges of pan. Cook oranges 1 hour. Turn over top layer of oranges and cook until oranges are translucent and orange peels are tender, about 1 hour longer. Arrange oranges in single layer on prepared rack. Let dry 1 hour. Boil sugar syrup until thick, about 6 minutes. *(Can be prepared 6 hours ahead.)*

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 74}



Run small knife around edges of cheesecake. Loosen pan sides and remove. Overlap orange slices atop cheesecake. Reheat orange syrup over low heat if necessary. Brush over orange slices. Garnish with mint and serve.

Orange Custard Tart

Cornmeal in the crust gives a nice contrast to the creamy filling in this dessert (below).

8 SERVINGS

CRUST

- ¾ cup all purpose flour
- ⅔ cup yellow cornmeal
- ⅔ cup powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons minced orange peel (orange part only)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 7 tablespoons butter, room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

FILLING

- 1 cup whipping cream
- ½ cup fresh orange juice
- 5 large egg yolks
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons Grand Marnier
- 1 tablespoon minced orange peel (orange part only)
- 3 oranges, peeled, white pith removed
- 2 ½-pint boxes raspberries

FOR CRUST: Combine first 5 ingredients in large bowl. Add butter, egg yolk and vanilla. Using electric mixer, blend until coarse crumbs form. Knead into ball. (Dough will be very soft.) Pat dough onto bottom and up sides of 13½x4¼-inch rectangular tart pan or four 4-inch-diameter tartlet pans with removable bottom. Press into place; trim excess dough. Freeze 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line crust with foil and fill with dried beans or pie weights. Bake 15 minutes. Remove foil and beans. Press crust up sides of pan if necessary. Bake 10 minutes longer. Cool.

FOR FILLING: Mix first 6 ingredients in medium bowl. Pour filling into crust. Bake until barely set, about 30 minutes. Cool 20 minutes. Refrigerate until custard is firm, about 3 hours. *(Can be prepared 8 hours ahead.)*

Using small sharp knife, cut between membranes of oranges to release segments. Drain well on paper towels. Arrange alternating rows of orange segments and raspberries atop tart.



Fresh Citrus Compote

Try over frozen yogurt, ice cream, pound cake, or serve with your favorite cookies.

8 SERVINGS

SYRUP

- 2 cups sweet orange Muscat wine (such as Essensia)
- 1 cup fresh orange juice
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 star anise*
- ½ vanilla bean, split lengthwise

FRUIT

- 3 oranges
- 1 pink grapefruit
- 3 kiwi, peeled
- ¼ pineapple, cored, peeled

Frozen vanilla yogurt or ice cream

FOR SYRUP: Bring all ingredients to boil in heavy medium saucepan. Boil until liquid is reduced to ¾ cup, about 25 minutes. Using small sharp knife, scrape vanilla seeds into syrup; return bean to syrup. Cool. *(Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and store at room temperature.)*

FOR FRUIT: Cut peel and white pith off oranges and grapefruit. Using small sharp knife, cut between membranes of oranges and grapefruit to release segments. Cut each kiwi into 8 wedges. Cut pineapple into ½-inch-thick slices. Drain fruit. Place in bowl. Discard vanilla bean and star anise from syrup. Pour syrup over fruit and stir to combine. Serve over frozen vanilla yogurt or ice cream.

**A brown, star-shaped pod. Each "ray" holds a seed. Available at Asian markets and specialty foods stores.*

Warm Orange and Mushroom Spinach Salad

Add the grated peel from half an orange to the dressing if you want a more intense orange flavor in the salad (right).

4 TO 6 SERVINGS

DRESSING

- 8 ounces sliced bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¾ cup fresh orange juice
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons minced shallots
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar

SALAD

- 4 oranges, peeled, white pith removed
- 10 ounces spinach, stems trimmed
- 1 medium head radicchio
- 6 ounces fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed, sliced
- 6 ounces fresh oyster mushrooms
- ½ cup (generous) toasted hazelnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1 3½-ounce package enoki mushrooms (optional)

FOR DRESSING: Cook bacon in heavy large skillet over medium heat until crisp. Using slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels. Pour off drippings and reserve. Combine ¼ cup reserved drippings with remaining ingredients in small bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

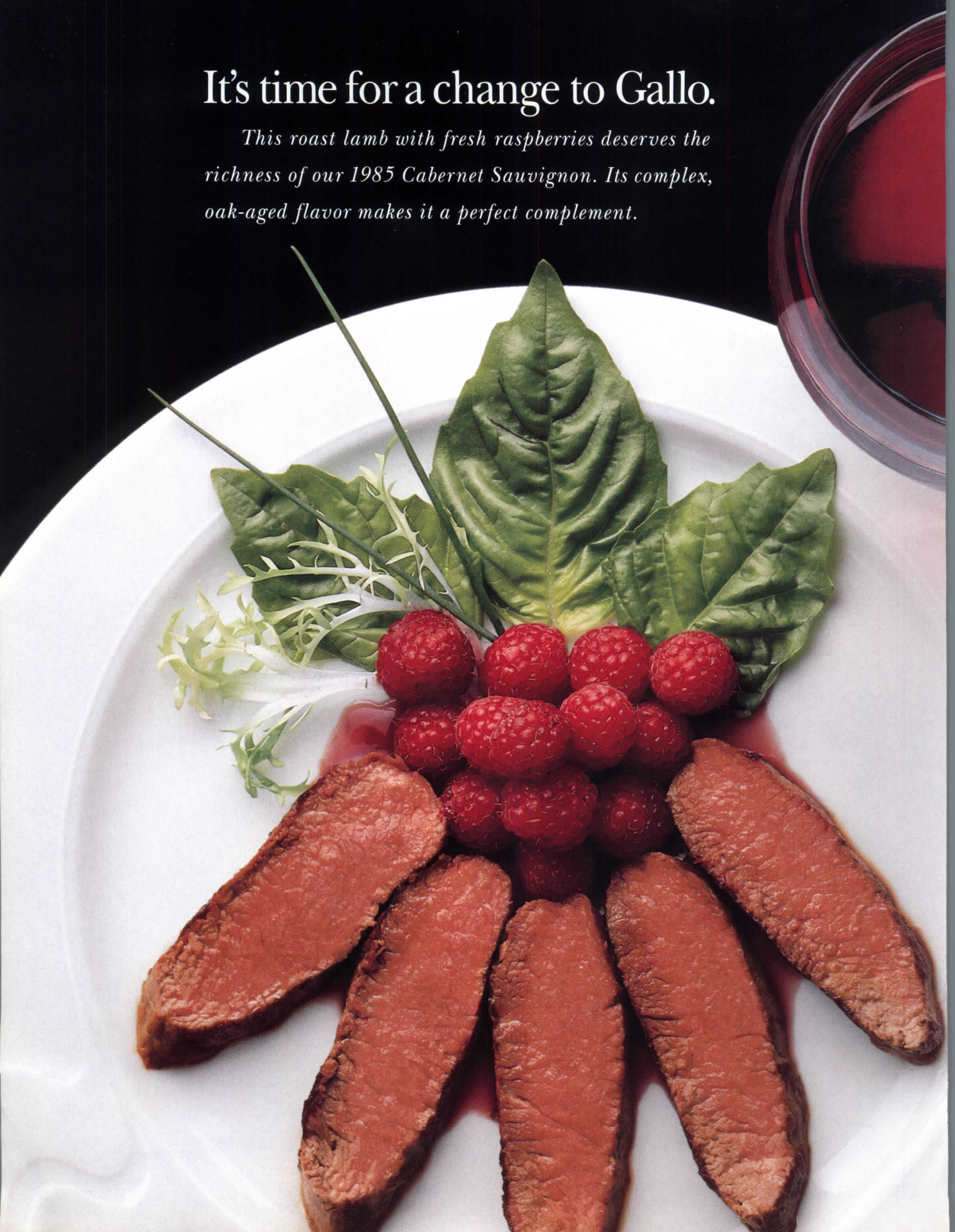
FOR SALAD: Working over small bowl and using small sharp knife, cut between membranes of oranges to release segments; add to bowl. Tear spinach and radicchio into bite-size pieces and place in large bowl. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover dressing, orange segments, greens and reserved bacon drippings separately and refrigerate.)*

Drain orange segments. Heat 2 tablespoons reserved bacon drippings in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add sliced shiitake mushrooms and sauté 1 minute. Add oyster mushrooms and season with salt and pepper. Sauté until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Add mushrooms to greens and toss. Pour dressing into same skillet and boil 2 minutes. Pour dressing over greens. Add bacon, orange segments and chopped hazelnuts. Toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish salad with enoki mushrooms and serve.



It's time for a change to Gallo.

This roast lamb with fresh raspberries deserves the richness of our 1985 Cabernet Sauvignon. Its complex, oak-aged flavor makes it a perfect complement.





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ENTERTAINING WITH STYLE

Hollywood



Nights





Show-business friends cast their votes at this winning Academy Awards party

PRODUCED *by* JONNA VEITCH CARLS TEXT *by* TRICIA CALLAS
PHOTOGRAPHY *by* JULIE DENNIS

FOR FILM INDUSTRY MOVERS AND SHAKERS, the Academy Awards ceremony is almost sacred, an event that can make or break careers, boost bottom lines and signal trends in moviemaking. For the rest of the world, it's a terrific opportunity for good-natured arguments, office pools and plenty of stargazing. This year, David Ladd, a senior vice president at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and son of the late actor Alan Ladd, and David's wife, actress Dey Young Ladd (above), are combining both ways of viewing the show by inviting some "industry" friends to watch the festivities on television while enjoying a casual dinner in the Ladds' Beverly Hills home. "If we're not at the show, then we stay here and relax with friends," says David. "We keep the menu simple and usually get food to go. That makes it fun for everyone."

But this is simple fun, Hollywood style. The Ladds start with a healthy dose of glamour by serving David's favorite Dutch vodka with smoked salmon and caviar with toast points (below). Before an envelope is opened, partygoers cast "ballots" with their predictions of the winners (left). {CONTINUED ON PAGE 80}









ON THE DAY OF THE PARTY, Dey's last stop is Chasen's restaurant, where she picks up the evening's entrée, chicken pot pies (above and left). "Everyone loves them, and they make the party so easy for us," says Dey. "All I have to do is toss a salad, prepare dessert and rewarm the pies." When that's done, the gang can relax over a delicious meal and wait for the winners to be revealed.

Menu for Ten

SMOKED SALMON AND CAVIAR WITH TOAST POINTS

KETEL ONE DUTCH VODKA

CHASEN'S CHICKEN POT PIES

MIXED GREENS WITH CHAMPAGNE VINAIGRETTE

MEEKER VINEYARD DRY CREEK VALLEY CHARDONNAY '90

WINNER'S CHOCOLATE CAKE

COFFEE AND COGNAC

Chasen's Chicken Pot Pies

David and Dey order their home-style main course from Chasen's, the fabled Hollywood hangout where the entertainment industry has been dining and dealing for more than 55 years. Although the restaurant does not usually take "to-go" orders, they make exceptions for some preferred customers. The recipe halves easily. To start the festivities, the Ladds offer smoked salmon and caviar with toast points. They pour a Chardonnay throughout the evening.

10 SERVINGS

FILLING

- 18 cups water
- 5 2¾-pound chickens, quartered
- 6 carrots, coarsely chopped
- 6 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
- 3 small onions, coarsely chopped
- 2 bouquet garni (2 bay leaves, 2 thyme sprigs, 2 parsley sprigs, 9 whole black peppercorns for each bouquet)
- 40 pearl onions
- 3 medium carrots, peeled, cut into matchstick-size strips
- 3 medium russet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2½ cups frozen peas, thawed

SAUCE

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (2¼ sticks) butter
- 3 medium onions, sliced
- 12 whole peppercorns
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1⅔ cups whipping cream
- 2½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon hot pepper sauce (such as Tabasco)

Pot Pie Dough (see recipe)

- 5 egg yolks, beaten to blend (glaze)

FOR FILLING: Divide first 6 ingredients between 2 large pots and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until chicken is tender, about 35 minutes. Using tongs, transfer chicken to large bowl and cool. Strain cooking liquid and return to 1 large pot. Remove skin from chicken. Pull meat from bones in large pieces. Cover chicken meat and refrigerate.

Bring strained cooking liquid to boil. Add pearl onions and blanch 1 minute. Transfer to medium bowl of ice water using slotted spoon and cool. Drain onions. Add carrots to pot and boil until crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Transfer to medium bowl of ice water using slotted spoon and cool. Drain carrots. Add potatoes to pot and boil until almost tender, about 15 minutes. Transfer potatoes to large bowl using slotted spoon and cool. Reserve 5⅓ cups cooking liquid. Peel pearl onions. Add chicken, onions, carrots and peas to potatoes. *(Filling can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)*

FOR SAUCE: Melt 1 cup butter in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add sliced onions and whole pepper-

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 83}

Strategy for an Award-winning Party

Over the years, the Academy Awards have become an event that many people, not just Hollywood insiders, get together to watch over dinner. As the Ladds have shown, the main thing is to have fun. This is not the time to orchestrate an elaborate multicourse menu or use your finest dinnerware. The most important ingredient at this party is a sense of humor.

- Since the awards show is always on a weeknight, there's not a lot of time to put together a party. The Ladds simplified their menu by centering it around a purchased main course—chicken pot pies. Another option is to send out for the best pizza in town and prepare a colorful antipasto platter of purchased deli items, plus a big green salad. Or buy some roasted or spit-cooked chicken, bake a few potatoes and serve a variety of toppings for them, including cheddar cheese, sour cream, chives and salsa. If you prefer to prepare your main course and buy side dishes, choose something that can be made ahead of time, refrigerated and then reheated, like chili or lasagne. Round it out with salads and bread from your market or deli.
- Popcorn is, of course, the most appropriate appetizer or snack food. Try different seasonings, like cumin, curry powder or Parmesan cheese.
- For an easy dessert that everyone will enjoy, set up a frozen dessert bar, and include a few different flavors of ice cream, frozen yogurt and sorbet. Offer purchased or homemade sauces, fruit, nuts and liqueurs as toppings.
- Before the show, make up ballots of the nominees and let your guests vote for their Oscar picks. Give the winner a prize: a movie cassette, free movie passes, a bottle of Niebaum-Coppola Estate wine (from director Francis Coppola's vineyard) or a basket of celebrity-linked food items (like Paul Newman's salad dressing or Frank Sinatra's pasta sauce) are good ideas.

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AFTERWARD, THE MEN RETIRE TO the library to savor Cognac and cigars, and to talk shop (above), and the women move to the den for coffee, dessert and conversation (below). When the cake is gone and the cigars extinguished, a few members of the group caravan to one or two of the many parties all over town. "It's a nice way to congratulate your friends on their success," says David. "Besides, it's one hell of a good time."





corns and sauté 5 minutes. Whisk in flour. Cook 2 minutes, whisking constantly. Gradually whisk in 5⅓ cups reserved cooking liquid and whipping cream. Boil 3 minutes, whisking constantly. Mix in fresh lemon juice, hot pepper sauce and remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. Strain sauce. *(Sauce can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover tightly and refrigerate.)*

Bring sauce to simmer, whisking frequently. Divide chicken and vegetables among ten 3- to 4-cup soufflé dishes or soup crocks (about 6 inches in diameter). Top with sauce. Cool.

Cut each dough disk into 4 pieces. Roll out 1 piece on lightly floured surface to 9-inch round. Place dough round atop soufflé dish, covering completely and trimming dough overhang to 1 inch if necessary. Press dough firmly to sides of soufflé dish to secure. Repeat with remaining dough pieces and soufflé dishes, reserving remaining 2 dough pieces for another use. *(Pies can be prepared 8 hours ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Let stand 30 minutes at room temperature before continuing.)*

Preheat oven to 400° F. Brush egg glaze over dough. Bake chicken pot pies until pastry is deep golden brown, about 30 minutes.

Pot Pie Dough

This dough makes enough to cover ten 3- to 4-cup 6-inch-diameter soufflé dishes, with a little left over. For best results, make the pastry in three batches.

9 cups all purpose flour
3 teaspoons salt
2¼ cups (4½ sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces
2¼ cups ice water

Combine 3 cups flour and 1 teaspoon salt in processor. Add ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter and cut in using on/off turns until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add ¾ cup ice water and mix in using on/off turns until dough forms moist clumps. Gather dough into ball; flatten into disk. Wrap tightly in plastic and refrigerate. Repeat with remaining flour, salt, butter and ice water in 2 more batches. Refrigerate dough at least 30 minutes. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead; keep refrigerated.)*

Mixed Greens with Champagne Vinaigrette

10 SERVINGS

⅓ cup Champagne vinegar or white wine vinegar
3 tablespoons minced shallots
3 tablespoons minced fresh chives or green onion tops
1 teaspoon dried pink peppercorns, coarsely chopped
1 cup canola oil

1 head curly endive, torn into bite-size pieces
1 head butter lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
1 head red leaf lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
1 head radicchio, torn into bite-size pieces
2 bunches arugula

Whisk first 4 ingredients in small bowl. Gradually whisk in canola oil. Season dressing to taste with salt.

Place greens in large bowl. Toss with enough dressing to season to taste.

Winner's Chocolate Cake

This dense, flourless fudge-like cake should be served in small wedges.

10 SERVINGS

CAKE

8 ounces bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semisweet chocolate, chopped
¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter (1¾ sticks)
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
1 cup sugar
5 large eggs, separated
3 tablespoons ground almonds

GLAZE

½ cup whipping cream
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
4 ounces bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semisweet chocolate, chopped
4 ounces milk chocolate, chopped

Fresh raspberries (optional)
Fresh mint leaves (optional)

FOR CAKE: Preheat oven to 350° F. Butter and flour 9-inch-diameter springform pan with 2¾-inch-high sides. Melt first 3 ingredients in heavy medium saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring constantly until smooth. Pour into large bowl and cool slightly. Add sugar, yolks and almonds and whisk until smooth. Using electric mixer, beat whites in large bowl until stiff but not dry. Fold whites into batter in 2 additions.

Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake until top is dry and begins to crack and tester inserted into center comes out with moist crumbs attached, about 40 minutes. Transfer cake to rack and cool 15 minutes. Press down gently on top of cake to even edges. Cool completely.

FOR GLAZE: Bring cream and butter to simmer in heavy medium saucepan. Reduce heat, add both chocolates and stir until smooth. Let stand until cool but still pourable, about 1 hour.

Invert cake onto 8-inch round tart pan bottom or cardboard round. Place cake on rack set over cookie sheet. Pour glaze over cake, spreading with spatula to coat top and sides. Refrigerate cake until glaze sets, about 1 hour. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead; keep refrigerated. Let cake stand 2 hours at room temperature before serving.)* Transfer cake to platter. Garnish with fresh raspberries and mint leaves if desired.



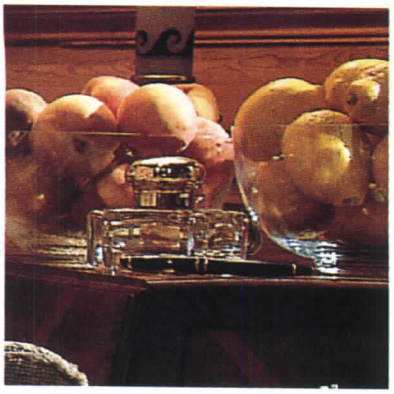




Cocktails *in the* Den

As winter delivers its final flurries of snow and blows its last cold winds, the den offers a warm and relaxing sanctuary from the outside world. But instead of curling up alone with a book, try curling up with a few good friends over simple appetizers and something spirited to drink. Dens and libraries, like this one at Kentshire Galleries, are, by their very nature, richly appointed, lovingly cluttered and built for comfort. What better place to get cozy with some of your favorite people while sipping vintage Port, a toasty single-malt Scotch or a steaming cup of cider? {CONTINUED ON PAGE 86}

by Sarah Belk
Photography *by* Kari Haavisto



FIRST OFF, BRIGHTEN THE WINTER MOOD BY FILLING THE room with fresh fruit and flowers. A flat of yellow tulips (see previous pages), like these from Castle & Pierpont, will lighten any dark corner. On the mantel, roses and lilacs scent the room. For a bit of whimsy, a florist's flower bucket can stand on the floor to double as a vase. Fruit-filled crystal **bowls** (like those at left) add to the spring-is-coming setting. Bring out your old **croquet mallets** or tennis racket to stir up some warm-weather memories. The antique mallets (see previous pages) from Julian Graham-White are 1920s artifacts.

To ensure that all appetites are satisfied, have a varied selection of finger food to nibble on and present a well-stocked bar. On the tray table, "Optic Classic" Champagne **flutes** (below) from Williams-Sonoma are just right for a sip of bubbly, which is guaranteed to lift just about anyone's spirits. No-nonsense appetizers are served from silver-plated **bowls** and **trays** (all below): toasted almonds, smoked salmon and black bread, prosciutto-wrapped asparagus (serving pieces are from Charlotte Moss & Co.) and Roquefort-and-walnut-filled endive spears (on tray from Te-Ma).

Traditional appointments enhance the comfortable setting. Gold-mesh and enamel-rimmed **salad plates** (a perfect size for appetizers) from Bernardaud and white cotton cocktail **napkins** (both below) from R. Schweitzer Linens are terrific examples.

Set up the bar on a convenient sideboard or a side table. Simple and elegant crystal **decanters** from Te-Ma and sturdy 12-sided geometric **glassware** from Crate & Barrel (both shown at left) accent the decor of the room. Crate & Barrel's all-purpose large stemmed **glasses** (left) can be used to serve everything from a white wine spritzer to beer. A pretty silver-plated **tray** with inlaid wood (left) from Linda Horn Antiques makes it easy to transport glasses from the cupboard to the side table. Sterling silver **ice tongs** (left, on tray) are available from Tiffany & Co.

When all your guests have arrived, there's only one more thing left to do. Raise a glass and toast the waning of winter and the coming of spring. Then just sit back and relax.

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Gentle Orange • Cinnamon Apple • Quietly Chamomile **Lipton** Orange & Spice • Blackberry • Mountain Berry Apple

Specialty Teas





◀ Herend's "Rothschild Bird" made of Hungarian porcelain



◀ Hand-thrown tureen by Kinichi Shigeno for del Mano Gallery & Studio





▶ Solid "Uno Black" tureen designed by Taitù from The Prince's Table



▶ "Coimbra" tureen handmade and hand-painted in Portugal for Cottura

▶ Hand-decorated porcelain tureen with lion motif, from Tiffany & Co.

Elegant Soup Tureens

PRODUCED *by* LAURIE BAER
PHOTOGRAPHY *by* HENRY HAMAMOTO

Wintertime is soup time, when a delicate broth or a hearty stew might well be the focus of a cold-weather party. Instead of dishing up dinner in the kitchen, bring your handiwork to the table in a big, beautiful tureen. This traditional serving piece, which has been decorating tables all over the world for centuries, takes on a new art form when fashioned by today's innovative designers.

One such tureen comes from Villeroy & Boch. They've created a contemporary version of the piece with "Thunderbird" (left) from their Heinrich line. Painted in bold colors, it will enhance any modern table setting. For an old-world look, there's Cottura's "Coimbra" (below, left), which is based on an antique Portuguese pattern. You'll also find some country charm in the fanciful "Melon" from Classical Creamware (below), an English company that has been hand-producing tableware since the 1760s. (In fact, no two of their pieces are exactly alike.) So whether you prefer a completely original creation by artist Kinichi Shigeno or a more traditional-looking one from Italy with a pretty butterfly motif (both below, left), you'll likely find the perfect server for your soup—or a different type of centerpiece for your table—right here.

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◀ Footed tureen with butterfly motif and gold details, hand-painted in Italy



◀ "Estate Tobacco Leaf" with rectangular underplate, by Mottahedeh



◀ "Pastel Floral" from J. Willfred Imports of Charles Sadek Import Co.



▶ "Melon" by Classical Creamware, with ladle and leaf-shaped underplate

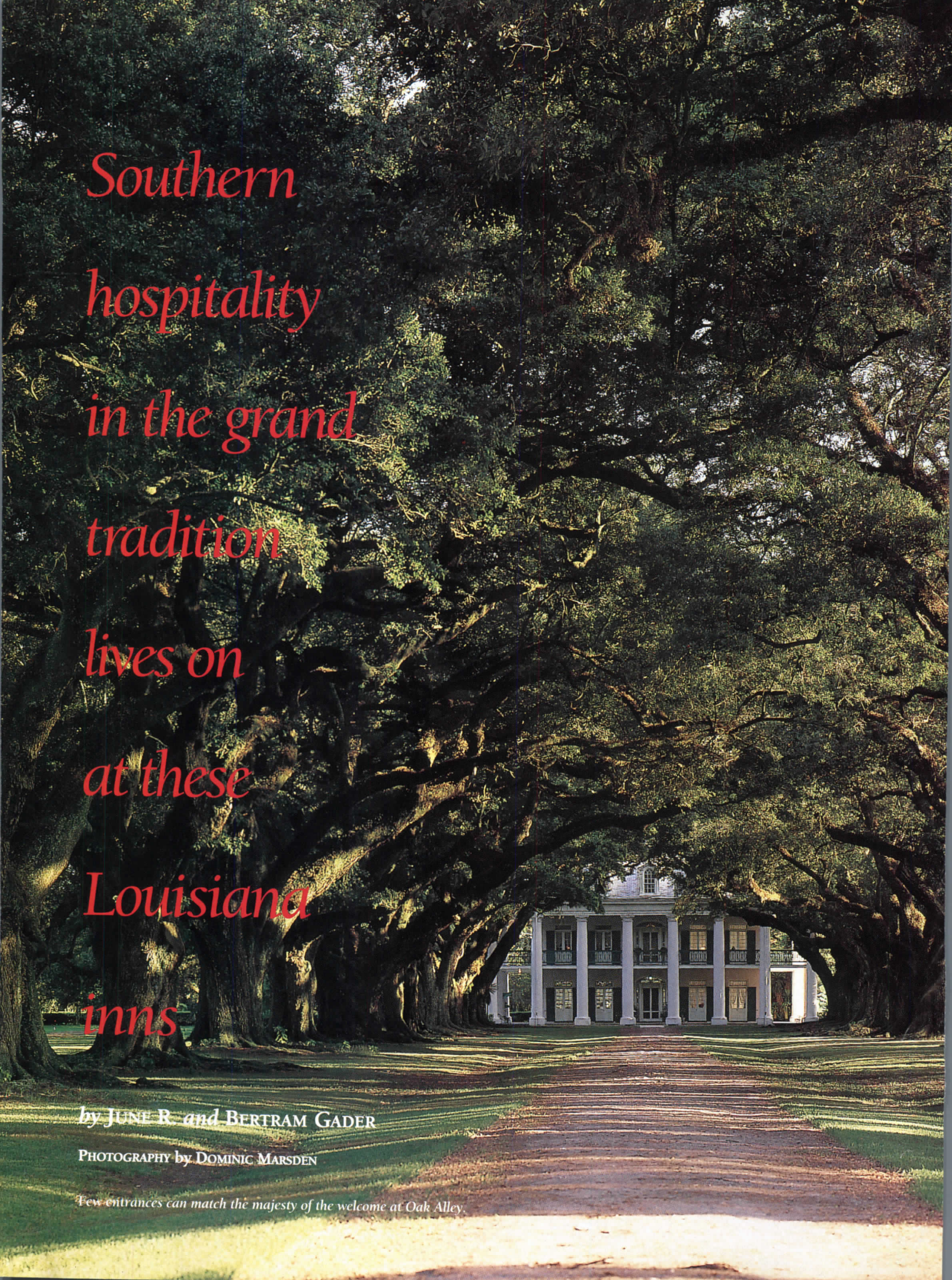


▶ Deruta's "Pompeiano" hand-decorated in Italy, with matching plate

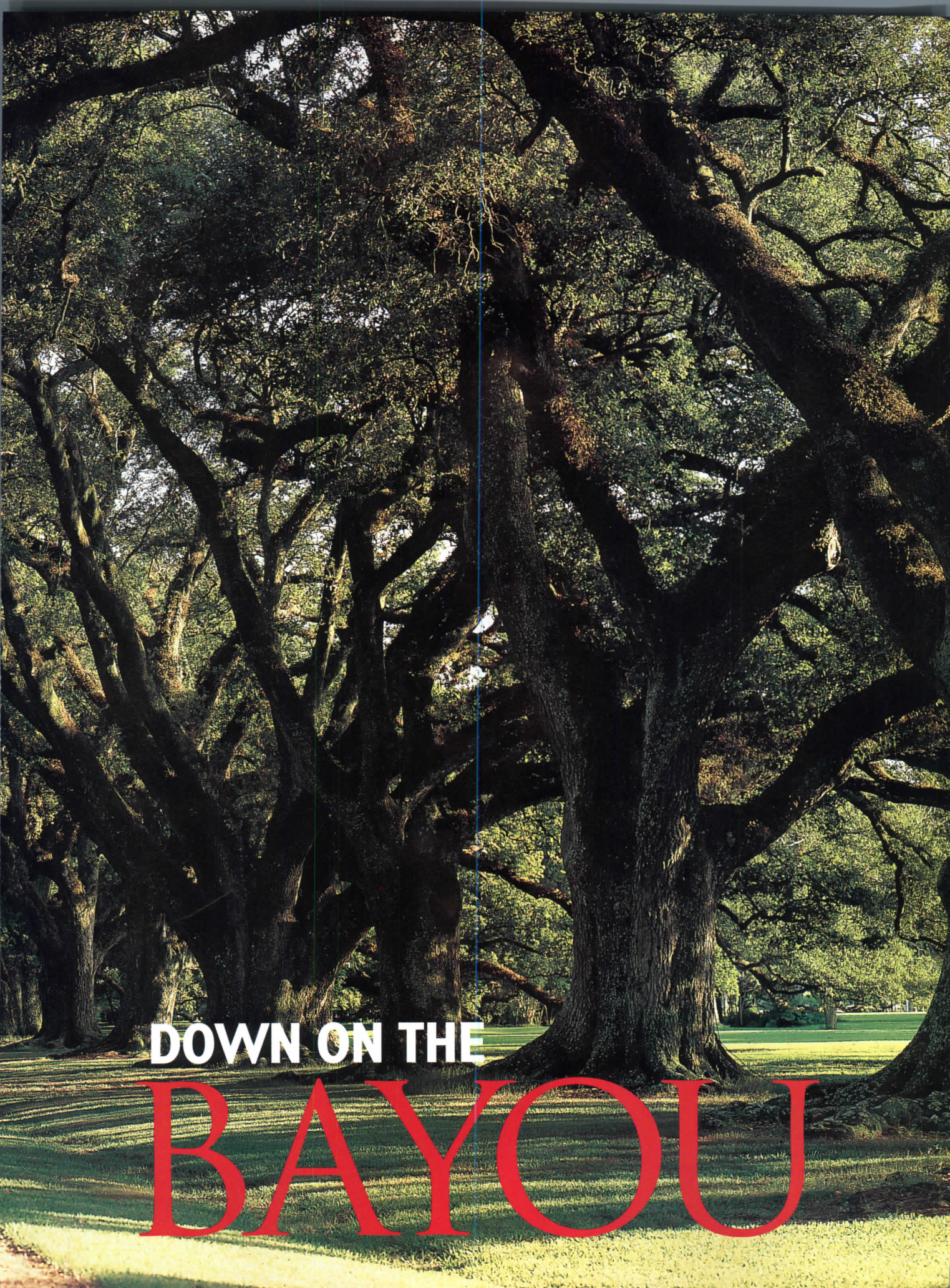
Southern hospitality in the grand tradition lives on at these Louisiana inns

by JUNE R. *and* BERTRAM GADER

PHOTOGRAPHY by DOMINIC MARSDEN



Few entrances can match the majesty of the welcome at Oak Alley.


DOWN ON THE
BAYOU

If you don't have a streak of romanticism as wide as the Mississippi, don't bother to take this trip.

It's about pristine mansions with columned facades, endless stretches of lawn and long driveways beneath live oaks that drip with Spanish moss and sweet nostalgia. It's about the scent of beeswax on gleaming antiques, the scent of crab *etouffée* cooking in plantation kitchens, and the scent of magnolias and honeysuckle hanging on balmy night air. It's about . . . oh, go ahead and say it . . . southern hospitality (a fact, not a myth), gracious living and hosts who treat you like old family friends.

In short, this is time travel, a trip into our antebellum heritage with every glorious cliché intact. Dust off your dreams of the Old South and come with us.

The Mississippi River carves a sinuous, sidewinder's path between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. On either side, River Road follows each twist and turn like a dance partner who never misses a step. Grassy levees, green as summer, shoulder between road and river, creating a dreamy, parklike landscape with a teasing sense of mystery about it: What's hiding back there? Is there really water just beyond those endlessly rolling banks?

On the inland side of each River Road the world encroaches, sometimes bucolic and sometimes, unfortunately, industrial; but for every corner you turn to confront some bastion of the Machine Age, there will be another turn where fields run to the horizon or where a cluster of live oaks alerts you to a nearly hidden plantation mansion.

On historic maps it can be seen that before the Civil War, the river land was like a beehive, tiny farms abutting the thousand-acre plantations, simple cottages far more prevalent than mansions, every inch of arable land given over to the two crops that were most successful in this marshy soil, indigo and sugar cane.

The wealthy families that built the mansions were mostly Creoles, descendants of European aristocracy who settled here under French, and later Spanish, rule. The smaller holdings, also spreading out along the bayous, often belonged to Acadians, or Cajuns—French refugees from Nova Scotia who had learned a hardy, backwoods way of life. That all leads us to another reason for taking a trip that has nothing—or maybe everything—to do with romanticism: food, outrageously wonderful food.

Creole cooking harks back to the classic cuisines of Europe, with their finely tuned sauces. Cajun cooking developed along the lines of the robust, one-pot meal. Both cuisines take advantage of Louisiana's abundance of seafood, wildfowl, game, sweet potatoes, corn and rice, and both have borrowed spices, sauces, ingredients and methods of cooking from the West Indies, Africa and the local Native Americans, so we outsiders are forgiven if we can't tell our Creole from our Cajun. What matters here is that three times a day we can sit down to fare that has the distinction of being both exotic and comforting—quite a feat.

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 94}



At Tezcuco, you can overnight in the main house or opt for one of these restored cabins.

SPAIN?



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NO.

So you thought this was the old country where Ponce de Leon once romped, where flamenco and latin guitar stir romance in each beating heart, where country inns called "Paradores" welcome the explorer from afar, where cannons still point out to sea from ancient forts that once repelled the great Sir Francis Drake himself. It is. Only this old country lies right in your own balmy Caribbean, with up-to-the-minute luxuries in top-rated resorts, and 150 white sand beaches you can sink your toes in within hours if you leave right now.

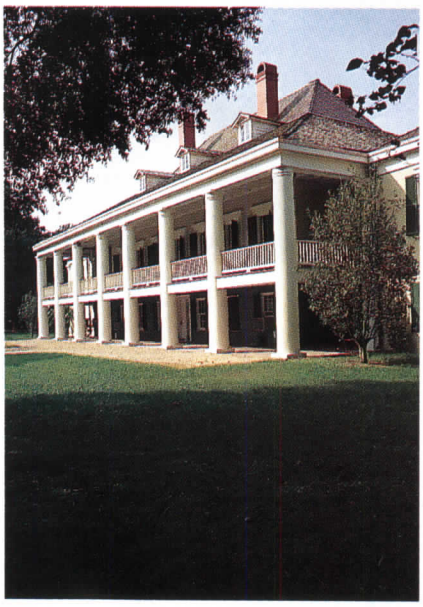
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There are about 20 mansions along this route, but many are private or open only by special appointment. We chose to visit eight that are open daily for tours, or that take overnight guests making a leisurely three- or four-day trip. There's no point in standing knee-deep in romanticism and not taking time to smell the magnolias.

We left New Orleans on a soft, balmy morning that promised perfect traveling weather, cutting west across the city to Jefferson Highway in the suburbs, which turns into Highway 48 (River Road) when it passes under the Huey P. Long Bridge. A few minutes past the bridge we were at Destrehan plantation, our first sight-seeing stop on the east side of the river.



Destrehan

DESTREHAN

Built in 1787, this is the oldest mansion in the area, and an unusual architectural mélange. The original house, designed for one hundred dollars by a "free person of color" named Charles, was Louisiana Planter style modified with a steeply hipped West Indian roof. Owner Jean Noel d'Estrehan de Beaupré, a statesman farmer, had 14 children; around 1810, he added two set-back wings called *garçonnières* to house his sons. Finally, at the height of the Greek Revival craze in 1840, eight massive columns were added to the front of the house.

Touring Destrehan is fun, because you learn a lot about the traditions and architecture of the region. Extra-tall windows and doors maximized ventilation (and still do). Gorgeous armoires replaced closets, which tended to encourage mildew in the humid climate. The ubiquitous decorative fire screens not only kept cinders out of the room but also helped keep the ladies' faces from melting—they used wax-based makeup to create those southern belle complexions.

In a section of the house under restoration you can see the traditional heart-of-cypress timbers (the nearby swamps are filled with cypress) and examples of *bousillage*, a plasterlike mixture of Spanish moss, animal hair and straw, molded with ground oyster shells and river mud, that was used as a building material. You also learn that the magnificent live oaks, a plantation staple, grow for two hundred years, stand dormant for two hundred more and then slowly die for two hundred. Destrehan's are in their dormant phase.

Here, as at many of the mansions, tour guides are dressed in crinolines; as we watched hoop-skirted ladies languidly cross the lawns, it was easy to imagine we had dropped into another century. But our hunger pangs were very up-to-the-minute, so we hastily followed our guide's advice and drove five minutes west to Saia's Oaks Plantation Restaurant for the first of many southern feasts.

Having regained our strength, we again headed west on River Road (which, after changing its numbers a couple of times, becomes Highway 44) and in half an hour were at our next destination.

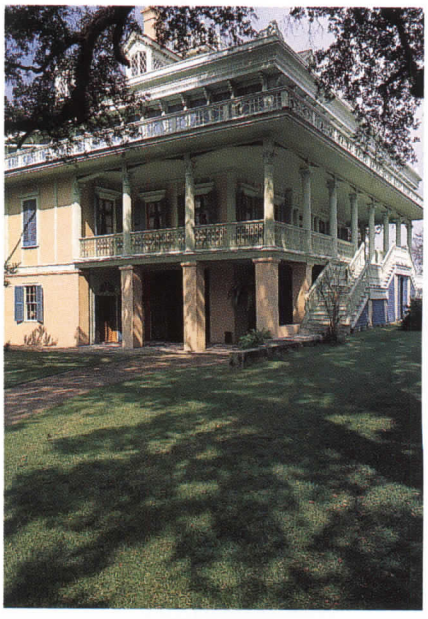
SAN FRANCISCO

You couldn't ask for a better study in contrasts than to travel from sedate Destrehan, with its still-under-restoration air of dishabille, to San Francisco, pastel painted and decorated and restored and refurnished to within an inch of its gaudy life. With its widow's walk and galleries, its balustrades and rococo grillwork, its columns and lattices and flanking blue onion-domed cisterns, it looks like a lady who couldn't decide which dress to wear for a grand ball, so ended up wearing them all.

This style is sometimes known as "steamboat Gothic." In fact, this is the very same mansion that writer Frances Parkinson Keyes used as a model for her novel of that name. Built between 1853 and 1856 by Edmond Bozonier Marmillion and embellished by his son, Antoine Valsin, and Valsin's Bavarian-born wife, the house is an absolutely dazzling bazaar of painted ceilings and friezes, *faux marbre* mantels, lavishly colored walls and ornate chandeliers, fabrics and furnishings.

The nonprofit San Francisco Plantation Foundation, the present owner, hired archaeologists to work with architects and interior designers to do a completely authentic, circa-1860 restoration, down to the most minute detail. So even though San Francisco seems to bear the hand of Disney, it is in fact a perfect representation of a kind of pre-Civil War luxe.

The slanting sun told us it was time to move on to our overnight stop at Oak



San Francisco

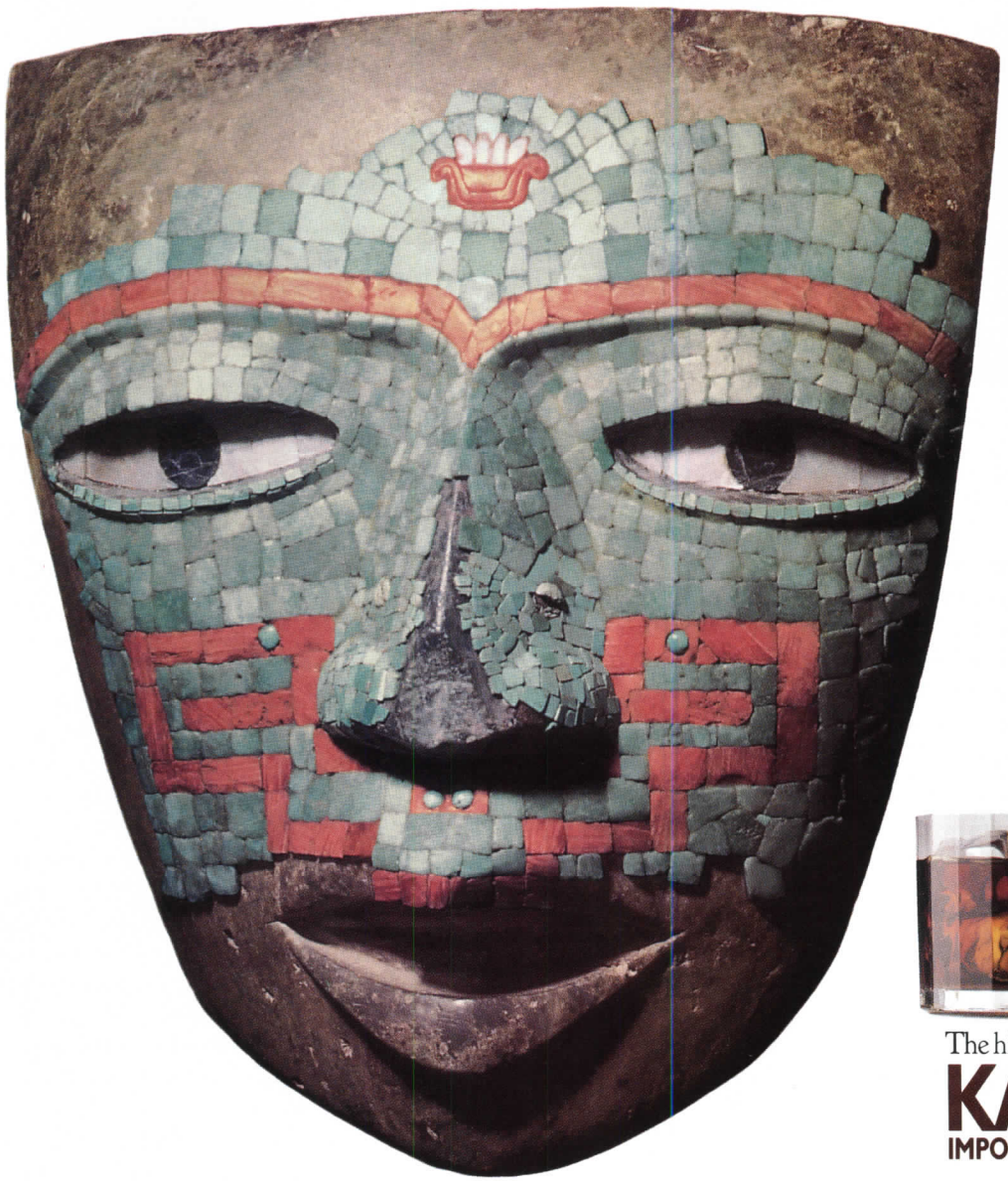
Alley on the other side of the river, so we drove west to the Lutcher-Vacherie ferry. Feeling very Mark Twainish, we chugged across the lazy expanse of the Mississippi, at last seeing the view that the levee had hidden. Disembarking, we turned right on Highway 18—the west-bank River Road—and reached our destination in less than ten minutes.

OAK ALLEY

The massive live oaks—14 to a side, planted exactly 80 feet apart in the early 1700s by an unknown French settler—create a leafy, cathedral-like arch over the broad avenue. Beyond the trees stands a graceful 1839 pale pink mansion with tall columns and wide verandas. A sense of déjà vu sweeps in: This is the "I've stood on this spot before" moment we've waited for, where the books we all have read seem to come to life.

The mansion was built by a wealthy French sugar planter, Jacques Télesphore Roman III, brother of a two-term governor of Louisiana. The felicitous

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 96}



The mask: good spirits 300 A.D.
The bottle: good spirits 1992 A.D.



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The veranda at Oak Alley is a charming spot for lunch or dinner.

blend of Greek Revival and Louisiana Planter styles is superb—28 Doric columns echo the number of trees, while the balustrades around the upper gallery and widow's walk are of wood so finely carved that they appear to be wrought iron. Inside, the high-ceilinged rooms are tastefully appointed in period and postperiod furnishings. The views from the upper verandas stretch across still-flourishing cane fields and to the river, making it easy to imagine the days when steamboats created an air of festivity as they churned by.

Festivities are still a hallmark of life at Oak Alley. The mansion is often the scene for weddings and other parties, and seasonal dinner-theater presentations take place in the pavilion near Oak Alley's restaurant. On the second Saturday in December, the plantation's famed Christmas Bonfire Party treats guests to a Cajun tradition: a bonfire on the levee "to light Père Noël's way." And any night there might be a Fais-do-do (or "go to sleep"), originally a party with Cajun music to put the babies to sleep so that parents could celebrate, but today a banquet with dancing under the stars, usually for a corporate group.

There was a Fais-do-do the night we stayed at Oak Alley, and owner Zeb Mayhew invited us to drop in for the dancing. But since the plantation's restaurant isn't open for dinner, he first sent us down the road to Lafitte's Landing Restaurant in Donaldsonville, just this side of the Sunshine Bridge, where chef Terry McDonner gave us an outstanding and extremely generous meal.

Back at Oak Alley we were happy to listen to the lively music and watch others dance. Then we wandered off to our two-bedroom cottage, and wished we'd brought along a family to fill it. There was a large living room, a dining room furnished with wicker and a well-equipped kitchen. Outside, a deck held table and chairs, and there even was a lawn swing beneath the trees. Sitting under the stars, listening to the music, we commented that the day had been sublime and that we'd never be able to eat again.

Yet the next morning, when we walked over to the cottage restaurant and were served the complimentary breakfast of coffee and fresh orange *juice, fruit and* giant, saucer-size beignets with powdered sugar and cane syrup . . . well, naturally we gobbled it all up. (Amazing what a good night's sleep does for the appetite.) We even considered hanging around for the lunchtime home cooking of Creole and Cajun specialties, but compromised by stocking up at the adjoining gift shop with garlic chili sauce, hot pepper jelly and green Louisiana hot sauce.

We decided to spend the day touring three plantations on the east side of the river, crossing this time by the Sunshine Bridge about 20 minutes away. Turning left off the bridge, we were almost instantly at our first stop.

TEZCUCO

At first sight, Tezcuco, an Aztec word meaning "resting place," seems like a country cousin to other, grander mansions. Its "raised cottage" style of architecture, with above-ground basement, fretted cast-iron railings and deep dormer windows, gives it a homey air. Lush with vegetation, shaded by dozens of the ubiquitous live oaks and studded with restored cabins and outbuildings including a chapel, carriage house and blacksmith shop, the property is like a little village. You almost expect friendly hounds to come out, tails wagging, to meet you, and to see babies playing around the cabin doors.

That's why the interior of the mansion, built in 1855 by Benjamin Tureaud, a member of a prominent Creole family, comes as a surprise. The large, comfortable rooms have soaring 16-foot ceilings with ornate friezes and center rosettes, doors and windows with intricate *faux bois* graining, splendid period furniture, and a quiet air of grandeur throughout.

Tezcuco accepts overnight guests, but our schedule didn't allow us the extra night. However, our hostess gave us a tour of the cottages and the mansion accommodations, and then we spent a happy half hour in the plantation antique shop. Back in our car, we

turned right for the short drive to our next tour stop, being careful to stay on River Road, which becomes Highway 942 and bears slightly left.

HOUMAS HOUSE

This is a fantasy estate, a perfectly posed portrait of a *grande dame* without a hair out of place. The lawns are as smooth and green as Scarlett's velvet curtains. The magnolias blossom, a vine-covered arbor arches over a garden walkway, a pair of domed, hexagonal garçonnières stand at a respectful distance. And the balconied, belvedered mansion, with its Greek Revival touch of 14 splendid columns, is as graceful and gorgeous as southern mansions come.

The land was purchased from Houmas Indians in Colonial days. A superbly preserved four-room dwelling at the rear—built in the late 1700s, when Louisiana was under Spanish dominion—is connected by a gated, arched carriageway to the 1840 main house, built by the daughter of Revolutionary War hero General Wade Hampton. Dr. George Crozat, who bought the mansion one hundred years later, stripped away all the irrelevancies that had been added by careless owners and restored it to perfection. He collected the finest furnishings and objects from both periods of the home, and made this a well-loved and livable museum. Of special interest are the free-standing three-story spiral staircase, much admired by architectural students, and Dr. Crozat's amazing collection of armoires, which fills an upper hallway.

Every tourist map of the area makes note of The Cabin restaurant, constructed by stringing together ten 140-year-old slave cabins from nearby plantations, so we headed there for lunch, our breakfast beignets now a distant memory. We backtracked to Highway 44, turned left at its junction with Highway 22, and found buildings so ramshackle that we thought twice about going in. But the parking lot was crowded (a hopeful sign), and the inside was inviting.

A high-ceilinged hexagonal dining room was hung with old farm implements, and the menu provided us with a lot of local lore and entirely too many temptations. Eyes much bigger than stomachs, we settled on spicy crawfish etouffée, a marvelously thick gumbo with crawfish and sausage, and side dishes of black-eyed peas, red beans and rice, and corn bread. They were all so good that we had to try the buttermilk pie as well.

Then we headed back past Houmas House on River Road—Highway 942, which becomes Highway 75—and arrived at our next plantation.

ASHLAND-BELLE HELENE

This 1841 Greek Revival mansion is an elegy to its era; it is the bare bones of what once was probably the most splendid of all the river homes. The trees seem to weep here, the birds that live undisturbed in the old oaks and pecans seem to sing a mournful song. Paint is peeling,

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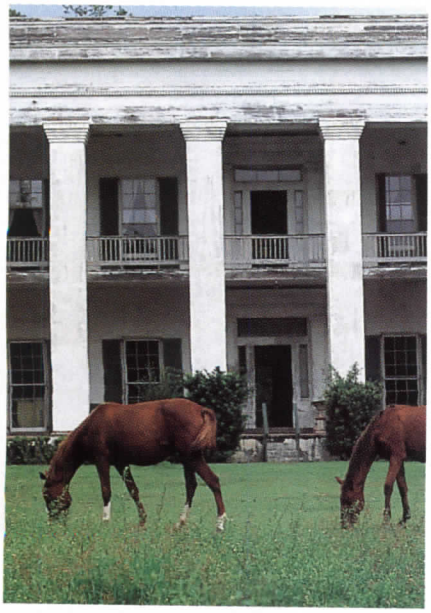
A generous southern breakfast gets the day off to a rousing start at Madewood (right). Houmas House (above) is known for its impeccable collection of antique furnishings.



Cherie Traigle of Randolph Hall, the restaurant at Nottoway plantation, uncorks a white wine to go with specialties of the house, including gumbo, corn bread and seafood salad.

and the entire floor is up in one section of the house, its underpinnings revealed.

And yet, just for those reasons, this was among the more interesting places on our trip: There is little to distract the eye from the outstanding architectural features. The two-story house is taller than most, its 28 massive square columns standing 30 feet high. Each floor is an immense 90 feet square, the large and airy rooms opening out to wide galleries via step-through "guillotine" windows on both levels. The magnificent elliptical stairway, one of the finest in the state, stands proudly amid the rubble of a long, lonely process of restoration.



Ashland-Belle Hélène

The elderly heirs to the plantation—direct descendants of the second owner—man their little tourist desk and greet visitors in hopeful expectation: Enough donations, enough tour groups and enough movie companies on location (since *The Foxes of Harrow* in 1947, nearly a dozen films have been shot here), and the coffers might be full enough to complete restoration on one more room.

The scenery, with its burgeoning greenery and sleepy southern air, is very pretty around here, so we didn't mind backtracking down River Road to recross the Sunshine Bridge. We stayed on Highway 70, then turned south at its junction with Highway 308 and arrived at Madewood with plenty of time to relax before dinner.

MADEWOOD

This is probably the most beautiful example of pure Greek Revival architecture in the region, a house of serenely harmonious lines. It is also a home, where the host and hostess, when they are in residence, join the guests for cheese and wine in the library and sit down with them for dinner in the magnificent formal dining room.

Outside, six massive Ionic columns rise to a classic pediment, which is repeated on lower, flanking wings. Inside, a broad entry hall sweeps from front to rear verandas past a superb winding staircase, and divides the matched sets of large and graceful rooms to each side. Twenty-foot ceilings and impressive furnishings and art objects give the house grandeur. Yet there's nothing of the "look but don't touch" about Madewood, and overnight guests are given free rein to explore the house and grounds.

Colonel Thomas Pugh built the house between 1840 and 1848. Spared during the war, it later became derelict. It was rescued in 1964 by New Orleans art patron Naomi Marshall. Her son Keith, who helped restore and now owns the plantation, loves to tell the story behind the purchase, about his father's return from a business trip, and his mother's greeting: "Hello, dear. While you were away, I bought Madewood." Keith says, "My father hated the whole idea. So it was pure irony that when he died, his obituary read: Harold Marshall, Restorer of Madewood."

Keith was an ebullient, story-telling host when six of us, including his wife, Millie Ball, sat down for a traditional dinner—yes, seafood gumbo and crawfish etouffée. But each time we ate them, they tasted different and "best," and here we ate green beans with bacon, mashed sweet potatoes and pecan pie with ice cream.

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 100}

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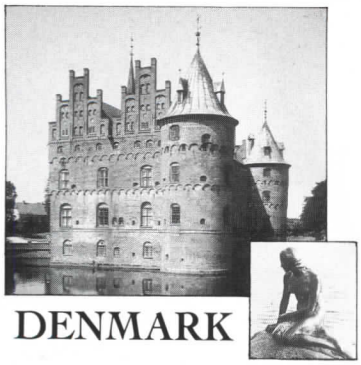
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After coffee and Sherry in the sumptuous front parlor, where Keith told us about the showboats that once plied Bayou Lafourche, we retreated to a grand but cozy room, with two canopied beds, a sofa and an armchair. In the morning we were awakened to coffee in the room. Half an hour later we followed heavenly aromas back to the dining room, where the table held platters of scrambled eggs and sausage, silver pots of coffee, frosty glasses of orange juice. We also helped ourselves to grits and melon, and fresh-baked miniature muffins served with homemade preserves.

Another eating adventure notched on our belts (quite literally), we decided to visit Captain Torres, whose Cajun Swamp Tours promised to show us a different side of bayou life. It took us about 40 minutes (via Highway 308 south and Highway 304 east) to reach Kraemer, where the two-hour trips begin. Torres and his family have hunted and fished the region for generations, and they're experts at finding the alligators and other wildlife we yearned to see. They're also mines of information about the region's fauna and flora, and Cajun and Indian folklore. The stunning scenery and their own collection of wild animals and exotic birds made this a memorable side trip.

We retraced our steps past tiny towns and cozy rural communities, heading north on Highway 308 and then west on Highway 1 to reach Nottoway, the largest of all the plantation homes on the river.

NOTTOWAY

The nearby town of White Castle is named for it, and with 64 rooms, Nottoway is definitely castlelike. It rises majestically from a raised basement foundation, its height emphasized by 22 slender, Italianate pillars placed in unusual groupings, by its two broad, encircling galleries and by double front stairways embellished with lacy cast iron. The festive design was created by Henry Howard, the same New Orleans architect who built Madewood, when he entered an 1857 competition to

design a "completely different" home for Virginia planter John Randolph, one of the wealthiest men along the river.

The huge home had every convenience. Two hundred windows provided summer breezes; gas chandeliers and coal-burning fireplaces made it cozy in winter; hot and cold water was piped into bathrooms on each floor; there were even built-in closets, an outrageous extravagance. A ten-pins bowling alley in the basement entertained Randolph's 11 children when they were small; later, their weddings were held in the curved and columned White Ballroom. No detail was spared in making the home magnificent, from ornate friezes and ceiling medallions to hand-painted Dresden china doorknobs.

Thanks to few owners and excellent documentation, Nottoway today is in almost exactly its original state, from those doorknobs and chandeliers and friezes to the superb furniture—some of it the most beautiful to be seen in any of these homes—that graces its imposing public rooms and spacious bedrooms.

One certainly feels a sense of indulgence at spending the night, as we did, in the splendid bedroom of one of the daughters, with its silk-draped full canopy bed and lacy Roman shades, and being awakened to a tray of coffee, orange juice and warm sweet-potato muffins. But heading down to the basement area set up with pink-covered tables for our "real" breakfast—another satisfying round of sausages and eggs and grits and fresh fruit—we noted that this was very different from the family home atmosphere of Madewood. With many of its living rooms turned into suites and its large garçonnière wing also offering accommodations (including a bridal suite with its own pool and Jacuzzi), Nottoway seems much more like a resort hotel.

Indeed, the sprawling property holds a parking lot big enough for tour buses; one enters through a new building with a large, well-stocked gift shop; the walled pool area has lots of lounges for sunning; and there are tennis privileges two miles down the road and golf privileges at the Donaldsonville Country Club ten miles away.

At Randolph Hall, the plantation's lovely restaurant, which was added to the property in 1984, lunches and dinners are served to the public, as well as to overnight guests. Lucky for the public. Chef Johnny Percle has won acclaim for his "country Creole" cuisine, which he likens to French provincial cooking. We tried a variety of dishes from seafood gumbo and grilled crab cakes to bread pudding and pecan pie. The only thing we missed was his curious-sounding bacon, lettuce and tomato soup.

Traveling River Road is a little like taking a one-way boat trip: You dream your way along for three or four days, and slide into an entirely different way of life; then when it's over, you can be back where you started in just two hours. But if we quickly put the distance behind us, the romance of River Road lingered. We had stepped into another century, and some of its elegance and its kindliness had rubbed off. We wished the world well. Which is what romance will do to you. Every time.

June R. and Bertram Gader are free-lance travel writers.

The Details

GETTING THERE: *American, Continental, Delta, TWA and United fly to New Orleans International Airport from most major cities.*

MANSION TOURS: *All the mansions are open for tours daily, except major holidays. Generally, hours are about 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.*

Overnight Accommodations

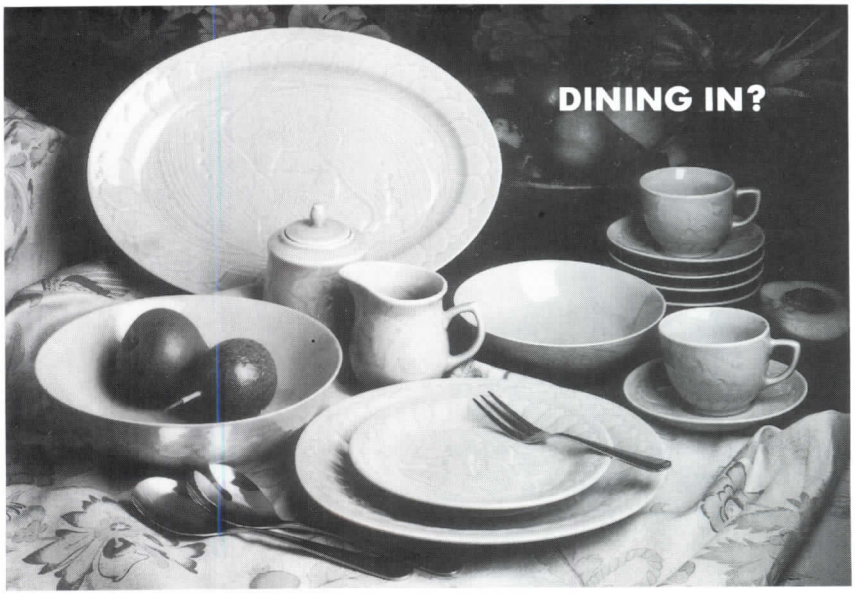
Based on double rooms

MADEWOOD. *Route 2, Box 478, Napoleonville, LA 70390; 504-369-7151. From $85 to $150.*

NOTTOWAY. *P.O. Box 160, White Castle, LA 70788; 504-545-2730. From $120 to $250.*

OAK ALLEY. *Route 2, Box 10, Vacherie, LA 70090; 504-265-2151. From $75 to $100.*

TEZCUCO. *3138 Highway 44, Darrow, LA 70725; 504-562-3929. From $60 to $185.*



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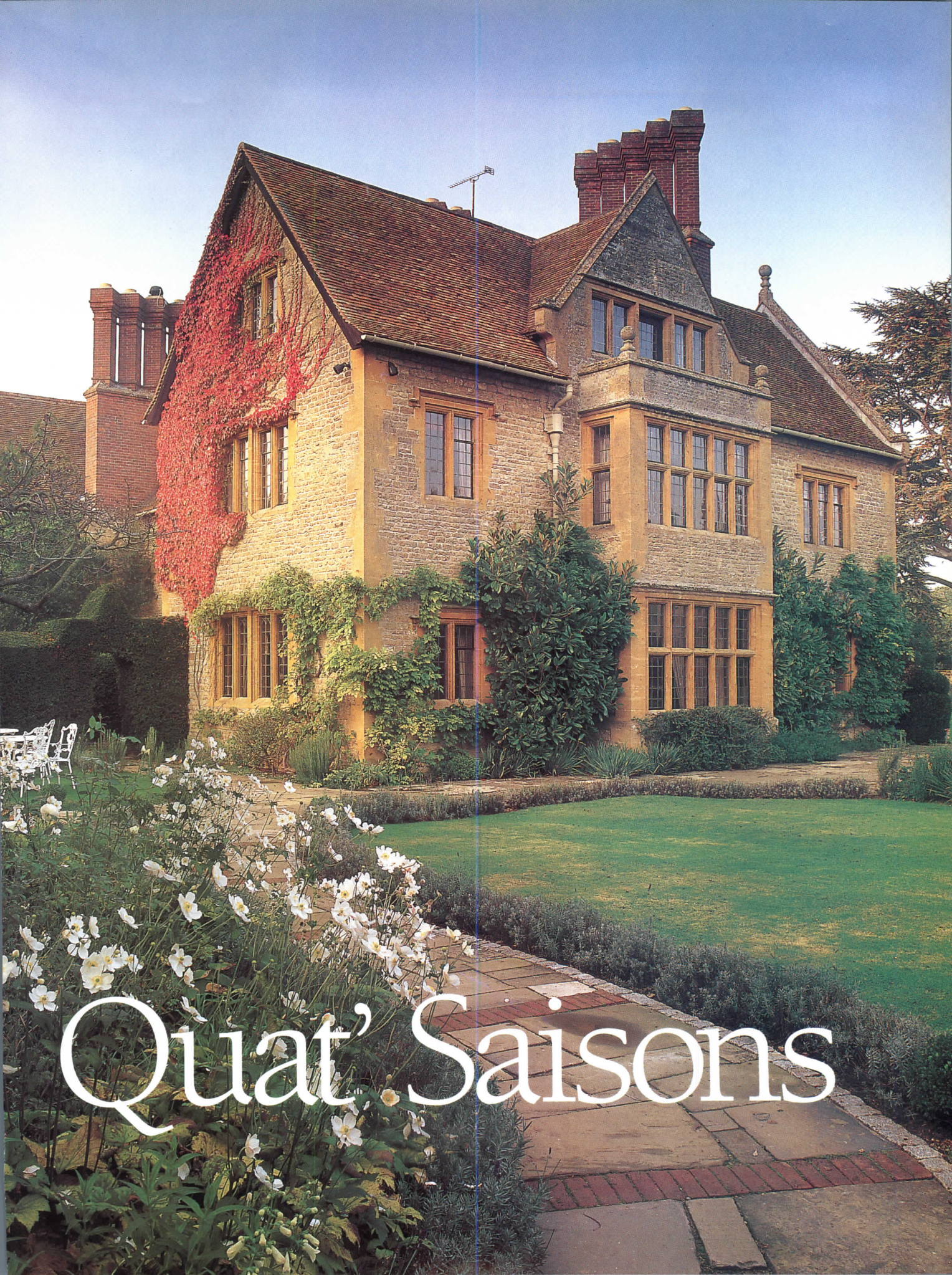
Le Manoir is a jewel of a place, perfect for a cozy weekend getaway. You'll find more gems in the dining room (above).

IF YOU WANT TO LAND YOUR HELICOPTER ON THE PAD behind the tennis courts at Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons, chef and owner Raymond Blanc won't mind. All he asks is that you give him 24 hours' notice, just in case someone else is planning to fly in at the same time. Or, you might prefer to arrive by limousine at this celebrated hotel and restaurant in the English village of Great Milton, just southeast of Oxford. That's fine, too. And you don't have to leave the same way you came, as actor Jeremy Irons demonstrated last summer when he launched a charity balloon flight {CONTINUED ON PAGE 104}

Le Manoir aux

BY MICHAEL BALTER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK BEATTIE


Quat' Saisons

from Le Manoir over the beautiful Oxfordshire countryside.

If this sounds to you like the kind of place that has been featured on "Lifestyles of the Rich & Famous," you're right. Just to be sure, peek into the high-tech kitchen and look up at the white tile wall. There you'll see the framed certificate signed by Robin Leach himself. And although you don't have to be rich or famous to come here, it helps to be fairly flush—at least for the length of your stay.

Is it worth the cost? In a word, yes. Nestled in the Chiltern Hills, among meadows and wildflowers and roaming deer, Le Manoir is one of the most sumptuous country hotels in Great Britain. But even more important to the gourmands who flock here as if to Mecca, its restaurant is regarded by British food critics as the best in the nation.

Naturally, opinions on this sort of subject differ. But one thing is indisputable: Raymond Blanc is one of the most imaginative chefs in the world. His creations have panache, but more than that, they have chutzpah. Examples? Panfried slivers of foie gras sandwiched between crisp potatoes and turnips escorted by a dark sauce made from a vintage Sherry; roasted scallops and John Dory served on a bed of seaweed with a lemon-thyme meat juice; iced lemon parfait wrapped in a blanket of golden pastry offered up on a bed of cherries.

IF YOU THINK THAT SUCH FARE could be invented only by a chef who served long years of apprenticeship with the French masters, think again. True, Blanc is French, a native of Besançon, the capital of the Franche-Comté region. But he has never cooked in a restaurant in France. After sampling one of his dishes, you may find it hard to believe that Blanc is almost entirely self-taught. But that is indeed the case.

Moreover, his light, sharply flavored cuisine owes little to that of his native region. "The cooking of the Franche-Comté is peasanty and countrylike," Blanc says. "It's very rich with lots of butter and cream, totally contrary to mine."

In fact, Blanc acknowledges only two principal influences on his style: Marc Meneau, the renowned chef and proprietor of the three-star L'Espérance in Saint-Père-sous-Vézelay, Burgundy, and his own mother. "My *mother was* my biggest influence," he says. "Her cooking was light, simple and inventive."

At the relatively late age of 19, Blanc decided he wanted to be a chef. But without traditional training, he couldn't break into even the bottom ranks of cookery in Besançon. So he decided to leave not just his hometown but his country as well. Soon France's loss would become Britain's gain.

In 1972, Blanc moved to Oxford where he worked as a waiter, and was eventually hired to manage the dining room of an establishment called The Rose Revived. On occasion, the chef would let him experiment in the kitchen.

"Whatever contact I had with classical French cuisine was from books," he says. "At The Rose Revived they often got fresh pike. The first dish I tried was a recipe for it out of Escoffier. But I was shocked by the amount of cream, flour and butter it used. So I proceeded to change it completely and removed most of the butter and all of the flour."

When the kitchen staff walked out one day in 1975, the restaurant owner fortuitously offered him the top job. Two years later, Blanc opened his first place, Les Quat' Saisons, in an Oxford storefront wedged between a thrift shop and a ladies' underwear boutique.

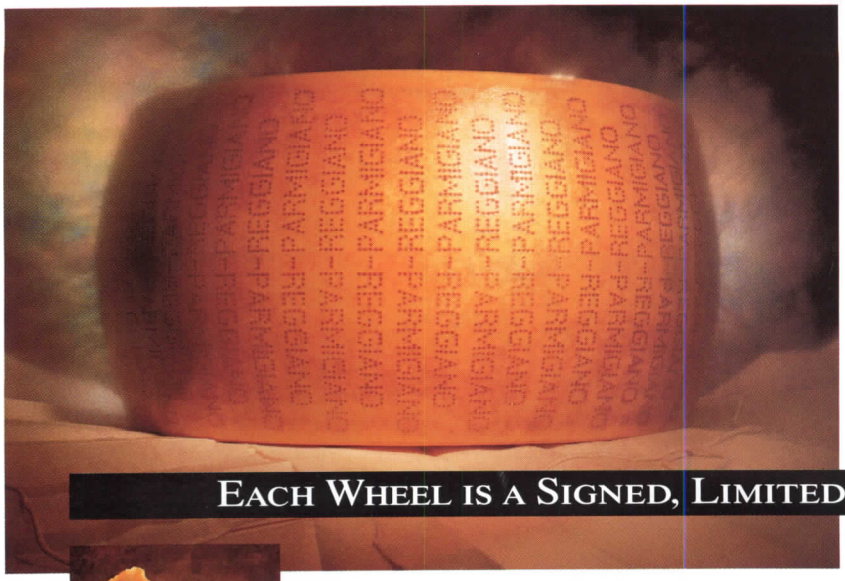
In command at last, Blanc was limited only by the boundaries of his imagination. From the start, he steered clear of the confines of both traditional French cuisine and latter-day nouvelle trendiness. Soon people were coming from all over Britain to try his inventive fare.

By 1983, Blanc was ready for a bigger challenge. Together with a group of partners, he purchased Great Milton Manor in Oxfordshire's Thame Valley. There, on 27 acres of grounds, Blanc found the perfect setting in which to exercise his extraordinary talents.

The original stone manor house, which dates back to the fifteenth century, still stands, although it was enlarged in the seventeenth century and then again in the early 1900s. A Virginia creeper

Typical of chef Raymond Blanc's artistry in the kitchen is this splendid main course, veal with fennel, tomato and a fricassee of wild mushrooms.







Whatever their profession, Italians tend also to be gourmets. And while they consider Parmigiano-Reggiano essential to any recipe, they know that as a table cheese, it is second to none. For it is when Parmigiano-Reggiano is eaten alone that its texture, aroma and flavor can best be appreciated.

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climbs its front wall, and the oak door that opens into the reception area still bears the teethmarks of the horses that were once tethered outside. Ducks flutter in the six ponds among fallen leaves from maples, willows and eucalypti.

Behind the house, a huge cedar spreads its branches over a green cricket lawn. Just beyond, a path descends into the garden where Blanc's staff—headed by a farmer who has lived in the area for 50 years—grows over one hundred different herbs and vegetables. As you walk down rows planted with coriander, chervil, dill, turnips, artichokes, sorrel, leeks and carrots, it's natural to ponder which will end up on your plate.

The hotel's 19 rooms were individually decorated by Michael Priest, an interior designer from the nearby village of Thame. Take, for example, the Hyacinth Room. The bed is covered with a thick, blue, embroidered quilt, and the antique wooden headboard is draped with blue and apricot curtains tied into bows on each side. The tables, chairs and settee are also antiques, and pillows are piled everywhere. Fresh fruit graces the breakfast table, and a crystal decanter filled with Madeira stands on another table nearby. In the bathroom a whirlpool tub awaits you, and when you step out, a warm towel is ready on a heated rack. In short, everything is designed to make you fall so deeply into the lap of luxury that you may never climb out again.

Imagine, then, a typical evening at Le Manoir. You dress for dinner, and descend the stairs to a lounge that resembles a Victorian drawing room. After sipping an aperitif, you are shown to the conservatory, an airy, glass-enclosed dining room decorated in green and pink. You take a seat in a bamboo chair and look out on the manor gardens. The waiter takes your order. Then you sit back and the gastronomic experience begins. You indulge in several courses of inimitable Blanc innovations. Then comes the pièce de résistance, Le Café Crème, a perfectly crafted dark chocolate cup and saucer filled with coffee ice cream and topped with a kirsch sabayon. It's almost too exquisite to eat, but not quite.

After lingering over espresso and Cognac, it's time either to retire to your room (if you're lucky enough to be staying at Le Manoir) or to take your leave. What shall it be tonight? The helicopter, limousine or balloon?

LE MANOIR AUX QUAT' SAISONS
CHURCH ROAD
GREAT MILTON, OXFORDSHIRE 0X9 7PD
ENGLAND
011-44-844-278881

Sea Bass with Rosemary-Lemon Butter Sauce

4 SERVINGS

SAUCE

2 cups dry white wine
1 large shallot, sliced

{CONTINUED ON PAGE 106}



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1 large fresh rosemary sprig or 1 teaspoon dried, crumbled
3 tablespoons whipping cream
2 tablespoons water

FISH

1 2-ounce can anchovy fillets
⅔ cup olive oil
2 large fresh thyme sprigs or 1 teaspoon dried, crumbled
2 teaspoons Pernod or other anise-flavored liqueur
1 small fennel bulb, trimmed, sliced
1 large lemon, sliced
Peel from 1 large orange
1 bay leaf, crumbled
1 star anise,* broken

1 1⅓-pound sea bass fillet

Vegetable oil (for deep frying)
½ cup fresh tarragon leaves
½ cup fresh parsley leaves
½ cup fresh basil leaves

½ cup (1 stick) butter, cut into pieces
Fresh lemon juice

FOR SAUCE: Boil wine with shallot and rosemary in heavy small saucepan over medium heat until liquid is almost evaporated, about 15 minutes. Add cream and water. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)*

FOR FISH: Drain oil from anchovies into medium bowl. Reserve anchovies for another use. Stir next 8 ingredients into anchovy oil. Transfer oil mixture to shallow roasting pan. Cover and let stand 1 hour at room temperature.

Preheat oven to 400° F. Brush fish fillet with oil mixture. Season fish with salt and pepper. Place roasting pan atop burners and bring mixture to boil. Arrange fish fillet atop mixture and place in oven. Roast until cooked through, basting with pan juices frequently, about 15 minutes. Cut fish fillet into 4 portions and transfer to plates.

Meanwhile, heat vegetable oil in deep pot to 375° F. Working in batches, add herb leaves and deep-fry until crisp, about 20 seconds. Using slotted spoon, transfer to paper towels to drain.

Heat sauce in heavy small saucepan over medium heat. Gradually whisk in butter. Season with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Discard rosemary. Ladle sauce around fish. Garnish with fried herbs.

**A brown, star-shaped pod. Each "ray" holds a seed. Available at Asian markets and specialty foods stores.*

VEAL WITH BRAISED FENNEL, TOMATO CONFIT AND WILD MUSHROOMS

4 SERVINGS

CONFIT

¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil
⅔ cup finely chopped onion
1 small bay leaf
1 fresh thyme sprig or ½ teaspoon dried, crumbled
2 tomatoes, peeled, seeded, chopped

MUSHROOMS

1 tablespoon butter
8 ounces chanterelles or other wild mushrooms
⅓ cup water

VEAL

7 tablespoons butter
4 1½-inch-thick veal chops
2 tablespoons water

¼ cup whipping cream
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
Braised Fennel (see recipe)

FOR CONFIT: Heat oil in heavy medium skillet over low heat. Add onion, bay leaf and thyme sprig and sauté until onion is tender, about 8 minutes; do not brown. Add tomatoes and cook until jamlike and no liquid remains, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes.

FOR MUSHROOMS: Melt butter in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms. Cover and cook 2 minutes. Add water and cook until liquid evaporates, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. *(Confit and mushrooms can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Cover separately; let stand at room temperature.)*

FOR VEAL: Melt 2 tablespoons but-

ter in heavy large skillet over low heat. Season veal with salt and pepper. Add to skillet and sauté until just cooked through, about 8 minutes per side. Transfer to plates and keep warm. Stir water into skillet and bring to boil, scraping up any browned bits. Pour over veal.

Add cream to mushrooms and bring to boil over medium heat. Mix in remaining 5 tablespoons butter. Stir in chives and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. Reheat tomatoes over low heat until just warm. Remove bay leaf and thyme sprig. Arrange mushrooms, tomato confit and braised fennel around veal.

Braised Fennel

Nice with any roast meat or fowl.

4 SERVINGS

- 3 tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup chopped shallots
- Seeds from 2 cardamom pods, crushed
- ⅛ teaspoon ground mace
- 2 medium fennel bulbs, each cut lengthwise into 6 pieces
- 1¼ cups chicken stock

Preheat oven to 350°F. Melt butter in heavy medium ovenproof skillet over low heat. Add shallots, cardamom and mace and sauté 8 minutes. Add fennel and toss to coat. Stir in stock and bring to boil. Cover and braise in oven 30 minutes, basting occasionally. Remove skillet from oven. Place on burner over high heat and boil until liquid thickens slightly, about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Pistachio Soufflé with Chocolate Sorbet

4 SERVINGS

SORBET

- 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons water
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 3 ounces bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semisweet chocolate, chopped

SOUFFLE

- 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons milk
- 2 cups shelled unsalted pistachio nuts, toasted, chopped
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 3 large egg yolks
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons all purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract
- Butter
- Sugar
- 4 large egg whites

FOR SORBET: Combine 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons water, cocoa powder, sugar and chocolate in heavy medium saucepan. Bring to boil, whisking constantly. Strain into bowl. Chill 1 hour.

Transfer chocolate mixture to ice cream maker and process according to manufacturer's instructions. Freeze in covered container until firm. *(Can be prepared 2 days ahead.)*

FOR SOUFFLE: Bring milk and nuts to boil in heavy medium saucepan. Add vanilla bean. Remove from heat, cover and let stand 20 minutes.

Strain milk mixture into medium bowl, pressing on solids with back of spoon. Scrape seeds from vanilla bean into strained milk mixture. Beat egg yolks, ¼ cup sugar and flour in another medium bowl. Gradually whisk in milk mixture. Return milk mixture to saucepan. Bring to boil, whisking constantly. Boil until thickened, about 1 minute. Strain pastry cream into bowl. Stir in almond extract. Place plastic wrap directly on surface of pastry cream. Refrigerate until well chilled, about 4 hours. *(Can be prepared 2 days ahead.)*

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter four 1-cup soufflé dishes or custard cups. Dust with sugar. Beat egg whites in large bowl to soft peaks. Gradually add remaining ¼ cup sugar and beat to stiff peaks. Fold whites into pastry cream. Divide mixture among prepared dishes. Bake until golden and well puffed above rims, about 30 minutes. Top each with scoop of sorbet and serve.

Michael Balter is a Paris-based writer and a frequent contributor to Bon Appétit.



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1

To make the vegetable filling for the Italian Country Omelet, red onion, bell peppers, mushrooms, zucchini and herbs are sautéed until just tender.



2

Egg mixture is ladled into pan, then skillet is shaken evenly with one hand while egg mixture is stirred in circular motion with heatproof rubber spatula held in other hand.



3

When underside of omelet begins to set, edge of omelet is lifted with spatula and skillet is tilted to allow uncooked egg from top to run under cooked portion.



The Perfect Omelet

It's basically just eggs, some cream and a filling, but making an omelet is a challenge for a lot of people. So Los Angeles-based cooking teacher Kathy Martin, a pro at showing people how-to, this month goes step-by-step in making two perfect omelets perfectly easy. One is more traditional—the rolled version so identified with France; the other typifies the style of the full-to-overflowing meal-in-itself so popular in the United States. {RECIPES ON PAGE 110}

4

Next, vegetable filling is spooned over half of omelet. With rubber spatula, second side of omelet is then lifted over filled side to enclose the filling.



5

The skillet is tilted to allow the folded omelet to slide out easily onto the serving plate.





PHOTOGRAPHY *by* BRIAN LEATART

Camembert and Bacon Omelet

This omelet is shaped by the traditional method of rolling it onto the plate.

2 SERVINGS

- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon butter
- 4 ounces Canadian bacon, cut into ¼-inch dice

- 6 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons crème fraîche or whipping cream
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh chives or green onion tops

- 5 ounces Camembert cheese, chilled, rind removed, cheese diced
- Additional minced fresh chives

Melt 1 teaspoon butter in heavy small skillet over medium-high heat. Add bacon and sauté until golden, about 2 minutes. Set aside.

Whisk eggs, crème fraîche and mustard in bowl until well blended. Gently whisk in 2 tablespoons chives. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat 9-inch-diameter nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until drops of water sizzle when sprinkled into skillet. Add 1 tablespoon butter and tilt skillet to coat bottom. When butter stops foaming, ladle half of egg mixture into skillet. Immediately begin to shake skillet with one hand and stir egg mixture in circular motion with heatproof spatula held in other hand. When underside of omelet begins to set, lift edge of omelet with spatula, tilting skillet to allow uncooked egg from top to run under cooked egg. Repeat lifting and tilting until egg mixture is cooked. Sprinkle half of bacon and half of cheese over center third of omelet. Using spatula, fold one edge of omelet over filling. Tilt skillet so that omelet slides to one edge of skillet and roll omelet out onto plate. Repeat with remaining 1 tablespoon butter, egg mixture, bacon and cheese to form second omelet. Sprinkle finished omelets with additional minced chives and serve.

Italian Country Omelet

In order to accommodate the generous amount of filling used here, this omelet is folded in half rather than in thirds, which is the more traditional shape.

2 SERVINGS

- 1½ teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ small red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- ½ small yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 4 large mushrooms, sliced
- 1 small zucchini, halved crosswise, each half cut into 8 pieces
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh basil or ½ teaspoon dried, crumbled
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh oregano or ½ teaspoon dried, crumbled

- 6 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons crème fraîche or whipping cream

- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) unsalted butter
- 2 ounces fresh mild goat cheese (such as Montrachet), diced

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and sauté 4 minutes. Add bell peppers and mushrooms and sauté 5 minutes. Add zucchini, 1 teaspoon basil and 1 teaspoon oregano. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cook until vegetables are just tender, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Set vegetable filling aside.

Whisk eggs, crème fraîche and remaining 1 teaspoon basil and 1 teaspoon oregano in large bowl until well blended. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat 9-inch-diameter nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until drops of water sizzle when sprinkled into skillet. Add 1 tablespoon butter and tilt skillet to coat bottom. When butter stops foaming, ladle half of egg mixture into skillet. Immediately begin to shake skillet with one hand and stir egg mixture in circular motion with heatproof rubber spatula held in other hand. When underside of omelet begins to set, lift edge of omelet with spatula, tilting skillet slightly to allow uncooked egg from top to run under cooked egg. Repeat lifting and tilting until egg mixture is cooked. Sprinkle half of diced goat cheese over half of omelet. Spoon half of sautéed vegetable filling over cheese. Using spatula, lift second side of omelet over filled side. Gently slide omelet out of skillet onto plate. Repeat with remaining 1 tablespoon butter, egg mixture, diced goat cheese and vegetable filling to form second omelet.

For Camembert and Bacon Omelet, bacon and cheese are sprinkled over center third of omelet. Rubber spatula is used to fold one edge of omelet over filling.



Skillet is tilted so that omelet slides to side of pan. Omelet is then rolled out onto plate.



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Accessories in This Issue

Page 22: Pea pod box from Geary's, 310-273-4741. Limoges Imports boxes from Mise en Place, 213-662-1334. Rochard boxes from Francis-Orr, 310-271-6106.
Page 30: Wild rice from Sorrenti Family Farms, 209-838-1127.
Page 34: Snifter from Tesoro Collection, 310-273-9890.
Page 45: Silver-plated espresso spoon by Kirk & Matz (shown with espresso cup and cookies) from The Harrel Shop, 203-655-1111.
Pages 62 through 65: Antique tole tray (circa 1880, with pecan pie) and Sheffield silver fork (circa 1873, with almond tart) both from James II Galleries, 212-355-7040. Tablecloth (with truffle cake, no. T-500) from D. Porthault & Co., 212-688-1661.
Pages 71 through 75: Green and black dessert plate (with cheesecake), teapot, mug, multicolored plate and fork (both with salad), rectangular platter by Annieglass and orange dessert plate (both with tart) all from Barneys New York, 212-929-9000. Large green platter (with cheesecake) from Portico, 212-941-7800. Fork (with cheesecake) and yellow glass made in France (with salad) both from Henri Bendel, 212-247-1100. Orange plate and glasses (both with chicken) and fork (with tart) all from The Frank McIntosh Shop at Henri Bendel, 212-247-1100. "Veronese" blue and green glass vase by Robin Mix and green glass bowl by Baldwin/Guggisberg both from New Glass Gallery, 212-431-0050. "Spring Cup" vase by Michael Biello from Archetype, 212-334-0100.
Pages 78/79: Sterling silver caviar server, underplate and crystal liner all from Pavillon Christofle, 310-858-8058. Glass vodka serving set (includes six glasses and bucket) and brandy snifters all from Pottery Barn stores nationwide.
Page 117: "Garland Song" plate by Mesa from Tesoro (see above).

All other items are privately owned.

Cocktails in the Den: Sources and Prices

Pages 84 through 86: From Kentshire Galleries: George III wing chair (circa 1760, $36,000) and pembroke table (circa 1790, $24,000); Regency candlestick (mounted as lamp, $2,750); tapestry pillow ($1,500), papier-mâché tray with stand (circa 1790, $12,750); Regency table (circa 1810, $5,350); "Tabriz" carpet (circa 1890, $36,000); marble tazzas (circa 1800, $5,000 per pair); chinoiserie pitcher (circa 1790, $3,600) and English chinoiserie plate (circa 1875, $675), both on bookshelves; 212-673-6644. "Footed Tumblers" (large-size stemmed glasses; no. 6515, $2.25 each) and "Distinction Barware" (no. 6517, $1.50 each for 14-ounce coolers; no. 6518, $1.50 each for 12-ounce double old-fashioneds) from Crate & Barrel stores nationwide, or to order, call 800-323-5461. Large silver-plated tray (with salmon, $485), oval silver-plated tray (with asparagus, $195) and silver-plated bowl (with nuts, $200) all from Charlotte Moss & Co., 212-772-3320. Silver-plated tray with inlaid wood (shown with decanters, $865) and glass and silver inkwell ($985) both from Linda Horn Antiques & Decorative Objects, 212-772-1122. Sterling "Scalloped Shell" ice tongs ($210) and crystal "Georgetown" bowl (with lemons; $40) both from Tiffany & Co., 800-526-0649. "Optic Classic" Champagne flutes (no. 80-404046, $31 for set of four) from Williams-Sonoma stores nationwide, or to order by phone, call 800-541-2233. Croquet mallets ($125 apiece) from Julian Graham-White, 212-249-8181. Cocktail napkins ($18 for set of six) from R. Schweitzer Linens, 212-799-9629. "Louvre" salad plates ($102 each; $445 for five-piece place setting) from Bernardaud, 212-737-7775. Decanters (left to right): "Campagna" ($38); "Venezia" ($28.50) and "Portland" ($98.50) and silver-plated tray (with endive, $285) all from Te-Ma, 914-679-5571. For information on "Expert" fountain pen ($90) by Waterman, call 800-523-2486. Flowers courtesy of Castle & Pierpont, 212-570-1284.

Listed prices are approximate.

Elegant Soup Tureens: Sources and Prices

Pages 88/89: "Thunderbird" ($519) from Villeroy & Boch Creation, 310-858-6522. "Rothschild Bird" ($817 for large tureen) by Herend from Geary's, 310-273-4741. "Uno Black" ($230) by Taitù from The Prince's Table, 310-573-3667. Kinichi Shigeno tureen ($480) from del Mano Gallery & Studio, 818-793-6648. "Coimbra" ($375) from Cottura, 213-933-1928. Butterfly motif tureen ($700) from Litchfield's, 310-395-7138. Lion motif tureen ($1,500) from Tiffany & Co., 310-273-8880 in Beverly Hills; 212-605-4132 in New York. "Estate Tobacco Leaf" ($3,500) by Mottahedeh from Foster Ingersoll, 310-652-7677. "Melon" ($126) by Classical Creamware from Bowers, 619-459-3678. "Pastel Floral" tureen ($198) imported by J. Willfred Imports available at Cabbages and Kings, 212-355-5513. "Pompeiano" ($275) imported from Italy by Deruta available at Siena, 619-779-0224, and also at Mayhew, 212-759-8120.

Listed prices are approximate.

"Bon Vivant" photography by Cynthia Brown, except "French Feast" and "It's a Wrap" by Ellen Silverman; "Spot of Tea" by Tommy Elder; and "Fruity Mixers" by Deborah Denker.

Too Busy to Cook?

KATHI DAMERON
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

THESE DAYS, I SPEND MY TIME doing the things that will turn our new house into a home. There's plenty to keep me busy, which makes me appreciate my years as a second-grade teacher, when I was always on the run and learned to be a shorthand cook. I suppose the most indispensable part of our kitchen is the indoor herb garden. I have about 40 to 50 kinds, and they never fail to inspire me. A pasta with some olive oil, herbs and fresh shrimp makes a great dish that's easy to prepare. I shop whenever the mood strikes me, which is often: I go to a fish market for seafood and a bakery for French bread, and I buy staples in bulk. And that's good, because with my two stepsons living nearby, I never know when I'll have to cook for four.



Spicy baked shrimp—a simple and sizzling weekday meal.

SPICY BAKED SHRIMP

4 SERVINGS

- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons Cajun or Creole seasoning
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 pound uncooked large shrimp, shelled, deveined

Lemon wedges
French bread

Combine first 7 ingredients in 9x13-inch baking dish. Add shrimp and toss to coat. Refrigerate 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 450° F. Bake until shrimp are cooked through, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Garnish with lemon wedges and serve shrimp with French bread.

FROZEN FRUIT SLUSHES

2 SERVINGS

- 1½ cups ice cubes
- 1 ripe banana, sliced
- 5 strawberries, hulled
- ½ cup orange juice

Mix all ingredients in blender until thick and smooth. Serve immediately.

QUICK SAUSAGE PIZZAS

2 SERVINGS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small zucchini, diced
- ¾ cup diced kielbasa sausage (about 4 ounces)
- 4 mushrooms, sliced
- ¼ cup chopped drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried, crumbled
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano or 1 teaspoon dried, crumbled

- 2 small Boboli pizza shells (1 8-ounce package)
- ¼ cup purchased pizza sauce
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- ¼ cup grated mozzarella
- 2 ounces goat cheese, crumbled

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-low heat. Add zucchini, sausage and mushrooms and sauté until vegetables are almost tender, about 5 minutes. Add sun-dried tomatoes and sauté until vegetables are tender, about 3 minutes longer. Remove skillet from heat; stir in basil and oregano.

Preheat oven to 450° F. Arrange pizza shells on small cookie sheet.

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 114}

Would you like to share your timesaving, previously unpublished recipes with *Bon Appétit*? Send at least three recipes (please tell us where they came from) with your address and telephone number to Too Busy to Cook?, *Bon Appétit*, 5900 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036. The material becomes our property and will not be returned.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GABRIELA ORTUZAR

Spread half of pizza sauce over each. Sprinkle each with half of Parmesan. Divide vegetable mixture between pizzas. Top each with half of mozzarella and half of goat cheese. Bake until mozzarella melts and pizzas are heated through, about 9 minutes.

SUSAN TOLLEFSON
BOZEMAN, MONTANA

SIX YEARS AGO, BEFORE I STARTED working full-time again, I often spent three hours in the kitchen preparing a meal. In those days, I even found time to do some catering on the side. But lately, between my work and the busy schedules of our two teenage boys, I'm lucky if I can squeeze in an hour. And since shopping is definitely not my favorite thing to do, I stay organized and try to plan menus for the week ahead. My cooking habits have changed drastically in the last several years, but recipes like these help keep things pretty much on an even keel.

PASTA WITH CHICKEN AND SUN-DRIED TOMATOES

4 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 large boneless chicken breast halves, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1 carrot, peeled, cut into matchstick-size strips
- ¼ cup finely chopped drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- 12 ounces fettuccine, freshly cooked
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and sauté until brown and cooked through, about 6 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer chicken to large bowl. Keep warm. Add onion, garlic and fennel seeds to skillet and sauté until onion is tender, about 6 minutes. Stir in carrot and sun-dried tomatoes and continue cooking until carrot is crisp-tender, stirring occasionally, about 2 minutes. Transfer mixture to bowl with chicken. Add pasta and Parmesan and toss well.

EASY DEVIL'S FOOD CAKE

A quick one-bowl cake perfect for a last-minute birthday celebration or party dessert. Use the Sour Cream Chocolate Frosting recipe that follows or your favorite purchased one.

8 SERVINGS

- 1¼ cups sugar
- 1 cup buttermilk
- ⅔ cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ cups all purpose flour
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1¼ teaspoons baking soda

Sour Cream Chocolate Frosting (see recipe)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour two 8-inch-diameter cake pans with 1½-inch-high sides. Whisk first 5 ingredients in large bowl to blend. Sift in flour, cocoa and baking soda. Stir to combine. Divide batter between prepared pans. Bake until toothpick inserted into centers comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Cool in pans on racks 10 minutes. Turn cakes out onto racks and cool completely. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Wrap cakes separately in plastic wrap and store at room temperature.)*

Place 1 cake layer on plate. Spread with ½ cup frosting. Top with second cake layer. Spread top and sides of cake with remaining frosting. *(Can be prepared up to 8 hours ahead. Cover with cake dome and let stand at room temperature.)*



SOUR CREAM CHOCOLATE FROSTING

MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS

- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- ⅔ cup (about) sour cream

Melt unsalted butter and chocolate in heavy small saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly until smooth. Transfer to large bowl. Whisk in cocoa powder and vanilla. Whisk in 1 cup sugar and ⅓ cup sour cream. Whisk in remaining 1 cup sugar. Gradually whisk in enough of remaining sour cream to form spreadable frosting.

FUDGE-PECAN PIE

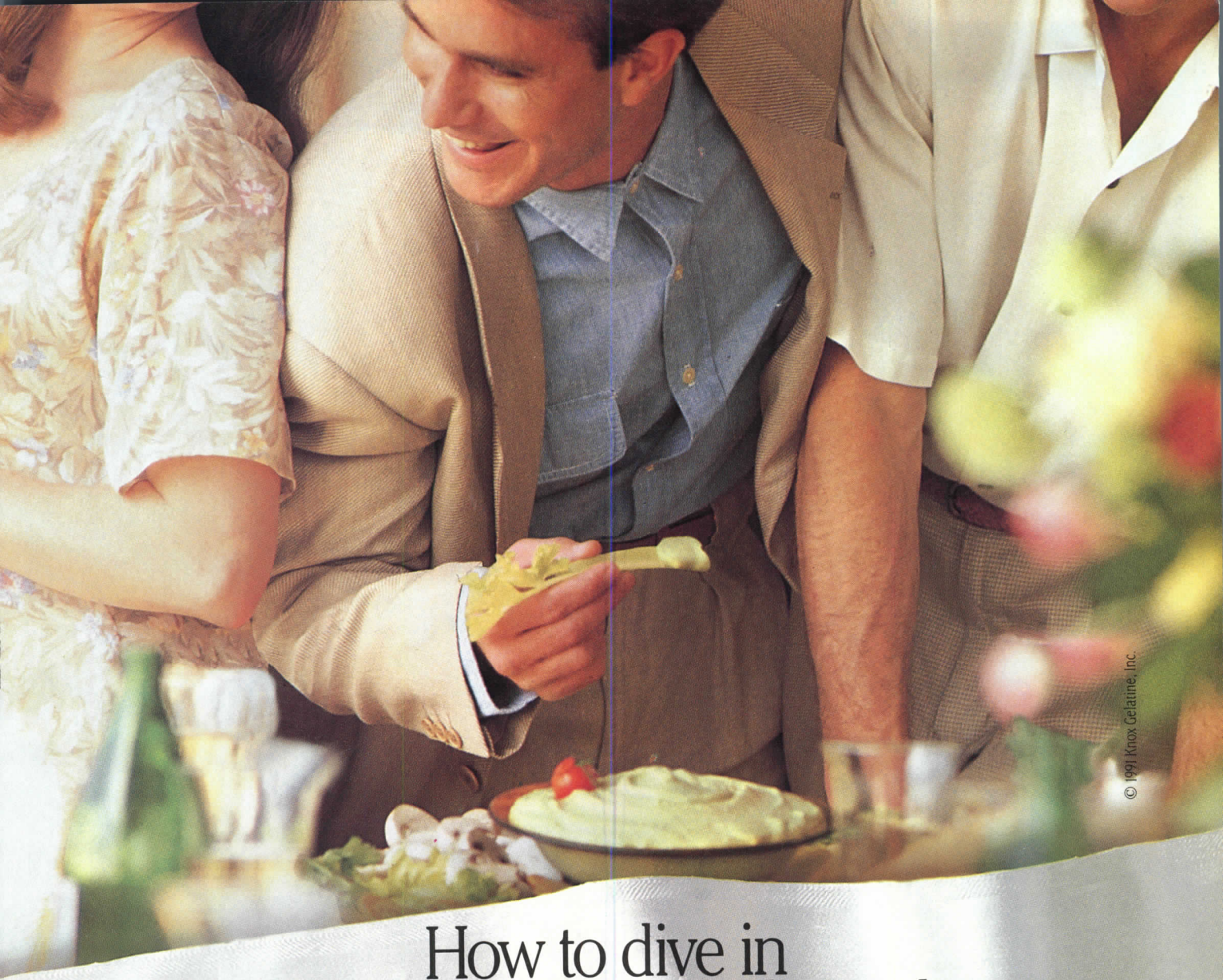
This rich southern-style pie is great topped with vanilla ice cream.

8 SERVINGS

- 1 cup light corn syrup
- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups chopped pecans
- 1 9-inch unbaked pie crust

Preheat oven to 350°F. Stir corn syrup and sugar in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Remove from heat. Add chocolate and butter and stir until melted and mixture is smooth. Cool slightly. Whisk in eggs, vanilla and salt. Stir in pecans. Pour filling into crust. Bake until filling is set, about 40 minutes. Cool slightly. Serve warm or at room temperature.

—By James Badham and Jeanne Thiel Kelley



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Zucchini & Onion Dip

2 tablespoons margarine
2 medium zucchini, sliced
1 medium onion, sliced
1 envelope Knox Unflavored Gelatine
1/4 cup cold water
1 cup skim milk, heated to boiling
3/4 cup lite sour cream
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon each, dried dill weed and salt
Dash red pepper

In skillet, melt margarine and cook zucchini with onion, stirring occasionally until very tender; set aside. In blender, sprinkle gelatine over cold water; let stand 2 minutes. Add hot milk and process at low 2 minutes. Add sour cream, cheese, dill, salt and pepper, then zucchini mixture. Process at high until smooth. Pour into bowl. Chill until set. To serve, whisk smooth. Makes 3 1/2 cups (14 servings).

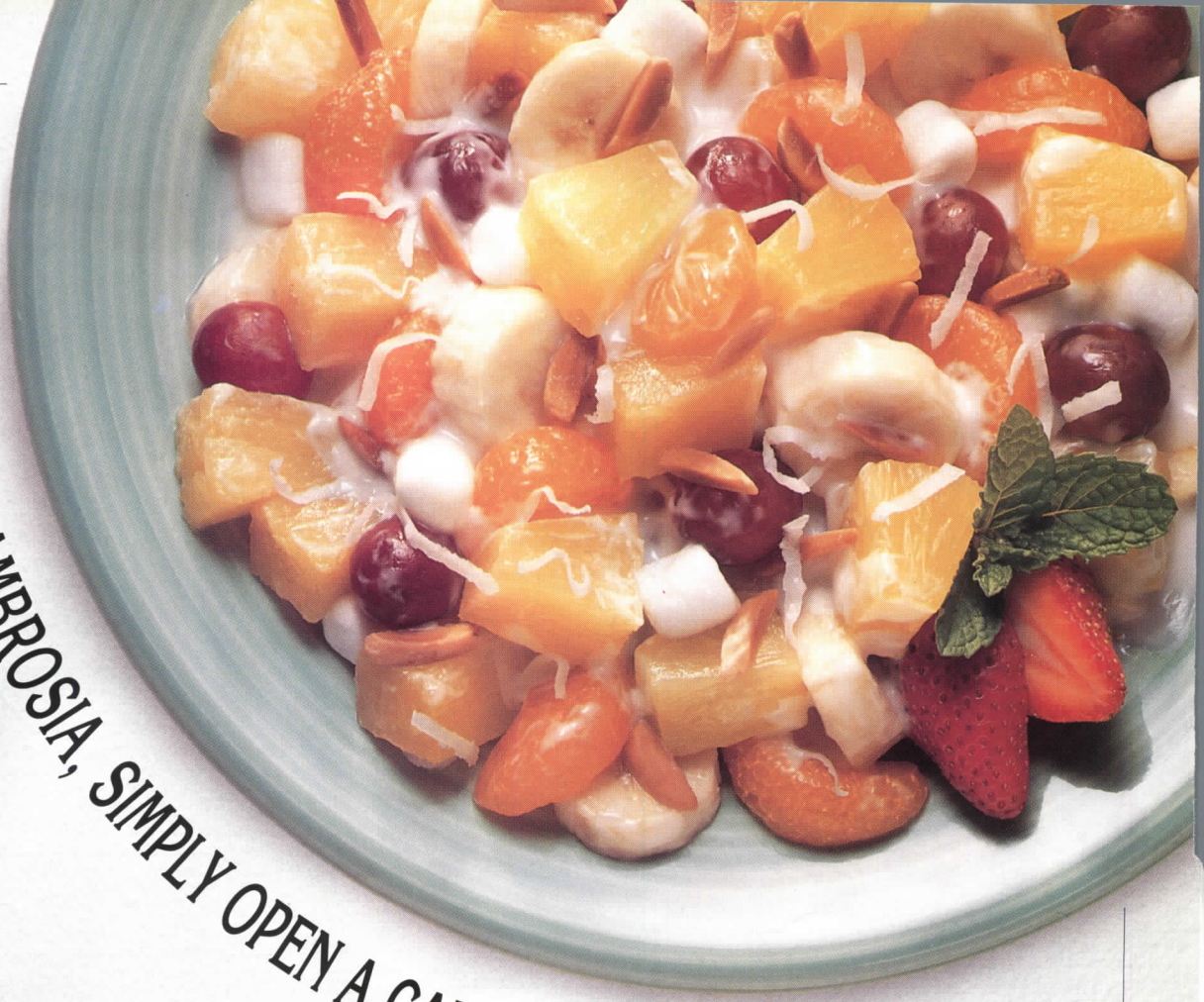
Nutritional Profile Per 4 T. Serving

	This Recipe	Sour Cream Recipe
Calories	58	99
Fat, g.	4	9
Cholesterol, mg.	6	20



*Chill time not included

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Prep. time: 15 mins.

- 1 can (20 oz.) Dole Pineapple Chunks in Juice
- 1 can (11 oz.) mandarin orange segments
- 1 banana, peeled, sliced
- 1½ cups seedless grapes
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- ½ cup flaked coconut
- ¼ cup chopped almonds
- 1 carton (8 oz.) vanilla yogurt

- Drain pineapple and oranges. Use juice as a beverage.
- Combine pineapple, oranges, banana, grapes, marshmallows, coconut and almonds.
- Fold in yogurt. Chill.
- Serves 4 to 6.

For more recipes, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Dole Consumer Center, P.O. Box 7101, Department LHABA, San Francisco, CA 94120-7101.

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RECIPES

PORK BRAISED WITH AROMATIC VEGETABLES

CURRY AND HONEY ROAST CHICKEN

SALMON WITH SESAME VEGETABLES

GREEN ONION NOODLES

CHUNKY VEGETABLE STEW

BY BROOKE DOJNY AND MELANIE BARNARD

LIKE THE WEATHER, WE TEND TO BE A BIT UNRESOLVED AT this time of year. On the one hand, we're ready for clear skies after a few months of rain and snow. On the other, there are still plenty of wonderfully warming dishes that we haven't made yet, and that seem so right when the wind is chill. This month, we've chosen recipes that reflect March's split meteorological personality: some with a foot on the far side of the spring equinox, others that allow us to linger a while in the comfort cuisine of winter.

Pork tenderloins cook quickly and make the perfect meal for two. Our recipe calls for braising the little roasts with aromatic vegetables and a bit of broth, for a flavorful, succulent result.

Sautéed salmon takes its cue from spring, combining lightly cooked fillets with snappy sliced vegetables and oriental noodles flecked with green onions.

Chicken breasts are delicious after being brushed with a curry-honey glaze and roasted to a crisp, burnished finish. Great hot or cold, they're a good idea for the upcoming picnic season, too.

Finally, our colorful vegetable stew is at home any time of year. So gather up those root vegetables while you can, and savor them as the seasons change.

PORK BRAISED WITH AROMATIC VEGETABLES

Start with a salad of red leaf lettuce and curly endive tossed with balsamic vinegar and extra-virgin olive oil. Accompany the pork with buttered egg noodles garnished with parsley and roasted red pepper strips. As a finale: a purchased pear tart.

2 SERVINGS; CAN BE DOUBLED

- 1 8- to 10-ounce pork tenderloin
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 carrot, thinly sliced
- 1 small celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 1 medium parsnip, thinly sliced
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- ⅔ cup canned low-salt chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme, crumbled
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

Cut pork in half crosswise. Season with salt and pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in heavy medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add pork and cook until brown on all sides, about 6 minutes. Using tongs, transfer pork to plate.

Reduce heat to medium-low. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil to skillet. Add carrot, celery, parsnip and garlic. Cook 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add broth and thyme. Return pork and any juices on plate to skillet. Bring liquids to simmer. Cover skillet and simmer until pork is cooked through, about 10 minutes. Remove pork. Add mustard to skillet. Increase heat to high and cook

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 118}

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HENRY HAMAMOTO

FOR ACCESSORIES INFORMATION, SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

until sauce thickens, whisking occasionally, about 5 minutes. Slice pork crosswise on diagonal. Fan slices on plates. Spoon sauce and vegetables alongside pork and serve.

Curry and Honey Roast Chicken

To begin, blend chutney with some cream cheese as an instant dip for carrot and celery sticks. Herbed rice and sautéed Swiss chard go well with the entrée. Coconut macaroons with a steaming cup of tea would round out this easy meal nicely.

2 SERVINGS; CAN BE DOUBLED

- 2 bone-in chicken breast halves
- 2 chicken thighs or drumsticks
- 2 garlic cloves, halved
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons dry white wine
- 1½ teaspoons curry powder
- Chopped fresh chives (optional)

Preheat oven to 450°F. Pat chicken dry. Rub chicken pieces with garlic. Discard garlic. Place chicken on baking sheet. Bring honey, wine and curry powder to boil in heavy small saucepan. Stir until thick, about 2 minutes. Brush chicken pieces with glaze. Roast 10 minutes. Brush chicken pieces with remaining glaze. Continue roasting until cooked through, about 10 minutes for breasts and 15 minutes for thighs. Transfer to platter. Sprinkle with chopped chives.

Salmon with Sesame Vegetables

Green Onion Noodles (see recipe) makes the ideal partner. For a big finish, serve scoops of frozen lemon yogurt with brown sugar wafer cookies or chocolate-dipped fortune cookies.

2 SERVINGS; CAN BE DOUBLED

- 2 skinless 6-ounce salmon fillets
- 2 teaspoons oriental sesame oil
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 1 medium leek (white and pale green parts only), thinly sliced
- 1 medium carrot, thinly sliced on diagonal
- 2 teaspoons grated peeled fresh ginger
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- ¾ cup dry white wine
- ½ cup bottled clam juice
- Toasted sesame seeds

Brush both sides of salmon fillets with sesame oil. Season with salt and pepper. Sear salmon in heavy medium skillet over high heat until just cooked through, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer salmon to platter. Reduce heat to medium. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in same skillet. Add leek, carrot, ginger and garlic and sauté until carrot is just tender, about 4 minutes. Spoon vegetables over salmon, dividing evenly. Tent with aluminum foil. Add wine and clam juice to skillet and boil until liquids are reduced to glaze, about 10 minutes. Whisk in remaining 3 tablespoons butter. Spoon sauce over salmon fillets and vegetables. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and serve.



Green Onion Noodles

This simple side dish continues the Asian theme of the salmon recipe, above. The noodles are especially attractive when spooned into Bibb lettuce "cups."

2 SERVINGS; CAN BE DOUBLED

- 6 ounces (half of 12-ounce package) fresh oriental water noodles or 4 ounces dried linguine pasta
- 2 tablespoons peanut oil
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- ½ cup thinly sliced green onions (about 2)

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Cook noodles in large pot of boiling salted water until tender but still firm to bite, about 6 minutes. Drain well. Transfer to medium bowl. Whisk oil, vinegar and soy sauce in small bowl. Pour dressing over noodles and toss to coat. Season generously with pepper. Add green onions and toss again to blend. *(Can be prepared 1 hour ahead. Let stand at room temperature.)*

Chunky Vegetable Stew

Tomatoes, sweet potato, chick-peas and zucchini simmer in a garlicky tomato sauce to make a satisfying meatless main dish. Begin with a light salad of crisp cucumber slices tossed with dill vinaigrette and sprinkled with paprika. Buttered couscous makes a great side dish for the meal. Serve pound cake topped with chocolate ice cream and hot fudge sauce for a quick but lavish dessert.

2 SERVINGS; CAN BE DOUBLED

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 onion, thickly sliced
- 2 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 14½-ounce can stewed tomatoes, with juices
- 1 8-ounce sweet potato, peeled, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1 cup drained canned chick-peas (garbanzo beans)
- ¾ teaspoon dried rosemary, crumbled
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into ½-inch-thick rounds
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Heat olive oil in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add sliced onion and cook until slightly softened, separating slices into rings, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute. Add tomatoes with their juices, sweet potato, chick-peas and rosemary. Bring mixture to simmer, stirring occasionally. Cover and cook 5 minutes. Add zucchini. Cover and cook until sweet potato is tender, about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide stew between soup bowls. Top with Parmesan cheese and serve.

Anne Thompson used three packets of Good Seasons® this week. And didn't make a single salad.



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Buon Appetito!



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The Cook's Exchange

THIS UNUSUAL BUT TERRIFIC SIDE dish has been in my family for generations. My grandmother gave the recipe to my mother, and she passed it on to me. When the time comes, I'll share the recipe with my daughter.

Anthony L. Howell
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Mashed Potato and Endive Salad

4 SERVINGS

- 2 small russet potatoes (about 12 ounces total), peeled, diced
- 4 bacon slices, chopped
- ¼ cup minced onion
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 2 heads Belgian endive, sliced

Cook potatoes in large pot of boiling water until tender, about 12 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook bacon in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat until brown and crisp. Transfer to paper towel using slotted spoon. Drain bacon well. Reserve pan drippings in skillet.

Transfer potatoes to colander and drain well. Return potatoes to pot. Mash coarsely. Reheat bacon fat in skillet until just warm. Remove from heat and mix in minced onion, cider vinegar and sugar. Add dressing to potatoes. Add endive and toss gently. Season salad to taste with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with bacon. Serve salad warm.

Do you have an interesting, challenging, previously unpublished recipe you would like to share with other *Bon Appétit* readers? It could be a heritage recipe from your family files, a new variation on an old favorite, or a showstopper you have developed. Send one or more to The Cook's Exchange, *Bon Appétit*, 5900 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036. The material becomes our property and will not be returned.

AS A GRADUATE STUDENT AND A working mother, I'm always searching for recipes that are simple and delicious. This traditional Middle Eastern one is a family favorite. It's rich and satisfying, and fits into my hectic schedule.

Donna Smith
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Shortcut Moussaka

12 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 15-ounce can tomato sauce
- ¾ cup dry red wine
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- ¼ cup all purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 large eggplant (about 1½ pounds), peeled, sliced into thin rounds

Heat olive oil in heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and chopped onion and cook until beef is brown, breaking up beef with fork, about 15 minutes. Mix in tomato sauce, red wine, parsley, crumbled oregano and ground cinnamon. Simmer until mixture thickens and is almost dry, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover tightly and refrigerate.)*

Preheat oven to 350° F. Melt butter in heavy medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Add flour and stir 1 minute. Gradually add milk, whisking until smooth. Boil until thick, stirring constantly, about 2 minutes. Beat eggs in small bowl to blend. Whisk small amount of milk mixture into eggs. Return mixture to saucepan. Bring to boil, whisking constantly. Remove custard from heat. Stir in ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese. Season custard to taste with salt and pepper.

Butter 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Arrange half of eggplant in bottom of dish. Season with salt and pepper. Spread meat mixture over. Top with remaining eggplant. Pour hot custard cheese sauce over eggplant. Sprinkle with remaining ½ cup Parmesan. Cover loosely with foil and bake 1 hour. Uncover and continue baking until golden and bubbling on edges, about 10 minutes longer. Cool 10 minutes.

I GREW UP ON CAJUN COOKING IN Louisiana, and after moving to California I really missed my mother's jambalaya. Thank goodness she sent me the recipe; it cured my homesickness and was a hit with my new friends.

Stacy L. Callahan
Pasadena, California

Louisiana Jambalaya

10 SERVINGS

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter
- 2 red onions, chopped
- 5 green onions, chopped
- 1 large green bell pepper, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 jalapeño chili, finely chopped with seeds
- 1 tablespoon Creole Seasoning*

½ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 pound andouille sausage** or hot Italian sausage, cut into ½-inch pieces
¾ pound ham, cut into ½-inch pieces
2 14½-ounce cans chicken broth
1 16-ounce can plum tomatoes, diced, with liquid
3 cups long-grain rice

Melt butter in heavy large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add red onions, 4 green onions, bell pepper, garlic, bay leaves, jalapeño, Creole Seasoning, cayenne pepper and oregano. Cover and cook until vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes. Mix in tomato paste. Add sausage, ham, broth, tomatoes and rice. Bring mixture to simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook until rice is very tender, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour. Garnish with remaining green onion and serve.

**A spice mixture that includes chilies, garlic and other spices. Available at specialty foods stores and some supermarkets.*

***A spicy Cajun smoked pork sausage, available at specialty foods stores.*

MY HUSBAND WAS BORN IN WEST Africa, and whenever he gets homesick, he prepares this spicy peanut stew from his native land. It's made with lamb and vegetables and has lots of heat. We like to serve it over steamed white rice to capture all the flavors.

Sabine Broeck-Sallah
Amherst, Massachusetts

Spicy Lamb and Peanut Stew

8 SERVINGS

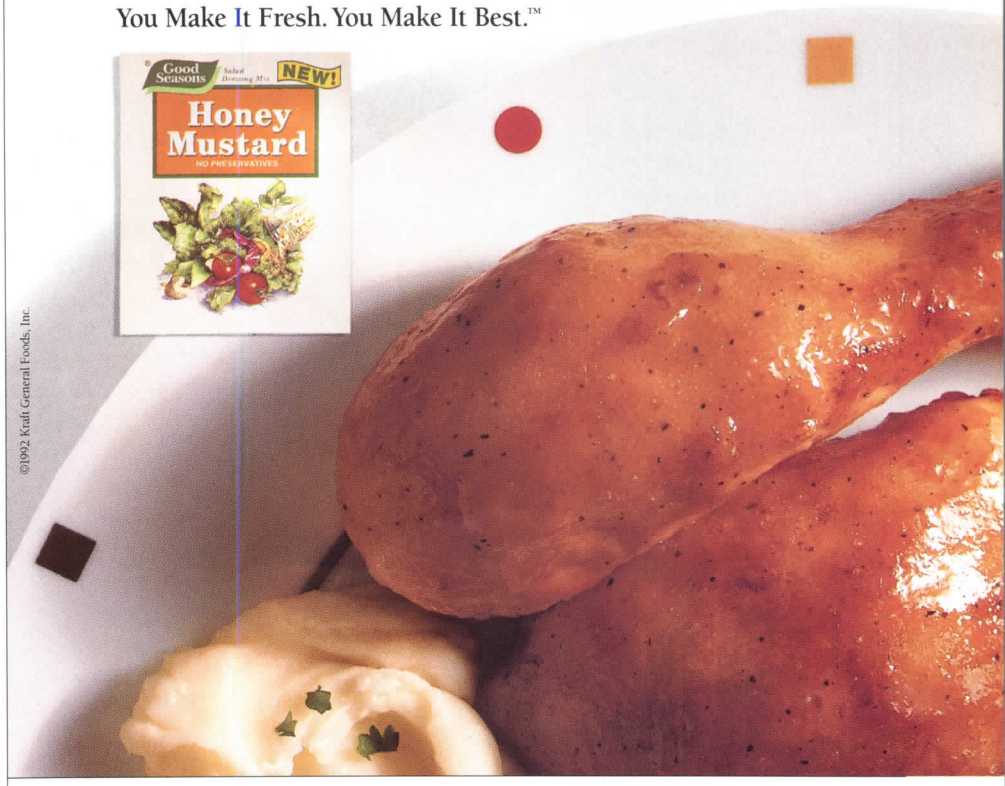
2 tablespoons peanut oil
1¾ pounds lamb shoulder, trimmed, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 large onions, coarsely chopped
1 6-ounce can tomato paste
3 bay leaves

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 122}

Anne's Honey Mustard Masterpieces.

- Pour one cup prepared Good Seasons® Honey Mustard Dressing over 2½ lbs. of chicken pieces.
- Marinate in refrigerator at least 3 hours.
- Remove chicken from marinade and bake at 350° for 60 minutes.

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¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1¾ cups beef stock or canned beef broth
1¾ cups water

¾ cup old-fashioned style or freshly ground peanut butter
1 cup diced carrots
4 jalapeño or 2 habañero chilies, halved, seeded
1 cup frozen peas
Cooked rice

Heat oil in heavy large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add lamb and onions and cook until lamb is brown, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Mix in tomato paste, bay leaves and cayenne pepper and cook 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper. Add beef stock and water and bring to boil. Simmer until lamb is tender, about 1 hour 20 minutes.

Stir peanut butter, carrots and jalapeños into stew and cook until carrots are tender, about 30 minutes. Add peas and cook until heated through. Discard jalapeños. Serve stew over rice.

MY FRIENDS ENJOY BEING THE "taste testers" in my kitchen because I'm always creating new desserts. Recently I invited a few pals over to try this cheesecake. It was a big success, but then again, who could resist the combination of hazelnut liqueur and white chocolate in a rich, crumbly crust? The flavors are even better if the cake is baked a day ahead and allowed to mellow in the refrigerator overnight.

Cynthia Paige Ward
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

White Chocolate Cheesecake with Hazelnut Crust

10 SERVINGS

CRUST

¾ cup hazelnuts (about 3¼ ounces)
12 whole graham crackers, broken
¼ cup sugar
6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, melted

FILLING

4 8-ounce packages cream cheese, room temperature
1¼ cups sugar
4 eggs
3 ounces imported white chocolate (such as Lindt), finely chopped
3 tablespoons hazelnut liqueur (such as Frangelico)

FOR CRUST: Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 325°F. Grease 9-inch-diameter springform pan. Wrap aluminum foil around outside of pan. Place hazelnuts in pie pan and roast until brown, about 15 minutes. Transfer to kitchen towel, cover and let stand 5 minutes. Rub hazelnuts with towel to remove husks. Chop coarsely in food processor. Add graham crackers and sugar and process until fine crumbs form. Add melted butter and process until crumbs begin to stick together. Press crumbs into bottom and 1 inch up sides of prepared pan. Bake 10 minutes. Cool crust on rack.

FOR FILLING: Using electric mixer, beat cream cheese in large bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in sugar. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in white chocolate and hazelnut liqueur. Pour filling into crust, covering completely.

Bake cake until edges are set and center moves only slightly when pan is shaken, about 1 hour 20 minutes. Cool completely in pan on rack. Cover and refrigerate at least 24 hours. *(Can be prepared 2 days ahead.)* Run small sharp knife around pan sides to loosen. Release pan sides. Transfer cheesecake to platter. Cut into wedges and serve.

THESE COOKIES DATE BACK TO MY high school days, when I used to make them for my family. I took a standard chocolate chip recipe and added some oats plus a surprise ingredient, instant pudding mix. My three older brothers (they were all football players then) couldn't resist the chewy treats



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and kept asking for more. Needless to say, I've been baking them ever since.

Nancy Bedford Van Ness
Los Angeles, California

Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Cookies

MAKES ABOUT 30

- ½ cup solid vegetable shortening
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¾ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 3.4-ounce package vanilla instant pudding mix
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon water
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- 2¼ cups all purpose flour
- 1 12-ounce package semisweet chocolate chips
- 1½ cups chopped walnuts (about 6 ounces)

Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter heavy large cookie sheets. Beat vegetable shortening and unsalted butter in large bowl until light. Gradually add white and brown sugars and beat mixture until fluffy. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla pudding mix, vanilla extract, baking soda, water, ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg and salt and mix until well blended. Mix in oats, then flour. Stir in chocolate chips and walnuts.

Drop cookie dough by large rounded spoonfuls (about 3 tablespoons each) onto prepared cookie sheets, spacing 2 inches apart. Bake until cookies appear dry and tops are lightly cracked and soft when pressed, about 12 minutes (do not overbake). Cool cookies 5 minutes on cookie sheets. Transfer cookies to racks and cool. *(Store cookies in airtight container.)*

—By Gaylen Ducker Grody

Anne's tip for a quick dip.

- Mix 1 envelope of Good Seasons® Italian Salad Dressing Mix, 1 cup mayonnaise, 1 cup sour cream (or low-fat yogurt).
- Refrigerate one hour before serving.

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RECIPES

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CRUNCHY SALSA

BLACK BEANS WITH SAFFRON ORZO PRIMAVERA

BY RICHARD SAX AND MARIE SIMMONS

"What is the proper food?" Pilon demanded. "Beans," she said. "There you have something to trust...."
—Tortilla Flat by John Steinbeck

"Proper food," indeed. Of all known foods, beans are among the best nutritional bargains going. For instance, one cup (approximately six ounces) of cooked white beans provides 15 grams of protein (roughly a quarter of our recommended daily requirement), about 200 calories and only a single gram of fat. True, an equivalent amount of broiled sirloin steak (fat trimmed) has considerably more protein, but it comes with 360 calories and 15 grams of fat. And while the steak delivers 150 grams of cholesterol, beans have none; in fact, they have been shown to be even more effective than oat bran in lowering cholesterol levels. Finally, at a few pennies per serving, beans are an economical way to get a good dose of iron, folic acid, zinc and fiber as well.

But we all know that this strong nutritional profile sometimes gets lost in the culinary translation, in such favorite dishes as pork and beans, enchiladas, dips and much more. As with any other good-for-you food, cooking beans with lots of fat—whether in the form of bacon grease, grated cheese or chunks of ham—tends to defeat the purpose. So we've developed recipes that take full advantage of the healthful aspects of beans, without adding the usual fat. Included here are a streamlined, lowfat version of the traditional bean dish *ribollita*, Tuscany's soul-soothing mixture of leftover bread combined with vegetable soup; and a couple of new concoctions. What they all have in common is the heartiness to warm you on a winter night, combined with the low fat content to keep you in good shape—and that's a plus for any time of the year.

LOWFAT TUSCAN RIBOLLITA

This dish is more like a stew than a soup, since the bread absorbs most of the liquid.

6 SERVINGS

- 6 ¼-inch-thick slices whole wheat Italian bread
- 1 garlic clove, halved

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, halved, sliced
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small zucchini, sliced
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ teaspoon dried rosemary, crumbled
- 4 cups coarsely chopped escarole (about 1 head)
- 1 15-ounce can cannellini beans,* rinsed thoroughly, drained
- 1 14½-ounce can ready-cut peeled tomatoes, drained, juices reserved

{RECIPE CONTINUED ON PAGE 126}

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL DEUSON

FOR ACCESSORIES INFORMATION, SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

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Dannon® Muffins

Ingredients:
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 tsps. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2/3 cup Dannon Plain Nonfat or Lowfat Yogurt
- 2/3 cup skim milk
- 1/2 cup blueberries or grated apple (if desired)

In large mixing bowl combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Gently stir in yogurt and milk, blending just until dry ingredients are moistened. Fill lightly greased or paper-lined muffin cups 3/4 full. Bake at 400° for 18 minutes or until well-browned. Serve warm. Makes approximately 12 muffins.

Lite Streusel Variation:
Combine 1/3 cup sugar and 1/2 tsp. cinnamon. Fill muffin cups 1/2 full with batter; place tsp. of sugar-cinnamon mixture on top of each and add batter to fill cups 3/4 full.

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- 1 cup chicken stock or canned low-salt broth
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350° F. Place bread on small baking sheet. Bake until crisp and golden brown, about 15 minutes. Cool slightly. Rub both sides of bread with halved garlic clove. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover; store at room temperature.)*

Heat olive oil in heavy large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until onion is tender, about 12 minutes. Stir in carrots, celery and 2 minced garlic cloves. Cover and cook until carrots are almost tender, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Add zucchini, red bell pepper and rosemary and sauté until zucchini is almost crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Mix in escarole, beans and drained tomatoes and stir until escarole is wilted, about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. *(Can be prepared 4 hours ahead.)*

Preheat oven to 400° F. Arrange garlic toast in single layer atop vegetable mixture in Dutch oven. Pour broth and reserved juices from tomatoes over toast. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake until toast is moist and cheese is golden brown, about 30 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes and serve.

**Also known as white kidney beans and available in the Italian section of most supermarkets. If unavailable, Great Northern or navy beans can be used.*

PER SERVING: calories, 162.20; fat, 5.91 g; sodium, 296.82 mg; cholesterol, 1.65 mg

Pinto Bean, Chicken and Cheese Burritos

4 SERVINGS

- 8 ounces boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into ½-inch-wide strips
- 3 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

- ½ small onion, chopped
- 1 15- to 16-ounce can pinto beans, rinsed thoroughly, drained
- Hot pepper sauce (such as Tabasco)
- 4 10-inch-diameter flour tortillas
- Crunchy Salsa (see recipe)
- 1 cup (about 4 ounces) shredded reduced-fat Monterey Jack cheese

Combine chicken, 2 teaspoons olive oil and 1 garlic clove in medium bowl. Season generously with pepper. Refrigerate 15 minutes to 1 hour.

Heat heavy large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add chicken mixture and sauté until chicken is cooked through, about 4 minutes. Transfer chicken to plate.

Heat remaining 1 teaspoon olive oil in same skillet over medium-low heat. Add onion, cover and cook until onion is very tender, stirring occasionally, about 8 minutes. Stir in remaining garlic clove and sauté 1 minute. Mix in beans. Remove bean mixture from heat and season to taste with hot pepper sauce. Mix in cooked chicken.

Preheat oven to 350° F. Spoon ¼ of bean and chicken filling down center of 1 tortilla. Top filling with 2 tablespoons salsa. Roll up burrito. Place burrito in 9x13-inch baking dish, seam side down. Repeat with remaining tortillas and filling and 6 tablespoons salsa. Sprinkle cheese over burritos. Cover with foil and bake until burritos are heated through, about 15 minutes. Serve with remaining salsa.

PER SERVING: calories, 356.59; fat, 9.91 g; sodium, 610.39 mg; cholesterol, 52.88 mg

Crunchy Salsa

MAKES ABOUT 1¾ CUPS

- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- ½ cup diced seeded peeled cucumber
- ¼ cup diced red onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 small jalapeño chili, seeded, minced

Combine all ingredients in small bowl. Season to taste with salt. *(Salsa can be prepared up to 8 hours ahead. Cover with plastic and refrigerate.)*

PER TABLESPOON: calories, 2.23; fat, .01 g; sodium, .73 mg; cholesterol, 0 mg

Black Beans with Saffron Orzo Primavera

6 SERVINGS

BEANS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 15-ounce cans black beans, rinsed thoroughly, drained
- 1 cup (or more) canned low-salt chicken broth

ORZO

- 2½ cups water
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Pinch (generous) of saffron threads
- 1 cup orzo (rice-shaped pasta; also called riso)

- 1 small zucchini, diced
- 1 cup small broccoli florets
- 1 cup diced green beans
- ½ red bell pepper, thinly sliced (optional)

FOR BEANS: Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-low heat. Add onion, cover and cook until onion is tender, about 12 minutes. Add garlic and sauté 2 minutes. Add cumin and stir 30 seconds. Add beans and 1 cup broth. Cook until beans are creamy, stirring frequently, about 15 minutes. Add additional broth if beans become dry. Cover and keep warm.

FOR ORZO: Bring 2½ cups water to boil in heavy medium saucepan. Remove from heat. Stir in salt and saffron. Cover and let stand 10 minutes. Return mixture to boil. Add orzo. Cover and simmer over low heat until pasta is tender and liquid is absorbed, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook zucchini, broccoli and green beans in large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Drain. Add vegetables to orzo and toss. Divide orzo among 6 plates. Top with hot beans. Garnish with bell pepper strips if desired and serve.

PER SERVING: calories, 246.26; fat, 3.82 g; sodium, 429.96 mg; cholesterol, 0 mg

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EVER SINCE THE ARTIFICIAL SWEETENER aspartame made its debut in 1981, it has been suspected of increasing one's appetite for sweet foods. But those suspicions are unfounded, according to an article by Dr. Barbara Rolls in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. After reviewing numerous studies of aspartame's effect on appetite, Rolls found that the sweetener does not promote excessive eating and that it may in fact help dieters avoid fattening foods. Rolls is director of the Laboratory for the Study of Human Ingestive Behavior at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

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Diet and Exercise

YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW THAT A lowfat diet will help you lose weight, but were you aware that maintaining good cholesterol levels requires a side order of exercise? That's what researchers at Stanford University say in a report published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. They studied 264 men and women who walked or jogged while dieting, and found that all of them increased their levels of HDL (a.k.a. "good" cholesterol). Conversely, those who dieted without working out decreased their HDL levels, leading to the conclusion that physical activity plays an important role in maintaining a high level of HDL. Researchers further estimated that the active dieters lowered their risk of heart disease by 35 percent. Everything considered, you might want to add a walk around the block to your next meal of pasta and steamed veggies.

Best-Dressed Potato

UNLESS YOU'VE BEEN LIVING IN YOUR own private Idaho, it's not news to you that a spud topped with butter and sour cream packs a hefty helping of fat. By themselves, however, potatoes and their skins are rich in vitamin C and potassium, contain just a trace of fat and minimal calories and are an excellent source of complex carbohydrates. So why mess with a good thing?

The Idaho Potato Commission offers these health-smart garnish suggestions for the tuber on your table: lowfat cottage cheese and chives, nonfat plain yogurt with chopped green onions, steamed broccoli florets, a dollop of part skim ricotta cheese, spicy mustard, and salsa or lowfat chili made with lean ground turkey. For other recipes, send an SASE (business size) to Idaho Heart-Healthy Recipes, The Idaho Potato Commission, P.O. Box 1068, Boise, ID 83701.

Great Fruit

THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CITRUS is spreading the word that right now is peak season for grapefruit. All varieties—white, pink and ruby red—are loaded with vitamin C (half a fruit provides more than 70 percent of the United States recommended daily allowance). They're also a source of such important nutrients as potassium, folate and pectin, the soluble fiber that experts believe may help lower cholesterol. And half a grapefruit has only 38 calories, a breakfast bargain if there ever was one.

Ranch-Hand Cereal

ONE DAY 70 YEARS AGO, A MONTANA rancher's wife put some whole wheat berries into her coffee grinder, poured boiling water over the ground kernels and served the mixture to a crew of hungry ranch hands. The nutritious hot cereal, now known as Cream of the West, has been a hit ever since. Made from Montana's hard red spring wheat, the original roasted blend has a hearty, nutty flavor. Better yet, it's low in fat and rich in protein, fiber, complex carbohydrates, essential amino acids, iron and B vitamins. There's also a new seven-grain hot cereal. Both varieties come packed in boxes or soft burlap pouches. You can order directly from Cream of the West, P.O. Box 20936, Billings, MT 59104; 406-252-6792.

A Classic Updated

IT'S BEEN 20 YEARS SINCE THE DEBUT OF *Diet for a Small Planet* (Ballantine Books, 1971), Frances Moore Lappé's sensation-causing treatise on how our food choices affect the world around us. Now, the publishers of this ecological classic have re-released it in a special anniversary edition. The new version includes an updated introduction, in which the author addresses timely issues for a new generation of readers brought up during the Green Revolution. Vegetarian menus and recipes from the original volume remain. Available in bookstores nationwide.

—By Vené Franco

March Menu Guide

Here are some suggestions for special parties and weekday menus based on the recipes in this issue.

MOM'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

Roman Broth with Parmesan Cheese Threads **52**

Orange-glazed Game Hens **72**

Steamed Snow Peas

Rice

Pistachio and White Chocolate Buttercream Cake **64**

CASUAL SUNDAY BRUNCH

Smoked Salmon with Brown Soda Bread **58**

Italian Country Omelet **110**

Roasted New Potatoes

Sunshine Cheesecake **73**

AFTER-THE-MOVIES SWEETS

Double-Crust Lemon Tart with Berries **60**

Chocolate Hazelnut Truffle Cake **65**

Fresh Fruit

Cappuccino and Assorted Coffees and Teas

ITALIAN SUPPER

Caesar Salad

Lowfat Tuscan Ribollita **124**

Mascarpone and Espresso Mousse **55**

VEGETARIAN DINNER

Mixed Greens with Champagne Vinaigrette **83**

Pasta and Chick-Peas with Roasted Red Peppers **52**

Orange Custard Tart **74**

BREAKFAST FOR THE KIDS

Mixed Grain and Wild Rice Cereal **32**

Canadian Bacon

Sliced Fresh Fruit

EASY AFTERNOON LUNCH

Chunky Vegetable Stew **119**

Toasted Sourdough Rolls

Macadamia Crunch Ice Cream with Mango Sauce **67**

LOW CHOLESTEROL

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Black Beans with Saffron Orzo Primavera **126**

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LOW CALORIE

Salmon with Sesame Vegetables **118**

Steamed Rice

Fresh Citrus Compote **74**

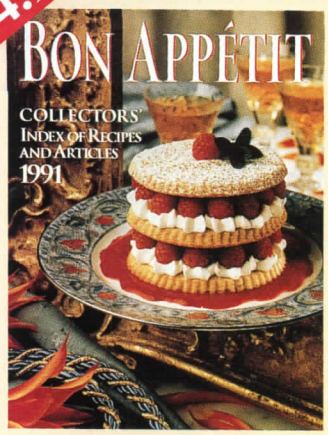
LOW SODIUM

Mixed Green Salad

Curry and Honey Roast Chicken **118**

Butter Almond Tart **66**

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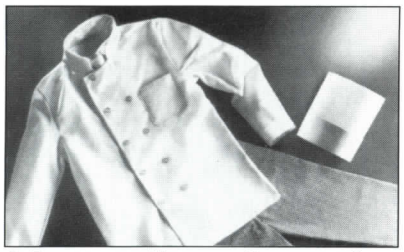
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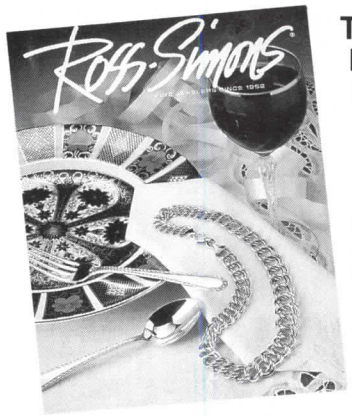
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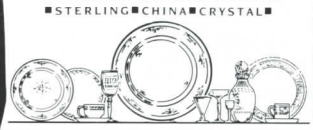
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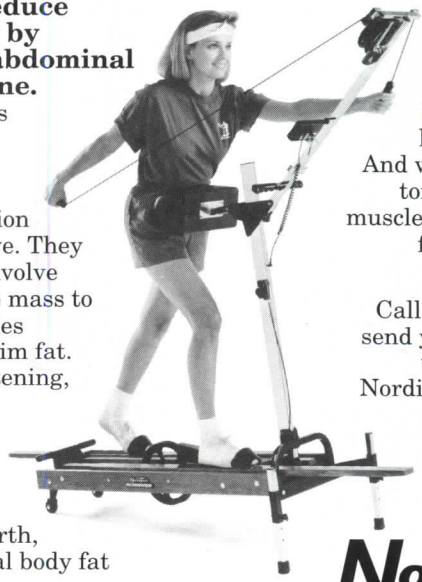
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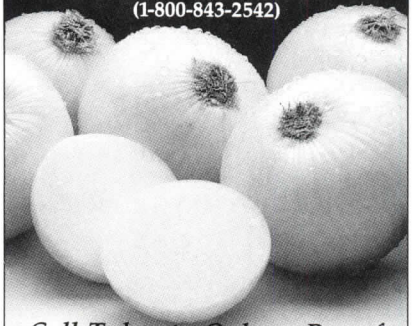
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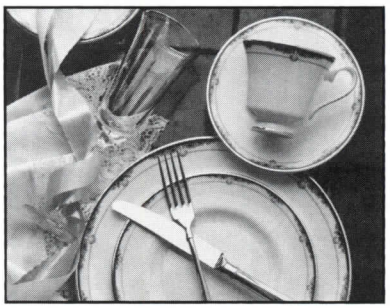
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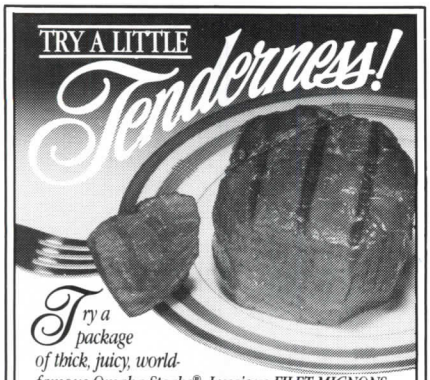
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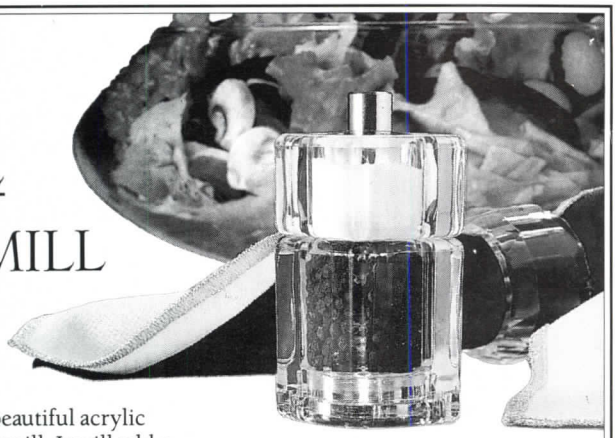
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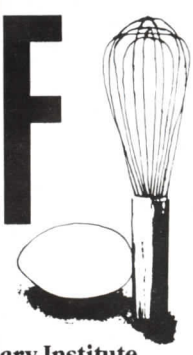
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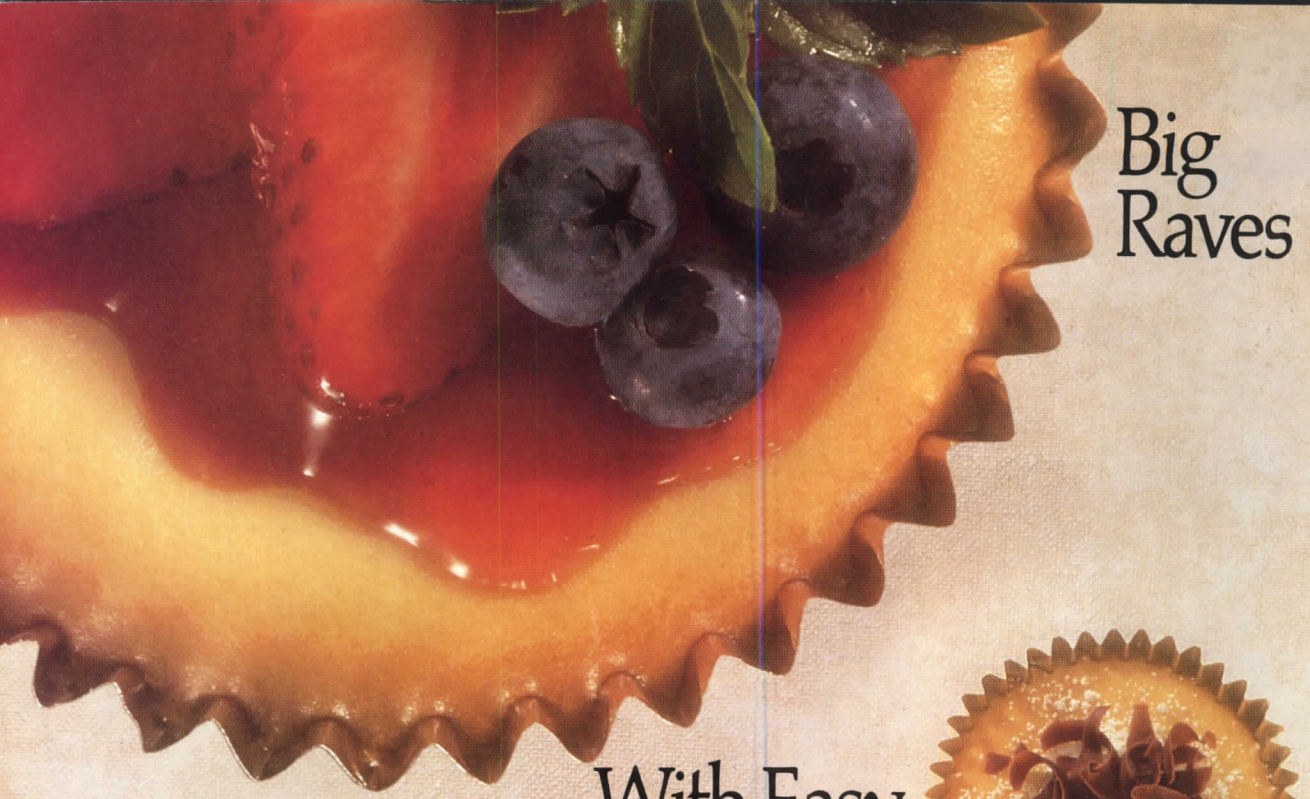
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Big Raves

With Easy Little Cheese Cakes.*









MINI-CHEESECAKES

(Makes 12)

12 vanilla wafers
2 8 oz. packages cream cheese
½ c. sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
2 eggs

Line muffin tin with foil liners.

Place one vanilla wafer in each liner. ◊ Mix cream cheese, vanilla and sugar on medium speed until well-blended. ◊ Add eggs. Mix well. Pour over wafers, filling ¾ full. Bake 25 min. at 325°.

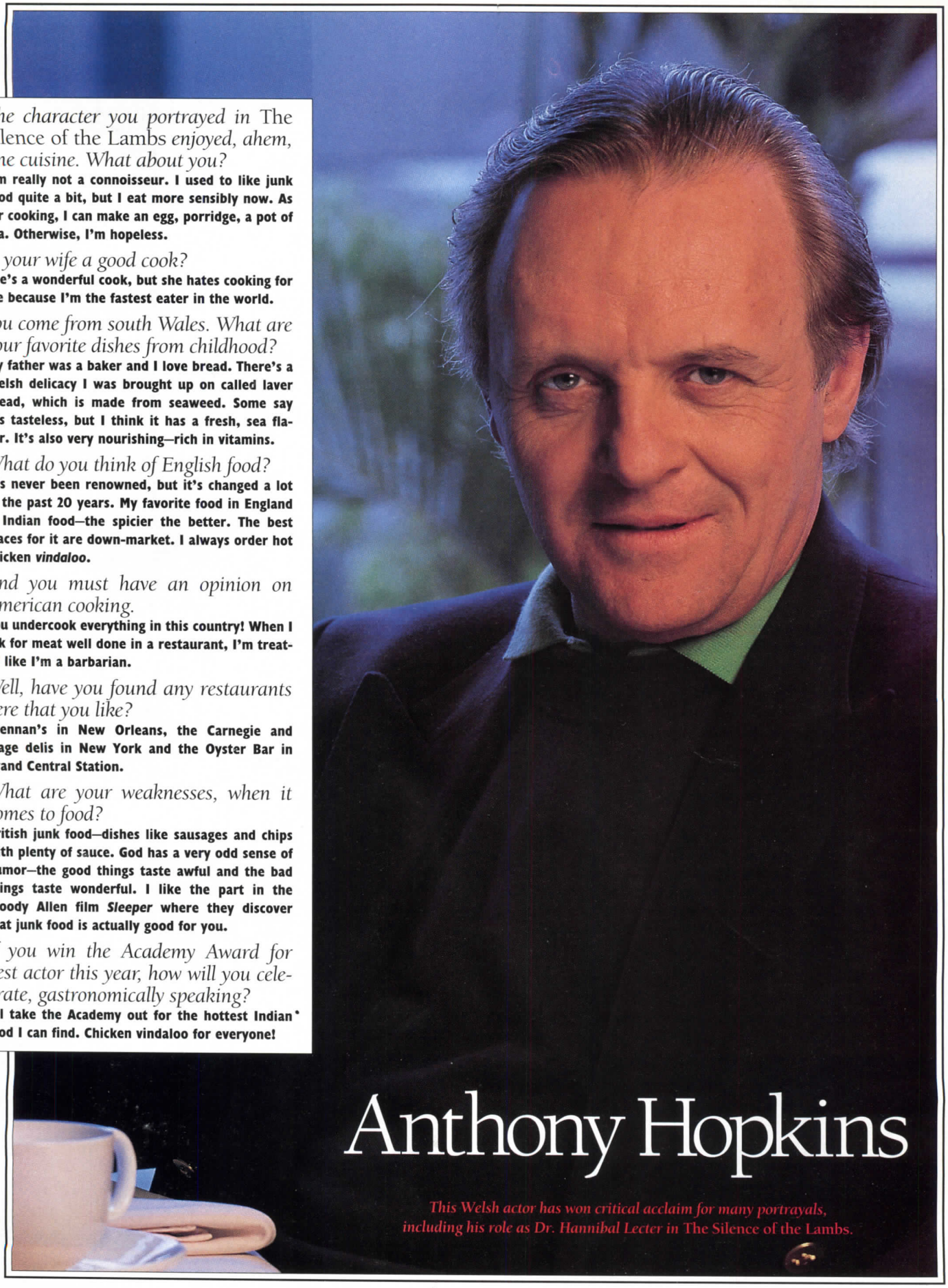
Remove from pan when cool. ◊ Chill. ◊ Top with fruit, preserves, nuts or chocolate. ◊ Be creative!

*Actual size is cupcake size.

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CREATE A STIR WITH CREAM CHEESE.



Anthony Hopkins

This Welsh actor has won critical acclaim for many portrayals, including his role as Dr. Hannibal Lecter in The Silence of the Lambs.

The character you portrayed in The Silence of the Lambs *enjoyed, ahem, fine cuisine. What about you?*

I'm really not a connoisseur. I used to like junk food quite a bit, but I eat more sensibly now. As for cooking, I can make an egg, porridge, a pot of tea. Otherwise, I'm hopeless.

Is your wife a good cook?

She's a wonderful cook, but she hates cooking for me because I'm the fastest eater in the world.

You come from south Wales. What are your favorite dishes from childhood?

My father was a baker and I love bread. There's a Welsh delicacy I was brought up on called laver bread, which is made from seaweed. Some say it's tasteless, but I think it has a fresh, sea flavor. It's also very nourishing—rich in vitamins.

What do you think of English food?

It's never been renowned, but it's changed a lot in the past 20 years. My favorite food in England is Indian food—the spicier the better. The best places for it are down-market. I always order hot chicken *vindaloo*.

And you must have an opinion on American cooking.

You undercook everything in this country! When I ask for meat well done in a restaurant, I'm treated like I'm a barbarian.

Well, have you found any restaurants here that you like?

Brennan's in New Orleans, the Carnegie and Stage delis in New York and the Oyster Bar in Grand Central Station.

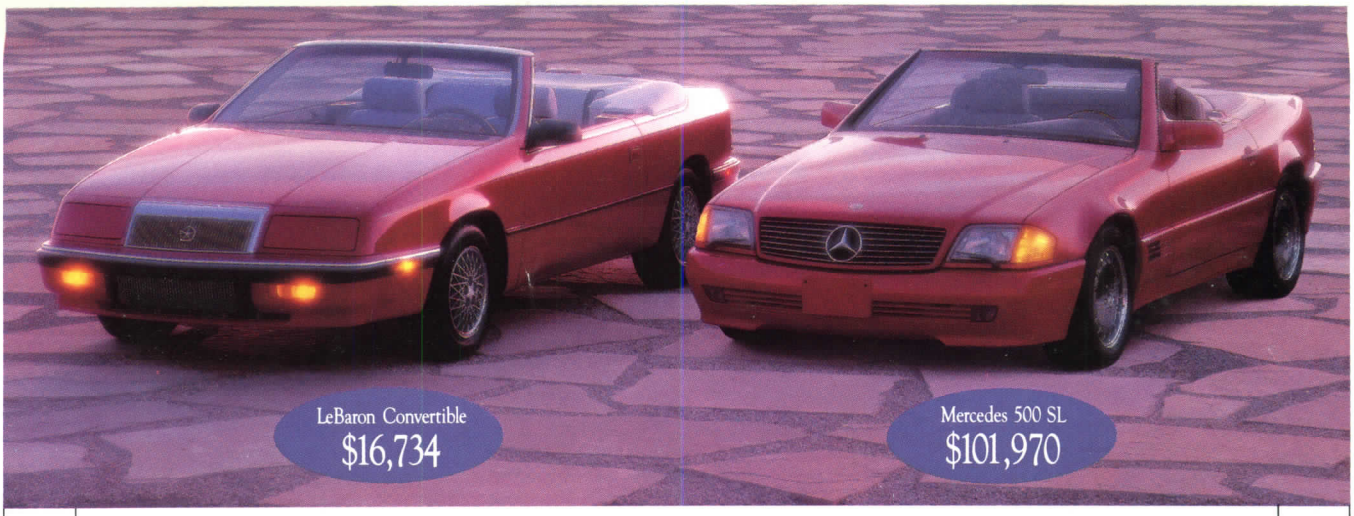
What are your weaknesses, when it comes to food?

British junk food—dishes like sausages and chips with plenty of sauce. God has a very odd sense of humor—the good things taste awful and the bad things taste wonderful. I like the part in the Woody Allen film *Sleeper* where they discover that junk food is actually good for you.

If you win the Academy Award for best actor this year, how will you celebrate, gastronomically speaking?

I'll take the Academy out for the hottest Indian food I can find. Chicken vindaloo for everyone!

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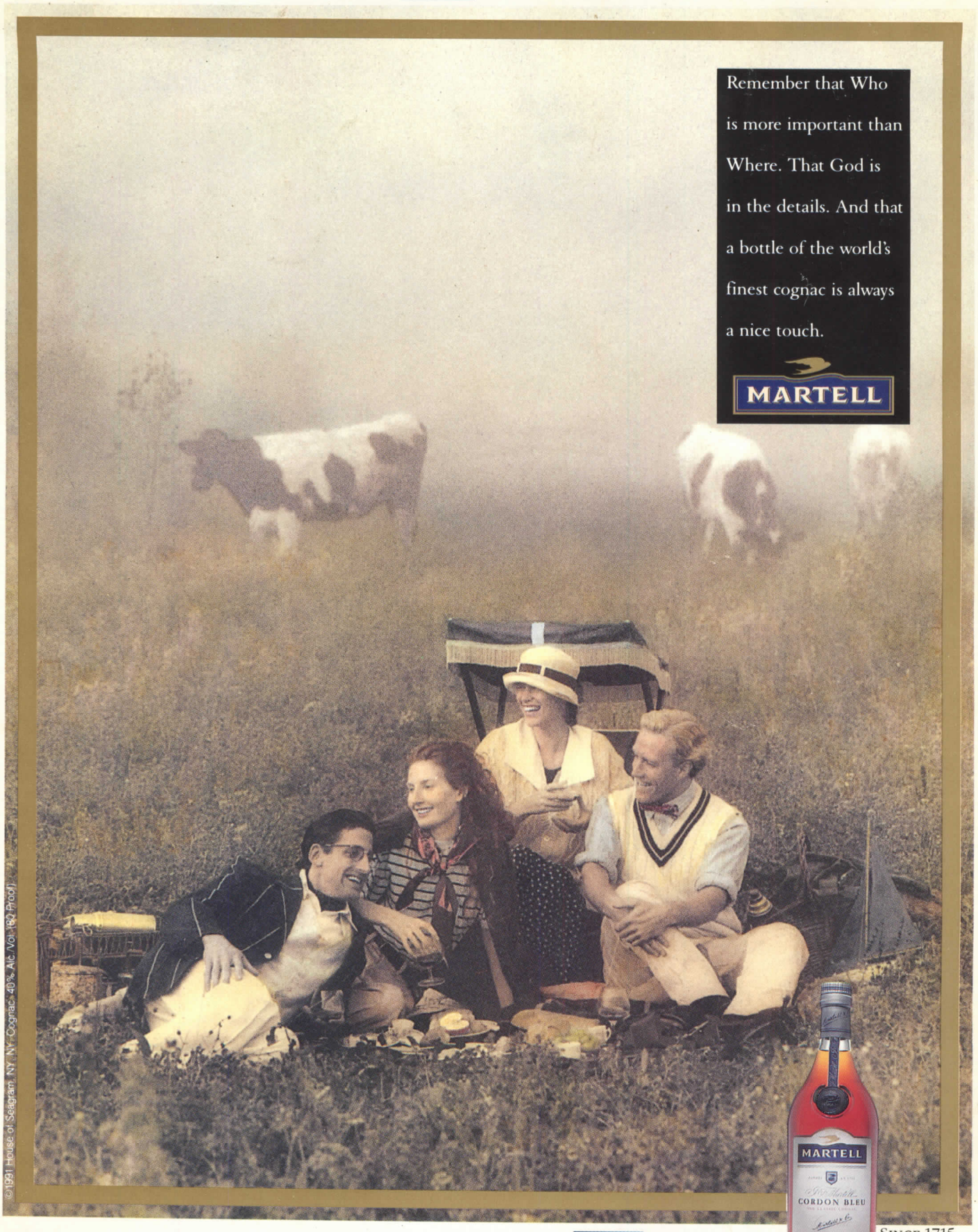
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