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Volume 2, Issue 1

The Richmond Hill Epicurean Society Newsletter

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COOKING WITH AN EDGE

Chef's Table

We had a wonderful experience on our last meeting as we tried a theme event. Due to the proximity to the Chinese New Year, our members were challenged to prepare a typical Oriental festive dinner.

Our next meeting will revert to a “Mystery Box” cook-off. Members who come in early will start with their choice and late arrivers will take on the balance of the task. Please don't take this as a penalty chore (remember that no single element of the production could be ranked as every one is vitally important and brings the final process to a completed dish). We need the production started as early as possible because a hungry guest is an angry guest.

As mentioned in our last meeting, the Culinary Arts Centre has taken on the training and management role of the Ontario culinary and pastry competition team. Unlike our preceding management team that was established solely of competitions, the new committee has a broader mandate to fulfill. This includes public relations / promotions, technical and skill developments. We seek developments through partnerships instead of competitions, we will foster alliance through education and humanitarian projects with our counterparts all over the world, we will promote our society with our knowledge and experience. This is a mammoth task but I am confident that this vision will make the Canadian team a cut above the others, over and beyond cooking. We have already made in-roads with the American team and a host of South Asian Regions including Australia. It is a good start!

I believe that this will inevitably benefit the Epicurean Society currently or in the future in one form or another. So keep an eye on the developments of the competition teams and support our culinary endeavors.

Our next meeting is indeed a special one in that we will introduce Chef Ruwan.

The Stock Pot

January 25, 2006, 6:30pm at the Richmond Hill Culinary Arts Centre. We were privileged to have Chef Rosemary Lee instructor at George Brown and Chef Louis Mendonca of the famed Cricket Club assisting the members with meeting and the preparation of our Chinese New Year celebration.

Menu



Monks jump over the wall soup



**Lemon ginger chicken
Stir Fried Vermicelli Noodles with assorted
Vegetables & Braised duck
Wonton and Thai lime dipping sauce
Lava Shrimp**



Bo Bo Cha Cha



Mystery Vegetable

Thank you to every one who participated!

The Stock Pot continued

As we move into the second full year since the inception of the society we are looking to increase our numbers and put a focused effort on an increased involvement by the members in the newsletter and special events.

Our next meeting will be held on February 22nd this will be a black box evening and is sure to be not only fun but a challenge.

Chef Ruwan our representative in the Food Hotel Asia competition will be on hand to provide us with samples of his pastry expertise.

Did you know?

Foods of the same color have the same number of calories; for example: spinach and pistachio ice cream!

When drinking a diet soda while eating a candy bar, the calories in the candy bar are cancelled by the diet soda.

REMEMBER: "*Stressed*" spelled backward is "*desserts*".

Epicurean Society Members

The founding members to date are:

Frederick Oh, Michael Davies, Ann Di Peco, Patricia Smyth, Darryl Tims, Nicholas Tims, John Murrell, Robert McFadyen, Heather Bracey, Diane Dejong, Erik Dejong, Joe Fezza, Joann Plumber, Terry Aimone, Connie Gerrow, Laura Fisher, Nancy Fisher, Dan Fisher, Patricia Brandon, Marran Woods, Glen Woods, Ellen Skinner, Jeff Heaman, Heather Heaman, Gloria Lee, Tom Coyle, Michael Hung, Vicky Ng, Ricky Lau, Roger Cole, Catherine Chan, Shelagh Reddy, Marina Stiso, Vic Gandhi, Elaine Yim, Marissa Virgara, Doug Rogers, Dale Hickey & Elisa Vergara

Richmond Hill Culinary Arts Centre
Pastry Team

The Richmond Hill Culinary Arts Centre would like to announce a fund raising dinner to support the launch of an Ontario world class gold medal Pastry Team. Lead Chef Ruwan will take a small pastry team to Singapore in April of this year to compete in the prestigious Food Hotel Asia competition.

This is the largest food and hospitality exhibition in Asia with a Culinary Competition level at par with the Culinary Olympics in Germany and the Culinary World Cup in Luxemburg. It draws competitors from all over the world, the very best chefs and pastry talents competing for the medals in this rigorous event.

Chef Ruwan is an international renown pastry chef, certified World Master Chef Gold Medal winner and his culinary skills have earned him a chapter in the World Celebrity Chefs publication.

The Culinary Arts Centre is currently the home base of the International Culinary Team competing in Luxemburg (November 2006) and will now extend our training and management capabilities for the Pastry Team as well. Our teams representing Canada is self-funded and we rely on supporters from the private to institutional sectors to assist in raising the necessary finance required to train and send the team to compete. These events sets the benchmark and standards for the industry and the experience gained through participation will elevate the skills and widen the exposure for our young chefs. For the individuals, these competitions encourage them to improve their skill level, practice professionalism in cuisine and for the industry; it inspires others to emulate the qualities of perfecting the arts.

There are only 60 seats available for this exciting display of the culinary artistry.

We look forward to your support and sponsorships for our new Pasty Team. For ticket sales and corporate sponsorship, please contact **Chef Frederick Oh** at **905 508 2665**.

Dinner Event

Date	24 th February, 2006. (Friday)
Time	6.30 pm
Location	Richmond Hill Culinary Arts Centre 1550, 16 th Avenue Building A, Unit 1 Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 3K9 (North East Corner of 16 th Avenue and Leslie Street)
Price	\$100.00 per person (wine with dinner)

Chinese New Year Celebration







I've been on a constant diet for the last two decades. I've lost a total of 789 pounds. By all accounts, I should be hanging from a charm bracelet.

~ Erma Bombeck

The first winners of the Kitchen Angel Award

Vicky NG, Darryl Tims, Nicholas Tims
Roger Cole, Randy Carr, Mike Davies, Jan Coughlin
Marina Stiso, Rob MacFadyen



BREAD

Sesame seeds and Poppy seeds are the only officially acceptable "spots" that should be seen on the surface of any loaf of bread. Fuzzy and hairy looking white or green growth areas are a good indication that your bread has turned into a pharmaceutical laboratory experiment

Monk Jumps Over the Wall (Soup)

There are many stories of how this dish (soup) originated but one appears to be more realistic than the others. Chinese New Year was a time of grand celebration by Chinese who regards this as a gesture to thank the Spirits for their blessings and to usher in the New Year with good fortune.

In the poorer areas of the country side, the people were poor and had to be creative in establishing a feast worthy to please the spirits they were paying homage to. So they got together to build a huge stock pot and contributed whatever food and vegetables from their pantry to make a soup with it. This process took a couple of days as each villager will gather their offerings, put it into the pot together with the contributions of the other villagers and simmered for a couple of days.

One day, while a monk was praying in the temple, the aroma from this soup reached his senses and he immediately got on his feet and was so drawn to the fragrance that he jumped over a extremely tall wall surrounding the temple and rushed for a portion of the soup, hence the name Monk Jumps Over the Wall (soup).

Ingredients

2 tbs Garlic, minced
 Vegetable Oil
1 kg Spare Ribs, cut into small sections
 Seasoning
2 tbs Light Soy Sauce
2 lt Chicken Stock
 Optional Ingredients
 [Preserved Szechwan Vegetable, Lotus Root, Lilly Flower, Napa Cabbage, Watercress,
Daikon, Carrots, Ginger, Cilantro Roots and Stems, any firm root vegetable, Fried Tofu, Dried Dates]
 [Shrimp, Squid, Chicken, Pork, etc]

Method

1. Sauté the garlic and spare ribs with the vegetable oil, seasoning and light soy sauce till the meat is partially cooked, about 15 minutes
2. Add the chicken stock and let it simmer for about an hour, skimming off the raft on the surface of the soup occasionally. Longer simmering time will produce a better flavor.
3. Test the spare ribs for texture (this is a personal call, some like it a little chewy while others prefer a tenderer piece).
4. Add all other ingredients and let it simmer for another hour, season to taste.

Lemon Ginger Chinese New Year Chicken

Cut up whole chickens with cleaver into bite size pieces... bone in.

Marinate pieces in a large bowl with soy, sesame oil and pepper for about 20 minutes

Stir fry or deep fry pieces until a nice golden colour is apparent on the pieces.

Place pieces on paper towel to remove excess cooking oil, then place pieces on parchment paper lined baking tray(s) and put into a 350 oven for about 35 – 40 minutes. Check after 25 minutes for progress to doneness.

While chicken is in oven, make a lemon ginger glaze to coat the chicken after cooking.

Glaze:

Add equal parts of water and sugar together in a sauce pan and bring to a boil

Add chopped garlic and peeled fresh chopped ginger root to boiling liquid. Bring back to a boil and allow ginger and garlic to infuse into the liquid.

Add fresh squeezed lemon juice to balance out the flavour.

Mix a cornstarch and water mixture and slowly pour it into the boiling liquid. Return to a boil to cook out the cornstarch and watch it thicken.

Add scallions cut diagonally (about 2") long to the boiling liquid and then turn off the heat and let it stand. The scallions will par boil while sitting there.

Plating:

Place chicken from oven into a large mixing bowl and pour over about ½ the glaze.

Mix thoroughly and put coated chicken pieces onto a serving platter.

Place remaining glaze into a serving bowl beside the platter for those who want additional glaze.

WONTON RECIPE

Filling ingredients all mixed together:

- Pork
- Shrimp or Squid
- Coriander
- Soya Sauce
- Sesame Oil
- Chopped garlic
- Salt and Pepper

1 egg, acts as glue for sealing wontons

Square wonton wrappers

Directions: Wrap 1 spoonful of filling into the middle of the square wonton wrapper. Line the 2 perpendicular edges of the wrapper in your hand with egg glue and then seal like a triangle, making sure the edges are closed so the filling doesn't leak out. Then fold the 2 ends of the triangle to the centre and stick together with more egg glue.

Place wrapped wontons on a floured baking sheet so they don't stick to the pan.

Put wontons in deep fryer for about 5 minutes or until golden brown. Take out wontons from oil and place on paper towel to soak up the oil. Wait till they cool and serve on a platter with dipping sauce.

Thai Lime Dipping Sauce: (estimate)

1/2 cup Fish sauce

1 cup water

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup of lime or lemon Juice or mix – Juice of (5 lemons and 2 limes)

Chopped up Coriander

Chopped almonds

Finely chopped garlic

Directions: Simmer water, juice and sugar until all sugar is dissolved. Add the garlic and almonds. Wait until the sauce is cool and then add coriander so the leaves don't turn brown and stay green in colour for decorative purposes.

Dessert - Bo Bo Cha Cha

Sweet Potatoes

Yams

Fresh Water Chestnuts

Dried persimmon

GinGko nuts

Mango

can of coconut milk

white fungus (hydradated and chopped finely)

coconut sugar

Brown Sugar

Pandan Leaves

We boiled water with Pandan Leaves? Then add diced yams, sweet potatoes (with the purple skin, and the sweet potato we normally call a Yam) when these are cooked, not mushy just passed crunchy. Then add Ginko nuts, cooked about 15 minutes longer.

We then added mango, water chestnuts, persimmon, both types of sugar. And let cook for another 10 minutes. This is where you would adjust the sweetness. It should be really sweet and coconuty.

Remove the Pandan leaves? add the coconut milk stirring gently and serve

Ask The Chef

This is Diane deJong calling, from the club. I have a question for the newsletter.

I have been trying to get a chocolate soufflé to rise - I understand that technically it should rise about 1" above the dish.

I am using a pastry cream base..then beaten egg whites folded in. The recipe calls for the oven @ 325 - could this be perhaps too low ?

Soufflé is characterized by a light and fluffy, melt-in-your-mouth product. There are basically two types of soufflé, namely savory and sweet. The base could be formed from a variety of starters such as pâte choux, roux, crème pâtissière (pastry cream) and even bread dough. Chilled soufflé is actually a mousse (made to resemble a soufflé by making an extension ring over the top of the ramekin).

The leavening or raising agent is usually egg whites (beaten to a soft peak). The bubbles formed when the egg whites are whipped are like little balloons and when they are over whipped (firm peaks), they will become vulnerable to bursting, just like a balloon that has been filled to the maximum. These air bubbles (thousands of them) will expand when subject to heat causing the soufflé to rise. Due to the fact that the soufflé has no structural integrity (usually a gluten like bread or starch from flour) the structure from the egg whites could not uphold the weight of the other ingredients for long, hence the collapse of the soufflé within minutes after baking.

The other factor that will determine the rise of the soufflé is the temperature. The ideal temperature is about 400 F to 425 F and baking time normally takes about 20 minutes for a 3 inch diameter ramekin. The oven should be preheated before the soufflé is placed in the oven as a low heat will usually cook the product without expanding the bubbles to the maximum.

To assist the soufflé to rise evenly, the sides of the ramekin should be coated with butter and lightly dusted with sugar. Failing which, it will result in a distorted rise. There are some soufflés that will rise with a flat top and others with a dome top, that is caused by the nature of the ingredients and that is the natural look. It is also normal for the centre of the soufflé to be very moist, but not dry (over baked) or wet (under baked). Different ovens react differently and the type of material of the ramekin will create a different reaction.

In Your Kitchen

Pork and Snow Peas with Ginger Sauce

Serves: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes



Ingredient Shopping List

:3/4 cup (180mL) Lite soy sauce

4 tablespoons (60mL) white wine or rice wine vinegar

1 teaspoon (5mL) sugar

1/3 cup (80mL) water

1 teaspoon (5mL) Gourmet® Garden Chili

1 tablespoon (15mL) cornstarch

1 1/4 lb. (625g) Perfect Pork pork fillet, trimmed and cut into thin pieces

2 tablespoons (30mL) peanut oil

1 lb. (500g) snow peas

1/2 tablespoons (22.5mL) Gourmet® Garden Garlic

1 1/2 tablespoons (22.5mL) Gourmet® Garden Ginger

Instructions:

Place the soy sauce, vinegar, sugar, Gourmet Garden Chili, cornstarch and 1/3 cup (80mL) water in a bowl and mix well.

Add the pork and toss to coat well. 2. Heat a wok or large skillet over high heat, add 1 tablespoon (15mL) of the oil to coat the sides. Drain the pork reserving the liquid, and add to the wok.

Stir-fry over high heat for 1-2 minutes, or until brown.

Remove the pork from the wok or skillet. 3. Heat the remaining oil, add the snow peas and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes.

Add the Gourmet Garden Garlic and Ginger and stir-fry for 1 minute, or until fragrant. Return the pork and any juices to the pan and add the reserved marinade.

Bring to a boil and cook, stirring for 1-2 minutes, or until slightly thickened. Serve over steamed rice.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: 8 ounces Energy 282 Cal 1180kj, Protein 23g, Fat 16g, Cholesterol 56mg, Carbohydrates 10g, Dietary Fibre 1.0g, Sodium 1254mg, Potassium 526mg

Thought for Food

Why you can't cook over a candle

I'm shopping for a new range, and all the literature keeps talking about Btu's. They all relate to how hot the burners will get, but exactly what should those Btu numbers mean to me?

A Btu is an amount of energy, just as a calorie is an amount of energy. Both are most commonly used to measure the amounts of heat.

The Btu, which stands for British thermal unit, was invented by engineers, so while it makes sense to the guys who design the stoves, it doesn't mean much to us in the kitchen. But by sheer luck it turns out to be almost exactly one quarter of a nutritional calorie. So, for example, the 250 calories that it takes to boil off a pint of water is equal to 1,000 Btu.

Another example: The total amount of heat given off by the burning of an average candle is about 5,000 Btu. That's the amount of chemical energy the wax inherently contained, and the combustion process converts that chemical energy into heat energy, but a candle releases its heat slowly over a period of several hours, so it's no good for cooking. In case you've been wondering, that's why you can't sauté a hamburger over a candle.

For cooking, we need a lot of heat delivered in a short period of time. Range burners are therefore rated according to how fast they can pump out the heat, expressed as Btu per hour at their top settings. The confusion comes when people neglect to say "Btu per hour" as just say "Btu". But the burners' Btu ratings are not amounts of heat; they are the maximum rates at which they can pump out heat.

Most home gas or electric range burners produce from 9,000 to 12,000 Btu per hour. The gas burners in restaurant kitchens are capable of putting out heat twice as fast, because for one thing their gas-supply pipes are bigger and can feed in more gas per minute. Also, restaurant ranges generally have several concentric burner rings instead of just one. Chinese restaurants that need to do high-temperature wok cooking have broad gas burners that spew out heat like a dragon with a mouthful of habanero peppers.

Remember that to boil off a pint of water from a stock requires 1,000 Btu of heat? Well, using your 12,000 Btu-per-hour burner, that should take one-twelfth of an hour or five minutes. But you know that it takes longer than that. The reason is that most of the heat emitted by the burner is wasted. Rather than going directly into the liquid in the pan, most of it goes into heating up the pan itself and the surrounding air. Put two different pots of food on two identical burners set at identical levels and they will heat and cook quite differently depending on their shapes and sizes, what materials they're made of, how much and what kinds of foods they contain, and so on. That's why you have to keep your eye on the pot and continually adjust the burner for every specific situation.

When shopping for a range, look for one that has at least one burner rated at 12,000 or preferably 15,000 Btu per hour. With that much heat output you'll be able to boil water in no time, sear meats quickly, and stir-fry in your wok.

History of Food

Famous Chefs

Antoine Careme

Antoine Careme went from being an abandoned child left at the door of a restaurateur in 18th century Paris, to become the father of “haute cuisine” the high art of French cooking – in the early 19th century. Chef to then-world movers and shakers such as diplomat Talleyrand-Perigord, the future King George IV, Czar Alexander I, and the powerful banker James Rothchild, Careme is noted for his voluminous writings on cooking, including the famed L’ Art de la Cuisine Francaise (The Art of French Cooking), a five-volume masterpiece on menu planning, table settings, hundreds of recipes and a history of French cooking.

Charles Ranhofer

Charles Ranhofer, the son of a restaurateur and the grandson of a chef, goes down in the annals of great chefs as the first French chef to bring the grandeur of his country’s cuisine to America. Noted primarily as the head chef of New York City’s famed Delmonico’s restaurant, Ranhofer ran its kitchens for nearly 34 years. Serving such luminaries as President Andrew Johnson, President U.S Grant, Charles Dickens and a host of foreign dignitaries, Ranhofer created such culinary distinctions as Lobster Newburg and Baked Alaska, among many others. He also wrote one of the most complete treatises of its kind, according to the New York Times in praise of his book, The Epicurean, published in 1894.

Julia Child

An American woman named Julia Child, born to a prominent Californian family, Child did not begin to cook until the age of 34. It was after she moved with her husband to France that she had her grand epiphany: Good food is more than roast beef and mashed potatoes. She flung herself headlong into an education at the esteemed Cordon Bleu cooking school in Paris and later wrote Mastering the Art of French Cooking with two partners. Child went on to become the first celebrity chef with more books, television programs, newspaper columns and magazine articles. She brought exquisite French cuisine to America as much with her “have-g-good-time” attitude toward cooking as she did with her talent and expertise.

To all the great chefs, we owe a debt for their giftedness and tireless contributions that have truly turned cooking into an art form. It does make one wonder, however, if ever the temptation arose with any of them to ever dine secretly on a lowly peanut butter jelly sandwich or to toast the evening with Kool-Aid and crackers. We’ll never know, but surely speculate – as we take another bite of quiche Lorraine.

In Your Kitchen

Scallop Stir Fry

Serves: 4

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Ingredient Shopping List:

1/3 cup (80mL) juice from a Texas Sweet grapefruit

4 tablespoons (60mL) lite soy sauce

3 tablespoons (45mL) vegetable oil, divided

2 tablespoons (30mL) grated fresh ginger root

1 pound (500g) shrimp, shelled and deveined

3/4 pounds (375g) bay or regular scallops

1 tablespoon (15mL) cornstarch

bunch green onions, cleaned and cut into 1-inch pieces

3 carrots, cleaned and cut into thin strips

2 Texas Sweet Grapefruit, peeled and sectioned

Hot cooked rice

Instructions:

1. Squeeze 1 grapefruit to make 1/3 cup (80mL) of juice. In a small bowl, combine grapefruit juice, soy sauce, 1 tablespoon (15mL) oil and fresh ginger. Add shrimp and scallops and marinate for 10 minutes.
2. In a large skillet or wok, heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil (30 mL) over high heat. Remove shrimp and scallops from marinade (reserve marinade) and stir fry seafood 2-3 minutes or until opaque. Remove from wok. Add cornstarch to reserved marinade mixture, mix well. Add green onions and carrots to wok and continue stirring until vegetables are crisp. Add marinade and continue stirring while sauce boils and thickens. Add seafood and grapefruit sections gently and heat through.
3. Serve over hot rice.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: 10 ounces Energy 270Cal 1130 kj, Protein 27g, Fat 9g, Cholesterol 134mg, Carbohydrates 21g, Dietary Fibre 5g, Sodium 623mg, Potassium 518mg



A Great “NEW” Line up of Cooking Classes

Cooking with Beef is an ever-popular cooking class which includes;

- Korean Style BBQ Beef Side Ribs
- Braised Ox-Tail Stew
- Flambé Beef Tournedo with Red Wine Sauce

\$85.00

Thursday, February 23, 6.30 p.m.

Part of the international series of classes, **Singapore** promises to be a great addition to any cook's repertoire;

- Spring Rolls
- Hainanese Chicken Rice and Accompaniments
- Straits Style Fruit and Vegetable Salad (Rojak)
- Spare Rib Soup (Bak Kut Teh)

\$85.00

Wednesday, February 15, 6.30 p.m.

Fred has added six great new classes based on preparing a **3 - Course Dinner** with recipes that are a perfect complement to each other. One of them is based on a **Seafood Theme** which includes;

- Seafood Bisque with Gorgonzola Crostini
- Pan Seared Turbot with St. Germaine Sauce
- Beet Infused Mashed Potatoes
- Braised Leeks and Endives
- Crepe Suzette

\$85.00

Tuesday, February 28, 6.30 p.m.

For all the chocolate-lovers, you won't want to miss **Chocolate Works I** just in time for Valentine's Day.

- Introduction to Chocolates
- Tempering Techniques
- Basic Ganache
- Hand Rolled Truffles

\$80.00

Tuesday, February 7, 6.30 p.m.

Please check out all that the centre has to offer at www.culinaryarts.ca and book your classes early.

Thanks and have a great day!

Phone 905-508-2665 to book your classes today!