



2020 Morgan Family Cookbook

Cover photo is of a living wall outside Yank Sing restaurant in the Embarcadero in San Francisco. I had a memorable and delicious dim sum meal there with Phillip Min in February.

On the back cover is a quartz heart that Tom gave me which sits in my entryway on a piece of fabric art made by my friend Patt Baenen Tapscott. To me, the rings represent all the love that swirls around me and sustains me.

Please let me know if any of the recipes seem to be missing something or don't make sense. Typos too!

Comments from Trish

2020 - who would've guessed it would turn out to be such a crazy, wacky, wild ride? Pandemic, election, Black Lives Matter, sheltering in place, Zoom, and me falling off a cliff (a mental cliff, I should note). Personally, what I ended up missing the most and wanting the most was the simplest - human touch. But it wasn't all bad, at least for me. At the best and the worst of the year, I couldn't be more grateful that Zoe and Ryan live so close, and were so kind and so loving. Even though we maintained social distancing, they grounded me, supported me, talked to me late at night, delivered groceries, and helped me cope. Zoe even came and spent a week with me when I needed it most, despite having to quarantine before and after.

This year, Zoe turned 25. It seems a momentous thing to me - 25. She is still a journalist, working for the Los Altos Town Crier. I love her ferocity and dedication to a career that advances good in the world, in large and small ways. In Ryan, she has a partner who complements her and matches her in commitment and intelligence.

To the cookbook! You know the drill. Here are the recipes that I loved this year. I had to make these twice and love them both times to get them in the cookbook. I can't believe there are so many I want to share. You'd think I would have run out of recipes after ten years. But no, here I am on my eleventh cookbook. Soup seemed to exert a tremendous pull on me this year. Cilantro was finally embraced.

In other news, this year Eli and I finished creating a website to house these cookbooks and provide a place for a blog and more. You can find it at www.plumeriaandpine.com. I'd love to hear what you think!

After Thanksgiving, I started something I'm calling the Munch Bunch - a group of friends who are on a group text. When I have food I'd like to share, I put out a text message and people let me know if they are interested in getting a portion or two. It's put a new spring in my cooking self. I realize now how much my joy in cooking really comes from joy in sharing food, talking about food, and thinking about food. And I do my best sharing, talking, and thinking with others, so...



Corpse Reviver 2

My, my, my, my, my. This is very good. My friend Tish Loeb and her expert mixologist husband Jonathan introduced me to this drink and I couldn't wait to share it! Lillet has long been a favorite tippie. A hot, still night, eating on the porch above the pool at Village Lake, Eli, Zoe, Ryan, and I delighted in this drink. Yum. Way more yum than you might imagine from the ingredients. Addictive. A required drink amid a pandemic.

1 oz. gin

1 oz. Lillet Blanc

1 oz. Cointreau

1 oz. fresh lemon juice

1 dash absinthe

Orange peel, for garnish

Shake all ingredients together in an ice-filled cocktail shaker; strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with orange peel.

Makes 1 cocktail



Fresh Watermelon Margaritas

Zoe was the first to try these and thought they were excellent. After she made them twice, I decided I had to try one too. Yummy! A very happy summer drink.

6 cups cubed seedless watermelon
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

Splash of tequila per serving
Squeeze of lime juice per serving

Blend watermelon and salt. Strain and serve in four glasses. Add the splashes of tequila and lime to each glass.

Serves 4



Chicken and Corn Soup

I love this soup. When I was seven my parent, my brothers, and I traveled to the U.S. for a holiday on one of the last of the great passenger liners - the S.S. President Wilson. It was a magical trip for me - my parents gave me almost unlimited freedom. I could wander wherever I wanted, eat with other kids at a special dinner seating, and make new friends. I LOVED being on a ship. And in Honolulu, with family friends, I had my first taste of chicken and corn soup at a Chinese restaurant. I can't remember anything else we ate that night, but this soup never left my memory and my heart. It always soothes me. Yet I've rarely made it for myself. But in the middle of summer, with warm weather, stress, isolation, and anxiety weighing on me, it was all I wanted for dinner one night. I didn't have a can of creamed corn, which almost all the Chinese recipes call for (weird, I know). So I improvised. I have just eaten the last of the soup cold for breakfast and it was even better than hot.

4 cups chicken broth
1 teaspoon grated ginger
1/2 chicken breast, in small 1/4-inch dice
2 scallions, chopped and white and green parts separated

1-1/2 cups frozen corn kernels
Freshly ground white pepper to taste
1 egg, beaten with 1 teaspoon neutral oil
Finely chopped cilantro or parsley (optional)

In a small soup pot, heat the chicken broth with the ginger. When it boils, add the chicken. Bring back to the boil and then add the white parts of the scallion along with the corn. Bring back to the boil and then simmer for about 5 minutes. Season with some white pepper. Turn the heat off and drizzle the egg into the soup. Stir to create the egg strands. Serve, topped with the green parts of the scallions and a little cilantro or parsley.

Serves 2



Dragon's Breath Soup

A lot like hot and sour soup.. From Cooking Light in about 1994. I made a bunch of changes, though. It is a fast soup if you have all the ingredients. Soaking the wood ear mushrooms takes longer than anything else. (By the way, if you're looking for wood ear mushrooms in Asian grocery stores, you might find them in the dried food area near the dried shiitake mushrooms. They may be labeled black fungus. Not an attractive name, but I love the rubbery crunchiness of them.) I also like to add some leftover pork or chicken, cut in matchsticks.

12 wood ear mushrooms, dried
10-12 fresh shiitake mushrooms
1 cup very hot water
1/2 tablespoon oil
1 teaspoon chili oil
1 cup fresh bean sprouts or bamboo shoots, in matchsticks
1 bunch green onions, chopped
4 minced garlic cloves
8 thin slices of ginger, minced

1/3 cup white vinegar
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
6 cups broth - vegetable or chicken
1 package (about 10-12 ounces) soft tofu, drained and cubed in 1/2-inch cubes
4 tablespoons cornstarch
4 tablespoons water
2 eggs, lightly beaten

Soak wood ear mushrooms in hot water and let sit for about 15 minutes. Drain. Discard hard stems and slice thinly. Meanwhile, cut stems off shiitakes and slice thinly .

Coat a large soup pot with oil and place over medium-high heat until hot. Add the chili oil, green onions, garlic, and ginger. Saute 3 minutes. Add the mushrooms, vinegar, soy sauce, broth, and tofu. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 3 minutes. Add the bean sprouts or bamboo shoots and stir.

Combine cornstarch and 2 tablespoons water, stirring until well blended. Add to soup, stirring constantly. Cook 1 minute or until thickened, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; slowly drizzle egg into soup, stirring.

Makes 6-8 servings



Pork Noodle Soup With Ginger and Toasted Garlic

I am officially in love with snow pea leaves. Not the tiny little mesclun-y baby arugula stuff - the big-leaved pea leaves. Their flavor makes me crazy. Mostly I just stir-fry them with a bunch of garlic and a little salt. But this soup captivated me. I loved it with wide rice noodles - the kind you use to make pad thai or even the fresh variety that is thicker and used for chow fun. The raw onion adds something special, but if you hate the idea, just leave it out.

3 tablespoons neutral oil
8 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 pound ground pork
1 ½ teaspoons red-pepper flakes, plus more to taste
Kosher salt and black pepper
4 cups chicken broth
3 tablespoons soy sauce or tamari, plus more to taste

1 large bunch pea leaves or spinach, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger (from about a 1 ½-inch piece)
6 ounces rice noodles (thick- or thin-cut), cooked and drained
½ medium red, yellow or white onion or 3 scallions, thinly sliced
1 cup cilantro, coarsely chopped

Heat vegetable oil in a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the slices become nicely toasted and golden brown, 2 or 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove garlic and set aside.

Add pork and red-pepper flakes to the pot, and season with salt and pepper. Cook, using a wooden spoon or spatula to break up large pieces, until the pork is well browned and in small bite-size pieces, 5 to 8 minutes.

Add chicken broth, soy sauce and 4 cups water. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 5 to 8 minutes or so, until the pork is very tender and the broth tastes impossibly good. (Give it a taste and season with salt, pepper, red-pepper flakes and soy sauce, if you want.) Add pea leaves, half of the onion slices, and all of the ginger. Stir to wilt the leaves.

To serve, ladle soup over noodles and top with remaining onion, cilantro and toasted garlic.

Serves 4



Lemony Chicken Celery Rice Soup

I've long had a thing for celery. It takes me back to elegant restaurants with my parents and dishes of crushed ice studded with carrot and celery sticks and olives. It reminds me of the silken creamed celery my mom always made when a British friend came to town. She invariably quoted the Ogden Nash poem Celery:

*Celery, raw
Develops the jaw,
But celery, stewed,
Is more quietly chewed.*

Here it is a lovely counterpoint to the soft broth-infused rice. And with a good helping of lemon, you really can't get a better remedy for the winter blahs.

8 cups chicken broth	1/4 cup heavy cream
1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs	1/2 cup fresh parsley leaves
4 stalks celery, leaves reserved and stalks thinly sliced	1 teaspoon fresh lemon zest plus up to 1/2 cup lemon juice (from 2 to 3 lemons)
3/4 cup jasmine rice (unrinsed)	1 small garlic clove
Kosher salt	1 tablespoon unsalted butter (optional)

In a large Dutch oven or pot, combine the broth, chicken, celery and rice. Season lightly with salt. (Some broths have more salt than others, so start easy.) Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce heat and simmer until the chicken is cooked through and the rice starts to break down and lose its shape, 20 to 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, finely chop together the parsley leaves, lemon zest and up to 1/2 cup celery leaves. Transfer to a small bowl, grate the garlic clove into the bowl, season with salt and stir to combine.

Using tongs, remove the chicken from the pot and transfer to a medium bowl. Using two forks, shred the chicken into pieces, then stir it back into the soup along with the cream. Remove from heat, stir in the butter (if using), and season to taste with salt. Stir in the lemon juice a little at a time until the soup is bright but still tastes like chicken. (You may not use the full 1/2 cup juice.)



Divide the soup among bowls and top with the parsley-lemon mixture. (The soup, minus the lemon juice and parsley mixture, can be refrigerated for up to 3 days; the rice will absorb liquid as it sits, so add more chicken broth when reheating. Add the lemon juice and fresh herb garnish just before serving.)

Refined Minestrone

This is Zoe's name for this dish. I made it on a cold December night. It was late and I was starving. This came together in about 30 minutes or even less. And it tasted divine. It is like a very stripped down minestrone.

1 tablespoon olive oil	8 cups chicken broth
1 pound Italian sausage (mild or hot)	A Parmesan rind (if you have it)
4 garlic cloves, chopped	1/2 teaspoon rosemary, crumbled
1/2 cup small shells or other small pasta	1 teaspoon garlic salt
1/2 cup slivered fresh tomatoes (in about 1/2-inch strips)	1/2 teaspoon basil, crumpled
1 15-ounce can white beans	Coarse freshly ground pepper to taste
	Shredded parmesan to serve

Heat the olive oil in a 4 quart pot over medium heat. Add the sausage, breaking it up, and then brown the sausage until it is just turning golden with darker spots here and there. Add the garlic and the pasta, continuing to cook for about 3 minutes. Then add the tomatoes, beans, Parmesan rind, broth, herbs, and salt and pepper.

Bring to boil and cook for about 10 minutes or until the pasta is just al dente. Remove the pot from the heat and serve with the Parmesan.

Serves 6



Spicy Chorizo Soup

Flat out addictive! And it can be made with soychorizo as easily as pork chorizo. I totally got into the combo of chorizo, peppers, and potatoes this year. You'll find Chorizo con Papas later in this cookbook. This uses Mexican raw chorizo, not the Spanish hard variety. I loved this soup and Ryan ate it so fast Zoe didn't get a bite.

1 tablespoon neutral oil
8 ounces Mexican fresh pork chorizo
1 medium onion, chopped
2 red bell peppers, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
4-5 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
6 cups chicken broth
20 ounces baked potatoes
3 ounces cream cheese

In a 3-4 quart soup pot, heat oil over medium heat and brown chorizo, breaking up as it cooks. You want it browned and getting crispy. Add the onion, peppers, and garlic and then cook, stirring every so often, until onions are translucent and peppers are just barely starting to wilt. Add the cumin and garlic salt, as well as the chicken broth and the potatoes. Bring to a boil. Cook for about 10-15 minutes or until the peppers are truly softened. Stir in the cream cheese and serve.

Notes: Nice with shredded cheese, corn, olives, and chopped green onions. Also, you could use just chopped potatoes and cook the soup longer.

Serves 4



Rolled Chicken Pate

This recipe comes from one of my oldest and most loved cookbooks - The New James Beard. I have memories of making this in Boston, around the time Tom and I married, and making it in Davis, as I looked out the window at the Coast Range that separated us from Napa Valley. I made it for Zoe and Ryan this year. I'll warn you that it's a little complicated and not to be made at the last minute. It is also decadence personified. (Yes, you see two line items for butter!) But if you can't be decadent during a pandemic, I don't know when you can. And time seems endless, so a perfect pandemic recipe. It looks beautiful too!

1/4 pound butter
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1 stalk celery, julienned
1 carrot, peeled and julienned
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon fines herbes
2 bone-in chicken breasts
1 6-7 oz pork chop (w/ bone)

3/4 pound sweet butter, softened
1/3 cup cognac or brandy
2-3 dashes Tabasco or hot sauce
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
Fresh ground black pepper
1/4 cup shelled pistachios
About 8-10 slices prosciutto

Combine the 1/4 pound butter, onion, celery, carrot, salt, and spices in a heavy saucepan. Add the chicken and pork chop. Cook, covered, over medium heat until tender. Do not overcook. Remove the chicken and pork from the saucepan and cool. Trim away skin, fat, and bone. Cut the meat into about 1-inch chunks.

Pulse the meats and vegetables in a food processor only enough to roughly chop them - you don't want to make a paste. Place in a large bowl and beat in the softened sweet butter, adding the cognac, Tabasco, basil or tarragon, pepper to taste, and pistachio nuts as you beat. (If you have one, you can use an electric mixer with a paddle attachment.) Taste the pate for seasoning, adding salt, pepper, and more Tabasco if needed.

On 2 pieces of wax paper or plastic wrap, arrange two sets of overlapping slices of prosciutto, forming a rectangle. Divide the chicken mixture and form into 2 rolls. Place 1 roll on each of the prosciutto rectangles. Roll tightly, without squeezing, so that the pate is completely enveloped by the prosciutto. Place in ziplock bags and refrigerate for 24 hours before serving. Serve on greens with toast or crackers.

Makes 10-12 servings



Things I Loved This Year!

TV & Movies: *Rita*, *Schitt's Creek*, *Cuckoo*, *Bridgerton*, *Last Dance*, *Agatha Raisin*, *Knives Out*, *Henry IX*, *Enola Holmes*, *The Unicorn*, *The Two Popes*, *Borat 2*



Bridge online with Diane Silverman, Lisa Jungherr, Neil Katin, Karl Garcia, and Sally Ahnger - & with UUCPA regulars Carl, Rich, and Dave.

Canasta with my big brother Phil every weekend.



Tom's memorial service, with Natalie Hollenbaugh, Isaac Klipstein, and Ryan talking. So many people Tom and I loved attended. It was the best possible celebration of his life. The Hollenbaughs came from Seattle, his brother Scott came from Kentucky, Isaac and Rachel came from L.A. Joe and Danette Molinari from Oregon. Nancy Houtz did flowers. Greg Selzer assisted with sound. I was overwhelmed with love.

Jeff Goldblum & the Mildred Stetzer Orchestra

Gamble Gardens and the beautiful flowers

Elder Nesting

Peace and quiet, as my mom always said



Headspace and Calm and Muse

Mendocino with Phyllis

Dreams of Davis

Ramps and ramp salt! I feel like I should compose an ode to ramps



Opal apples

Monthly calls with MBBB, Matt, & Geoff - 40 years later, we still have a ton to say to one another!



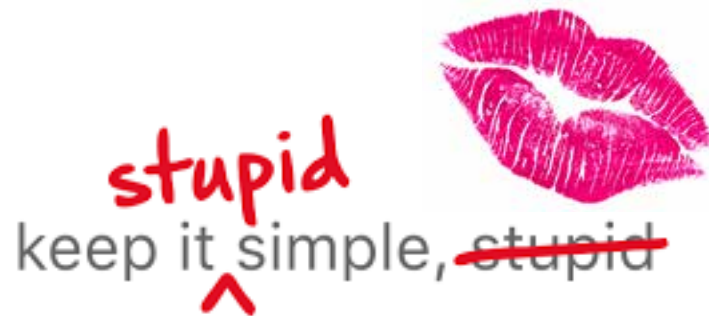
Vaguely Mexican Salad

This just sort of fell together at the end of January. I had some almost dead herb salad mix. The ranch and salsa were there, in front of my eyes. It tasted fresh and good and like salad comfort food. This recipe officially wins the stupid simple recipe of the year award.

Lettuce/Salad mix of your choice
Ranch dressing
Fresh salsa, heat of your choice

Put salad in a bowl. Dollop on a little less ranch dressing than you might typically use. Add 1 hefty dollop of salsa. Toss it all together and eat.

Serves however many you want



Asparagus & Mushroom Salad

Oh, man, this is good. It's a perfect late spring, early summer salad. It could easily be a vegetarian main course, although then it would only serve 2-3 people. It would be delightful with a simply pan-fried chicken paillard, pork chop, or steak. I could also see this beside some crisply roasted fingerling potatoes. I particularly like the tart tang of the lemon juice against the graininess of the Parmesan. Altogether excellent.

1 pound asparagus
½ pound mushrooms, thinly sliced
¼ cup chopped fresh herbs, such as parsley,
tarragon and chives
1 cup baby arugula
2 to 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (to taste)

Salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
1 small garlic clove, minced or pureed
5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 ounce slivered Parmesan

Steam the asparagus for three to five minutes, depending on how thick the stalks are. It should be tender but still have some bite. Rinse with cold water, and drain for a minute on a kitchen towel. Cut into 1-inch lengths. Place in a salad bowl, and toss with the mushrooms, herbs and arugula.

Whisk together the lemon juice, salt and pepper, garlic and olive oil. Toss with the asparagus mixture and the slivered Parmesan, and serve.



Broccoli Cranberry Salad

I know there are a ton of these recipes, but I really liked this one. It wasn't super sweet, which seems anti-salad somehow. Anyway, for my records, if not yours, here is the recipe I liked.

8 cups broccoli cut into bite-sized pieces
1/3 cup red onion diced
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
1/2 cup bacon bits

2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1/2 tablespoon sugar
1 cup mayonnaise
Salt & pepper

Whisk together cider vinegar, sugar, mayonnaise, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine broccoli, onion, cranberries, sunflower seeds, and bacon bits. Pour the prepared dressing over and mix well.

Refrigerate for at least one hour before serving.

Serves 6-8



Carrot & Sweet Potato Salad with Harissa and Feta Cheese

I had not cooked with harissa before until I made this recipe. It was impossible to stop nipping at it once I got my first taste. I bought NY Shuk Harissa with Preserved Lemons.

2 medium sweet potatoes, washed & chopped
lengthways into batons
3-4 carrots, peeled & chopped into batons
4 tbsp olive oil
2-3 tbsp harissa paste (to taste)
1/2 tsp garlic powder

1/2 tsp dried or fresh thyme
1/4 cup pumpkin seeds
1/2 bunch fresh coriander or parsley, finely
chopped
1/2 cup feta cheese
Salt & pepper to taste

Preheat your oven to 400F and line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.

In a large bowl, combine the sweet potatoes, carrots, olive oil, and harissa. For a spicier salad, add three tablespoons of harissa instead of two. Season with garlic powder, thyme, salt and pepper and toss to combine thoroughly.

Arrange the vegetables evenly on the baking tray and roast in the oven for 45 minutes - 1 hour, until the vegetables are softened and browned. Remove from the oven and let cool.

Transfer the vegetables to a large platter, scatter the pumpkin seeds and crumble the feta over the top. Serve with the freshly chopped coriander or parsley to finish.

Serves 4



Tom's Death Party (as we called it) brought together the Fabulous Four from middle school. Marion, Natalie, Brian, & Zoe!



Seems like a Monkey See, Monkey Do Situation with bridge buddies Sally Ahnger, Lisa Jungherr, and Diane Silverman



Photos of the (former) kids by Diane Hollenbaugh



With Eli and Jeremy Katin thrown in the mix

Carrot & Beet Salad

From my sister Diane, this salad brings joy to my heart. If your beets come with beet greens, don't toss them. Steam them and add them to the salad. I love how when you let this salad rest overnight, the carrots take on an amazing color.

3 medium beets
6-8 carrots, peeled
Beet greens (optional)

1/4 cup sherry vinegar
3/4 cup walnut oil
Salt and pepper to taste

If your beets come with greens, trim off the greens, leaving at least 1 inch of stem. Place the beets in a steamer basket over a couple of inches of simmering water. Steam the beets (unpeeled) until you can pierce the beet to its center with a small knife, checking every so often to ensure the water hasn't evaporated. This will take about 30-40 minutes, but will vary based on the size and age of the beets.

Meanwhile, slice the carrots into 1/4-inch rounds. When the beets are done, remove them from the steamer and allow to cool. Add the carrots to the steam. Steam for about 5 minutes or until the carrots are just barely tender. Remove from steam and allow to cool.

If you have beet greens, add them to the steamer and allow to steam for about 2-3 minutes or until the greens have turned bright green. Remove from the steamer and allow to cool.

The beets should be very easy to peel - in fact, the peel should slide off fairly easily as you rub your fingers over it. Cut the beets in 1/2-inch cubes. Combine with the steamed carrots and beet greens (if using) in a non-reactive storage container (the beets may permanently stain softer plastics). Combine the sherry vinegar, walnut oil, and salt and pepper in a small bowl. Pour over the carrots and beets and mix well.

Serves 4

Chile Mango Salad

I saw this recipe on the twee British website SheerLuxe. I couldn't get it out of my head. I could virtually taste this. I woke up the next morning thinking about it. It's sweet, salty, spicy, sour, sheer yum, quite honestly. Have to admit that I changed things quite a bit from that original recipe. The cucumbers are added. I messed with the citrus juice, just because I had bought these little packets of frozen fresh calamansi juice. And I had parsley not cilantro. I do love this final tip from the website: "A great little tip to add texture to the salad is to finely slice some dried mango and garnish the salad with it. The jerk-like consistency adds a tasty touch to this already banging salad." It is indeed that - a banging phenomenal salad! I served this with hot steamed rice and a sprinkling of Asian Ground Pork. It was AMAZING. Oh, oh, oh!

By the way, I have completely and totally become addicted to a seasoning straight from Appalachia - crumbled dried ramps mixed with a fine sea salt. The oniony-garlic scent just makes me a little crazy. I get mine online from a purveyor on Etsy called earthinabottle. There are a lot of online sources.

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|---|--|
| 1 garlic clove, peeled | Small handful of parsley or cilantro leaves, chopped |
| 2 tablespoons calamansi juice or 1 tablespoon each of lime juice and orange juice | 1 large ripe mango, peeled, stoned and sliced into bite-sized chunks |
| 1 teaspoon soy sauce | 1 Persian cucumber, cut lengthwise in half and then cut into 1/4-inch half moons |
| 1/2 teaspoon ramp salt* or coarse sea salt | |
| 1/2 - 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes (to taste) | |
| Small handful of mint leaves, torn | |

Press the garlic or finely mince and combine in a bowl with the rest of the ingredients. Toss well and serve.



Cilantro & Pomelo Salad

On a brilliant winter day, I went to Castro Valley to my friend Freddie's home, there to learn and play with fabric printing. On the way, I stopped at a farmer's market to pick up the fixings for this salad. Freddie had some lump crab meat, which was a perfect addition.

Making supremes of the pomelo? It's a little fiddly, but not really difficult. Here's how you do it: Take a slice off the top and bottom of the pomelo. Setting the pomelo on a cutting board and using a thin flexible knife, cut off the peel and white pith so that the flesh is revealed. Holding the pomelo in your hand over a bowl (to catch the juice), cut with the knife between the section walls. When all done, squeeze juice from the remaining membrane into the bowl. Discard the membranes. You can search online for a video showing you how to do this.

1 bunch cilantro
1/2 bunch Italian parsley
1 bunch dill, chopped
1/2 red onions, slivered

1 pomelo, in supremes
Olive oil
Salt & pepper
Crab meat (if desired)

Roughly chop the cilantro, parsley, and dill. Mix in a large salad bowl with the rest of the ingredients (keep out the crab meat to crown the salad). I'm not giving you a precise amount for the olive oil, because you need to adjust it to your taste - I'd say at least 2-3 tablespoons.

Serves 2-4



Cucumber & Watermelon Salad

This is simply addictive. Really - it should go on a list of regulated drugs. I find that when it's hot there is nothing better to bring my body's temperature down and put a smile on my face. This is from a cookbook of my friend Phyllis, who introduced me to this Persian salad. Although there are many similar recipes that call for adding feta, this recipe does not. I prefer it that way - it tastes super clean. You can put this together ahead of time and add the salt and vinegar just before serving. You may be tempted to leave out the vinegar. Don't give in to the temptation - the vinegar adds a sparkle that just isn't there otherwise. Really. You may wonder, looking at the photo below, where the watermelon is. When I cut open my watermelon, it was yellow! Yellow watermelons are a little more refined and less pronounced in flavor than red watermelons, but I loved it in this recipe.

1 pound unwaxed cucumbers (I much prefer Persian cukes), seeded (if regular), cut in half lengthwise, then cut in 1/2-inch half moons
3 cups diced seedless watermelon

1 scallion, thinly sliced
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar

In a large bowl, combine the cucumbers, watermelon, and scallion. Add the salt and vinegar and toss well. Serve immediately.

Serves 4



Italian Raw Asparagus Salad

This was quite a year in so many ways, but one way was hot, hot, smoky, nasty weather. In late September, on Zoe's birthday, the air was clear, but the temperature soared almost to 100F, I had a recipe for an asian raw asparagus salad, but as I started to make it I realized I just didn't want that flavor. So I veered to Italy. This is one of those salads that crunches its way into your heart. The trick is to thinly slice almost everything.

1-1/4 pounds thick asparagus
1 large scallion, slivered
1 cup thinly sliced celery
1/4 cup grated parmesan
Zest of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons lemon juice

1/3 cup olive oil
1 teaspoon garlic salt
Freshly ground pepper
3/4 cup pine nuts or sliced almonds

Snap the ends off the asparagus. Very, very thinly slice the asparagus on a diagonal, leaving the tips whole. Mix together everything but the almonds. Cover and chill for 2 hours or overnight. Add the almonds, taste, and adjust seasoning.

Serves 4



Prosciutto Celery Salad

This is a very happy, sunny salad. On a hot October evening, getting ready to play a virtual game of bridge, this salad went together super fast and was delicious. It just grew out of tastes I love and stuff I had in the fridge. If you can, I'd urge you to get the prosciutto from the deli - ask them to slice you a pretty thick slice (not paper thin as usual). The savory moistness of the prosciutto complements the crunchy celery so nicely. A diced yellow pepper, lemon zest, and some Parmesan make it perfect. I would consider adding some small pasta like shells or orzo if I was taking this to a party. For myself, as the sun set, it was perfect as is.

2 large stalks celery, 1/4-inch diced
About 1/4 pound prosciutto, 1/4-inch diced
1/2 yellow bell pepper, 1/4-inch diced
Zest of 1 lemon
3 tablespoons minced parsley
2 tablespoons capers

3 tablespoons Parmesan (I only had grated, but I think shredded or flakes would be great)
1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons olive oil

Mix it all together. Serve. If you are making it ahead, I would wait until before serving to add the cheese.

Makes about 2 perhaps without the pasta if this is all you are eating



Chayote & Orange Salad

About a week into the pandemic of 2020, or the Zombie Apocalypse as I call it, a friend at work gave me a free week of Blue Apron = you know, where they send you all the ingredients and then you do the cooking? Given my pledge to Zoe not to go to the store, I decided I'd give it a try. This is a slight variation on the first recipe I made. It introduced me to a whole new way to use sayote (or chayote, as they call it here in the States). I've always eaten cooked sayote, but it is absolutely delicious raw. It reminds me a little of raw kohlrabi, although they aren't in the same class of plants at all. Sayote is a squash in the gourd family, while kohlrabi is a type of wild cabbage in the brassica family.

Anyway, back to the salad. It's very bright and very pretty in a spring-ey way. The flavor of the oranges is really lovely. The cilantro is optional, as always. Parsley or nothing is fine too.

2 chayote (beautiful, because you won't peel them)	1 tablespoon capers
8-9 radishes	Juice from 1 small lime
2 small shallots, peeled	Salt & pepper
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar	2 tablespoons chopped cilantro or parsley
2 small oranges, peeled fo with the rind removed	2 tablespoons crumbled cotija cheese

Cut the radishes in half and then thinly slice each half. Peel and thinly slice the shallots. In a large bowl, combine the radishes and shallots and red wine vinegar. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then toss lightly. Let sit on the counter for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, cut the sayote in half lengthwise and remove the pit, then thinly slice each half across. Cut the oranges in half lengthwise, then slice fairly thinly (about 1/6 of an inch or so). Add both the sayote slices and orange, along with the capers, to the radishes and shallots. Add the lime juice and taste again for salt and pepper, adjusting if needed. At the last minute, toss again with the cilantro or parsley and top with the pepitas and cotija if using.

Serves 6 .



Tel Aviv Arugula Salad with Roasted Grapes

This is a wonderful sharp salad, softened by the sweetness of the broiled grapes. We had it on a beautiful February evening with Eli, Lisa Jungherr, and Neil Katin, before a few hands of bridge. It went terrifically with the Almond, Caper, and Herb-Crusted Chicken.

2 cups seedless black or red grapes (black give a beautiful color to the onions)
4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1/2 small red onion, slivered
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1/2 cup pecorino Romano cheese, grated (optional)
1 large bunch arugula, stems removed and roughly cut (about 8 lightly packed cups)

Heat the broiler. In a broiler safe rimmed baking sheet, toss the grapes with 1 tablespoon olive oil., Broil until the grapes are starting to blister and split, shaking the pan once about halfway through.

Using the bottom of a cup, lightly crush the grapes to just burst them. Transfer the grapes to a large bowl. If there is a lot of juice, leave it behind. If there isn't much, just throw it in. Add the onions, salt, pepper, and red wine vinegar to the bowl with the grapes. Allow to marinate for at least 30 minutes, or longer if held in the refrigerator.

When ready to serve, add the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil to the grapes, as well as the cheese and the arugula. Toss well, then check salt and pepper, and serve.

Serves 4





Oh, my! From 1988 to 2020... My buddies Matt, Maria, and Geoff



Garlic Parmesan Melting Potatoes

These were absolutely amazing. I made them late one night when I had taken a four hour evening nap. I needed comfort and warmth and cozy yumminess and, boy, did these deliver. Don't, don't, don't, however, make them in a glass or stoneware casserole. When you pour the broth in that baby will shatter. I loved that I could eat these with my fingers and that they were almost as good cold as hot. And lukewarm would be great as well.

2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 1-inch-thick slices
2 tablespoons butter, melted
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground pepper
3 large cloves garlic, grated
1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth or chicken broth
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Position rack in upper third of oven; preheat to 500F.

Toss potatoes, butter, oil, thyme, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Arrange in a single layer in a 9-by-13-inch metal baking pan. (Don't use a glass dish, which could shatter.) Roast, flipping once, until browned, about 30 minutes.

Whisk garlic into broth; carefully add the broth mixture to the pan. Sprinkle the tops of the potatoes with Parmesan. Continue roasting until most of the broth has been absorbed and the potatoes are very tender, about 15 minutes more. Serve hot.

Serves 6



Genius Fried Eggs

I really love fried eggs, but I hate cooking them. Somehow, even in a nonstick pan, I end up breaking yolks, they don't cook right, it's just a mess. Until I saw this recipe on Food52, adapted from Ideas in Food. These were so delicious and perfect. I even put a couple of breakfast links in the pan and cooked them in the cream too. I don't think I'll ever try to fry an egg again. These are just too good and too easy. And if you worry about the cream, think of it this way - you'd probably use butter to fry the eggs, this is no worse healthwise, and maybe with even less fat overall.

Heavy cream
Salt
Eggs

Choose a nonstick skillet with a lid that's large enough to hold the number of eggs you'd like to cook, without leaving lots of extra room (an 8-inch skillet fits 2 large eggs nicely). If you don't have a lid that fits your pan, a baking sheet or another skillet will work well.

Without heating the pan, pour enough heavy cream into the bottom of the skillet to make a thin layer (this will depend on the size of the pan, but for an 8-inch skillet, a few tablespoons is enough). Sprinkle the cream with salt to taste and add the eggs.

Now turn the heat to medium-high to start cooking the eggs. The cream will boil, steam, and eventually separate into liquid butterfat and butter solids. If you are using a gas stove, the cream will likely caramelize at the edges; electric or induction will likely only caramelize the bottom.

When the egg whites are almost set and the cream has mostly become butter and butter solids, remove the pan from the heat and cover it for a minute to finish setting the whites, specifically in the center of the pan.

Remove the eggs from the pan and serve up breakfast. The bottoms should be caramelized, the whites tender and cream-coated, the yolk firm but runny.

Serves as many as you want



Jacket Potatoes

I never knew that the British called baked potatoes anything else, but the terrific show Cuckoo educated me. In fact, the eponymous character is so taken with jacket potatoes that he buys a small van and begins a career as a philosopher jacket potato maker. If only. So here, one authentic jacket potato recipe. Guaranteed to nourish both body and soul. Note: You'll find another Cuckoo inspired recipe in this cookbook - Cuckoo Chicken Balti Curry.

Potatoes
Butter

Salt & pepper
Whatever else floats your boat

Preheat oven to 400F and make sure there is a rack in the top position.

Cut a cross shape into the top of the potato about 1/4 inch deep.

Place the potatoes directly on the top rack of the oven, not on a baking tray. Bake for about 1-1/4 - 1-3/4 hours or until the skin feels crunchy (could be as much as 2 hours if the potatoes are big). Take the potatoes out and cut deeper into the slices you already made to release steam. Put them back in the oven for another 10 minutes. Then serve with butter, salt, pepper, and whatever else you think will enhance your well-being.

Serves as many as you want



Andy Samberg as Cuckoo and Greg Davies as Ken (from the British tv show Cuckoo)

Miso Mushroom Pasta

This was so good that Zoe said she was convinced something magical went into it. Originally from food52.com, I took some liberties which are reflected below. I'd take those same liberties again. This is scrumptious and deeply comforting. And fast. What more could you want?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 6 ounces dried pasta, such as bucatini | 2 teaspoons white miso |
| 8 ounces mushrooms (I used 1 king mushroom, 5 fresh shiitake mushrooms, and half a cluster of Shimeji mushrooms, but really I think any mushrooms would do) | 3 tablespoons butter, softened |
| 2 tablespoons vegetable oil | 5 garlic cloves, minced |
| 1 teaspoon sherry vinegar, or white wine vinegar | 1/2 cup heavy cream |
| 1 teaspoon soy sauce | 1 cup Chinese chives (cut in 2-inch lengths) |
| 1 boneless chicken breast, cut into bite sized pieces (omit if you want to go vegetarian) | 1 pinch salt |
| | 1 pinch black pepper |

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Season generously with salt until it's nearly as salty as the sea, then add dried pasta. Cook the pasta until just under al dente (a minute less than on its package directions), then drain the pasta and set aside.

To start on the sauce, whisk the red miso paste and butter together in a small bowl until it comes together to form a smooth, fluffy paste.

Chop or pull apart the mushrooms into large, bite-sized chunks. Then, heat a large skillet over medium or medium-high heat with a tablespoon of vegetable oil, and sauté the mushrooms for 3-5 minutes until nicely browned. Don't crowd them. It took three cycles for me to do all the mushrooms - you want to give them room so that they brown, not steam. As each batch is browned, transfer to a serving bowl. When the last of the mushrooms are browned and in the serving bowl, add the vinegar and soy to the mushrooms and set aside.

In the pan, add a little more oil and quickly cook the chicken until it's turning golden. Add the garlic and saute for about 30 seconds. Then add the miso mixture and cream. Bring to a boil and then add the mushrooms. Again bring to a boil. Add the cooked pasta and chives and stir until the pasta is well coated. Salt to taste and cook for about another minute or so until the pasta is al dente and the chives have slumped.

Serve with a black pepper grinder.

Serves 2



Scalloped Sweet Potatoes with Olives

With this recipe, I establish a new category for my cookbooks: The Odds Bodkins Award. This recipe takes it for the year. The title doesn't even capture the full texture of this casserole, as it omits the tiny pre-made meatballs that nestle amidst the creamy slices of sweet potato. This is certainly the anti-sweet-potato-with-marshmallows casserole. It's all savory, herby, creamy yumminess. Or at least that's my opinion.

But you may take issue with olives combined with sweet potatoes and meatballs (I'm assuming nobody has problems with caramelized onions (heresy!)). If that is the case, pass this recipe on by. It's not for you! Of course, you could leave out the olives altogether. Or the meatballs. You could leave out the onions, but then where are we? You can also switch out the cheeses. And I think, next time, I'll use hunks of sausage browned instead of the meatballs. Damn, you can just mix and mingle. With cream, it all comes right.

2 tablespoons butter	1/2 teaspoon thyme
1 medium onion, cut vertically in half, then sliced in 1/4" thick slices	3/4 cup heavy cream or evaporated milk
4 garlic cloves, minced	12-15 pimento stuffed olives, sliced
Salt and pepper to taste	8-10 cooked mini-meatballs (optional)
1 pound baby garnet yams	1/3 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary	1 cup shredded cheddar and/or monterey jack
	Parsley for sprinkling

Prep a 8-inch square dish or the equivalent casserole dish by buttering the bottom and sides. Set aside. Preheat the oven to 400F.

In a wide skillet, heat butter over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Saute until the onions are caramelizing (at least 10-15 minutes).

Meanwhile, peel yams and slice into thin rounds (or if the diameter is greater than 1", halve lengthwise and then slice into 1/4-inch thick slices. When the onions are nicely golden with darker edges, add the yams, along with the rosemary, thyme, Gently toss together. Add the cream and bring to a boil. Let boil at a pretty fast clip for about five minutes, or until the sauce is thickening nicely. Add the olives and the meatballs and bring back to a boil. Turn off the heat and stir in the Parmesan. Taste the sauce and adjust the salt and pepper.

Pour into the prepared baking dish and then cover with the other cheese. Cover the baking dish with lid or aluminum foil. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes, then remove the cover/foil and continue to bake for another 15 minutes so the top is golden and bubbly. Sprinkle with parsley and serve. Yes.

Serves 4 at a not excessive level or 2 at a stomach-glutting level



Sichuan Braised Eggplant

This recipe is one that is adapted from Fuchsia Dunlop's Fish Fragrant Eggplant (there is, however, no fish in it). I prefer this dish with pork, so I added that. You can eliminate that if you want to go vegetarian. This was the first recipe of 2020 that I absolutely positively knew had to be in the 2020 cookbook. I could barely stop eating it.

1 pound 5 ounces (600g) eggplants (1–2 large)
Salt
Cooking oil, for deep-frying

1 1/2 tablespoons Sichuan chile bean paste
1 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped garlic
1 tablespoon finely chopped ginger
10 tablespoons (150ml) hot stock or water

4 teaspoons superfine sugar
1 teaspoon Chinese light soy sauce

1 teaspoon cornstarch, mixed with 1 tablespoon cold water
1 tablespoon Chinkiang vinegar
6 tablespoons thinly sliced scallion greens

Cut the eggplants into batons about 3/4 inch (2cm) thick and 2 3/4 inches (7cm) long. Sprinkle with salt, mix well and set aside for at least 30 minutes.

Rinse the eggplant, drain well and pat dry with paper towels. Heat the deep-frying oil to around 390°F (200°C) (hot enough to sizzle vigorously around a test piece of eggplant). Add the eggplant, in two or three batches, and deep-fry for about 3 minutes, until tender and a little golden. Drain well on paper towels and set aside.

Carefully pour off all but 3 tablespoons oil from the wok and return to medium heat. Add the chile bean paste and stir-fry until the oil is red and fragrant: take care not to burn the paste (move the wok away from the burner if you think it might be overheating). Add the garlic and ginger and stir-fry until they smell delicious.



Tip in the stock or water, sugar and soy sauce. Bring to a boil, then add the eggplant, nudging the batons gently into the sauce so they do not break apart. Simmer for a minute or so to allow the eggplant to absorb the flavors.

Give the potato starch mixture a stir and add it gradually, in about three stages, adding just enough to thicken the sauce to a luxurious gravy (you probably won't need it all). Tip in the vinegar and all but 1 tablespoon of the scallion greens, then stir for a few seconds to fuse the flavors. Turn out onto a serving dish, scatter over the remaining scallion greens and serve.

Serves 4 as a main course

Spaghetti al Cognac

This is one of those recipes that proves why I needed to start creating these cookbooks. I found "Spaghetti with Cognac" on a list of recipes I love. When I created that list is lost in the shadowy mists of time - but at least 15-25 years ago. I couldn't remember the recipe at all! Then I did some searches and found this recipe by Giuliano Hazan (son of the rightly famous Marcella) from a cookbook I bought about 25 years ago. Cookbook is still in my possession with spatters on the page. As soon as I read it, I could taste it in my mind. Ah! Problem solved. Added to cookbook. Delicious! How did I go so many years without making it? It feels both luxurious and comforting.

Here's what Giuliano Hazan says about the recipe: "This dish was invented by Alfredo, the famous Roman chef who created Fettuccine all'Alfredo. It is traditionally eaten in Rome at 4:00 in the morning. It's a dish that is meant to pack a little heat and is one of those rare instances when you do want some fresh pepper added to each serving."

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 cup yellow onion, finely chopped
2 tablespoons Cognac
Salt

Freshly ground pepper
1 pound fresh, ripe roma tomatoes, peeled,
seeded, and ¼-inch diced*
1 pound spaghetti

Put the olive oil and onion in a 10-inch skillet and place over medium heat. Sauté until the onion turns to a rich golden color, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, fill a pot for the pasta with about 6 quarts of water, cover, and place over high heat.

When the onion is ready, turn the heat up to medium high and add the cognac. Cook for about 30 seconds to allow the alcohol to evaporate then add the tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes are no longer watery and have separated from the oil, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Add 2 tablespoons salt to the boiling pasta water, add the spaghetti, and stir until all the strands are submerged. Cook until al dente. When the pasta is done, drain well, and toss with the sauce. Grind some extra fresh pepper over each serving and serve at once.

Serves 4-6

Note: There are a few ways to peel tomatoes: 1) use a sharp peeler and as you use it jiggle it from side to side; 2) Cut a very shallow x on the bottom of the tomatoes and dip them for about 30 seconds in boiling water - the skin should come off easily; 3) freeze the tomatoes and then they should peel easily. I usually do the first - it's honestly quicker and I like that I'm not changing the texture of the tomatoes. To seed them, I just dig in with my fingers and scoop out the seeds, shaking them over the sink as I go. It works.



Spicy Garlic Butter Parmesan Pasta

Quite astonishingly good. This is perfect late night food - pings of spiciness, the comfort of butter, parmesan, and pasta, the brightness of the parsley. I had this one Friday night in August after going to my friend Tish's backyard for socially distanced drinks. Her husband made Corpse Reviver IIs and Sazeracs. I liked the Corpse Reviver IIs (see the index) in particular and then got Zoe and Ryan hooked on them.

8 ounces uncooked spaghetti pasta
1 tablespoon instant bouillon (beef, chicken or vegetable)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 cloves garlic, sliced

1 or 2 tablespoons of your favorite hot sauce (we used Sriracha)
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup fresh chopped parsley

To make the spicy garlic butter parmesan pasta: Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling water with a tablespoon instant bouillon according to package directions. When the pasta is finished cooking, reserve about 1/4 cup of the pasta water, then drain the rest.

While the pasta is cooking, heat olive oil and melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sliced garlic and hot sauce and cook for 2 minutes, stirring regularly, until it has started to turn golden brown and fragrant. Make sure not to burn the garlic, otherwise the dish will taste bitter.

Turn the heat to low and add the pasta. Quickly toss the pasta into the spicy garlic butter, then add reserved pasta water, parsley, and parmesan cheese. Finally, toss the pasta into the spicy garlic butter sauce with tongs to coat well.

Adjust seasoning with black pepper if necessary. Sprinkle the pasta with more fresh chopped parsley and parmesan, if you like. Serve the spicy garlic butter parmesan pasta immediately.

Serves 4



Thai Basil Fried Rice

This is a great late night snack or casual lunch or dinner. Damn, I'd eat it for breakfast. One thing has become crystal clear to me this past year. I am a carnivore plain and simple. I feel like I should feel guilty about that, but I don't. I just like meat. My body craves it more than any other food except for vegetables. But the vegetables need meat to go with them. Anyway, what a royal triad here - pork or beef, rice, and basil. It soothes my soul.

1 tablespoon neutral oil	1 teaspoon fish sauce
1 shallot, minced	2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 large cloves garlic minced	1-1/2 cups cooked rice
1/2 teaspoon Penang curry paste (more if you wish)	1/2 cup loosely packed Thai basil, chiffonaded
4 ounces ground beef or ground pork	Scrambled egg (optional)
4 oz long beans or green beans, cut in 1/2-inch lengths	Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in a non-stick pan or wok. Add shallot, garlic cloves, and curry paste. Saute for about 1 minute. Add the ground meat and break up well. Let brown without bothering it for about a minute or two.

Add the beans and toss meat and beans together. Allow another couple of minutes or until all signs of pink are gone from the meat. Add the fish sauce and soy sauce. Allow to cook another minute or two until the liquid is almost gone.

Add the rice, basil, and eggs (if you are using). Toss well, allowing the rice to soak up the flavors. Season with salt and pepper as needed.

Serves 2-3





January 25th found us hosting Tom's Death Party. There were so many people who came and it was fun, despite the purpose. I think Tom would have liked it.



Joe, Ryan, and Danette Molinari; Mr. Mohl & Zoe; Hank Hollenbaugh; Diane Hollenbaugh with Zoe; Isaac Klipstein and Ryan; my niece Tai, brother Phil, and me; Diane Silverman, me, and Lisa Jungherr; and Tom watching over me as I speak (I love his expression!).



Swordfish with Caramelized Eggplant

A truly lovely dish. It was quick to make and the flavors are soft and unctuous, yet with sparks from the capers and olives. I served it with rice pilaf and roasted carrots. I wasn't sure what I would think about the chunks of fish in the midst of all the slumpy eggplant, but it was excellent, even for a barely-there fish eater like me. I think you could sub in chicken or even tofu, but the fish was a nice choice.

- 1 ½ pounds eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 small red onion, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes (any kind will work)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 garlic cloves, grated or minced
- 1/3 cup dry white wine or rosé (or use chicken or vegetable broth)
- 2 tablespoons chopped, pitted Castelvetrano or other green olives
- 1 tablespoon drained capers
- 1-1/2 pounds swordfish, cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- Torn basil leaves, for garnish
- Lemon or lime juice, to taste (optional)

Set a broiler rack 4 inches from the heat source, and heat the broiler. If grilling, heat your grill. On a rimmed baking sheet lined with aluminum foil, toss eggplant with just enough oil to coat, and season with salt. Broil or grill until golden all over and charred in spots, 2 to 4 minutes per side.

As eggplant broils, or after you've grilled it, heat a large skillet over medium-high. Add 2 tablespoons oil, and, when it's hot, add onion and a pinch of salt. Sauté until onion is lightly browned in spots and soft, 5 to 7 minutes. Add tomatoes and 1/4 cup water, and simmer until the tomato breaks down and turns saucy, about 5 minutes. If the pan starts to dry out, add a splash of water.

Add eggplant to the pan, along with a drizzle of oil, and turn heat to medium-low. Cook until the mixture is very tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Taste and season with more salt, if needed, and plenty of pepper. Use a slotted spoon to transfer eggplant mixture to a bowl and set aside. Raise heat to medium.

Without wiping out the pan, add butter and let it melt. Add garlic and sauté until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add wine, olives, capers and a small pinch of salt, and bring to a simmer. Add swordfish, and let cook, gently turning the pieces with a spoon so they don't fall apart, until cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes.

Return eggplant mixture to the pan and gently stir in parsley. Heat until the mixture bubbles, 1 to 2 minutes. Garnish with basil leaves and a squeeze of lemon or lime, if you like, and serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings



Almond, Caper, & Herb-crusted Chicken

So yummy. This is based on a recipe from Milk Street, but I made changes. They didn't use an egg wash, but I found it was the only way to make the nut mixture stick to the chicken. You may think that you have way too much of the nut panko mixture, but you won't. When served at a Sunday supper, we all agreed this recipe was delicious. The nut coating was crispy and the chicken was moist.

3/4 cup sliced almonds, finely chopped
1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup drained capers, finely chopped
1/4 cup lightly packed fresh dill, chopped

1 egg, beaten
2 large chicken breast halves, cut horizontally into
6 cutlets
6 tablespoons neutral oil, divided
Lemon wedges

Combine the almonds, panko, salt, pepper, capers, and dill in a shallow wide bowl. Place the chicken cutlets in the beaten egg so they are well-coated with egg. Heat a cast iron griddle or other flat pan over medium heat. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil, then lift the chicken cutlets one at a time from the egg and coat well with the nut/panko mixture. Place on the griddle (don't crowd - it's better to do a couple of batches) and cook until golden on the bottom, then flip and cook until the other side is golden as well. Continue to cook, adding oil as needed, until the chicken cutlets are all cooked. Serve with the lemon wedges.

Serves 3-4



Chicken with Pine Nuts

The perfect dinner to nibble (ok, inhale) as I talked with Hank and Diane Hollenbaugh on video before watching Lavay Smith with Phyllis Rothblatt. What a night of virtual fun! But this provided delicious ballast for the fun. Good simple cooking. Great flavor. A gentle kick from the jalapeno. I got the basics of this recipe from a Youtube video from The Chinese Cuisine, then played a little to produce what you see below. .

2 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut in small dice (barely 1/2 inch)
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons dry sherry or Chinese rice wine
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon peanut oil

2 tablespoon peanut oil, divided
1/4 cup pine nuts
1 jalapeno, sliced thickly (adjust how much of this you use based on your spicy-tolerance)
3/4 cup diced celery
3/4 cup diced green pepper (about 1/2 pepper)
Freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon oyster sauce

Combine the chicken with the soy sauces, sherry/wine, cornstarch, and oil. Set aside while you prep the rest of the ingredients.

Heat a wok over medium-high heat and add 1 tablespoon oil, When hot add the pine nuts and quickly flip around until they are golden brown (it goes fast, so keep flipping and watching). Put the pine nuts in the serving bowl, leaving as much oil as possible in the wok.

Reheat the wok on high. Add a little more oil, if needed. Add the chicken and stir-fry, allowing it to sit a minute or two between flipping, to ensure you get some searing going. After about three minutes, or when the chicken looks just barely done, add the jalapeno, celery, and green pepper. Flip and stir-fry for about 2 minutes, then dust with pepper; flip. Then add the oyster sauce and stir-fry for another minute or so. Add the pine nuts back in and mix well. Serve.

Serve 2-3



Prosciutto Chicken

This is that unique combination - super easy, frightfully elegant, and utterly delicious. It's an old recipe - I think I've been making this since the 1980s. I have no idea where it originally came from or if it resembles the original. Zoe remembers it and asked for the recipe this year when she was planning a dinner party. Personally, anything with prosciutto is good by me.

4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
Salt and pepper
3 oz. thinly sliced prosciutto

8 sage leaves (optional)
2 tsp. olive oil

Season chicken with salt and pepper. If you want to use it, put two whole sage leaves on each chicken breast. Wrap each wrap each breast in 2 slices prosciutto, slightly overlapping.

Heat oil in a nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add chicken seam side down and cook 4 minutes. Turn and cook 5-6 minutes more.

Transfer to cutting board and let stand 5 minutes. Slice diagonally and serve.

Serves 4 - 6



Ken's Chicken Balti Curry

This year (2020), I became completely and totally enamoured by Cuckoo, a British show I found on Netflix that totally hit all of my buttons. It is funny, offbeat, British, and oddly philosophical. In a number of episodes, Ken, the father in the show, keeps wanting to go get "Balti." I couldn't rest until I discovered what this was. It's a kind of Anglo-Indian curry, very popular in the Midlands of Britain. Here is one version that I just loved (and so did Ryan - Zoe didn't even get a bite). This dish is part of a theme this year - food inspired by the TV shows I love.

Marinade

1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled
2 garlic cloves, peeled
¼ tsp salt
1 lime, juice only
½ tsp ground coriander
½ tsp chilli powder
Dash or two of cayenne
½ tsp ground turmeric
½ tsp ground cumin
2 chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
¼ cup plain yoghurt

Curry

1 tbsp sunflower oil
1 red onion, peeled and finely sliced
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 tbsp tomato paste (optional
75ml/2½fl oz double cream (I substituted a can of
cream of celery soup because I needed comfort
tonight)
150g/5oz baby spinach leaves
small handful fresh cilantro, chopped

For the marinade, finely chop or grate the ginger and garlic. Sprinkle over the salt and chop a little more, then place into a bowl. Add the lime juice, ground coriander, chilli powder, ground turmeric and ground cumin to the bowl and mix well. Add the chicken pieces and the yoghurt and stir to coat the chicken. Leave to marinate for at least 10–15 minutes (or for an hour if possible, covered in the fridge).

For the curry, heat the oil in a frying pan over a low heat and add the onion. Fry for 1–2 minutes, then add the tomatoes and the tomato purée and cook gently for about one minute.

Add the chicken to the pan along with the marinade and a splash of water.

Pour in the cream, turn up the heat and simmer for 10–15 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through. There should be no pink when you cut into it. If pink, cook for longer.

Add the spinach to the pan and stir until just wilted. Taste and adjust salt and black pepper. Sprinkle the cilantro over the top.

Serves 2



Enchiladas Suizas

One of the all time funniest episodes of Schitt's Creek revolves around Moira and David Rose making her mother's famous "ahn-chelada" recipe. I literally cannot watch it without laughing myself silly. I present this recipe so that if you, like David and Moira, are befuddled by the culinary term "fold" you need not fear. It also honors my colleague Margaret Bettencourt, who inspired me to make some enchiladas suizas!

1 very large or 2 medium onions, chopped
3 4-ounce cans canned green chiles
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons flour
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
1 teaspoon salt

Freshly ground black pepper
2 cups cooked chicken, shredded
1/4 lb monterey jack cheese, shredded
1/4 lb cheddar cheese, shredded
2 scallions, sliced
6 7-inch flour tortillas
1 cup heavy cream

Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and onion and saute until the onions have become translucent and soft. Add two cans of green chiles. Stir in the flour and cumin, then cook, stirring for a minute or two. Slowly add the chicken broth and salt, as well as black pepper, stirring, as the sauce thickens. Simmer gently for about 15 minutes to blend the flavors of the sauce.

Heat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 7 x 11 baking dish or similar.

In a bowl, combine the shredded chicken with the last can of chiles (which you've drained of liquid). Add 1/2 cup of the sauce. Season with salt and pepper if needed.

Lay out tortillas and put some of the chicken mixture in a strip on each tortilla. Add a tablespoon or two of the cheeses. Roll up the tortilla tightly and place in the prepared baking dish, seam side down. Pour remaining sauce over top, then the cream. (It may seem too runny, but it will all meld together beautifully). Sprinkle with remaining cheese and scallions. Bake for 30 minutes uncovered.

Serves 3-4



Frug Chicken & Green Onions

According to my notes in the cookbook, I started making this in 1986 and said it was A+. That's super high praise in my book. Although I refrained from making it when Zoe was growing up (she who hates green onions), and then almost forgot it, it came back into my consciousness this year. I think, also, I hesitated to make it for years because Jeff Smith (aka The Frugal Gourmet) was widely accused of sexually predatory behavior with many of the young men who worked with him. I felt guilt cooking a meal he devised. But, really, he's dead now, the food is innocent of his wrongdoing, and that is perhaps taking the #metoo movement a little too far. Or is it? This moral conundrum continues to confound me as I eat this recipe. Every slurping delectable morsel.

This is an absolutely perfect meal for a hot day. Buy a roasted chicken, chop some green onions, heat a small amount of oil and you have a luscious meal. And it is luscious - the oil makes it unctuous and sensuous to eat. It is wonderful as leftovers. I'd even have a little heap of it next to some softly scrambled eggs, drizzled lightly with the juices, for breakfast.

1 (3 lb) chicken, cleaned or 2-3 boneless chicken breasts (or, let's face it, just buy a roasted chicken at the supermarket and call it a day)
6 thin slices ginger

2 bunches green onions
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1-2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup peanut oil, heated to smoking point w/ three slices of ginger in it

Read these instructions carefully. This dish is so simple that you will think the instructions are incorrect.

If you are using a whole chicken: Put the chicken in a large kettle. Fill it with water and ginger and bring to a boil. Cover pot and lower heat to medium-low and boil for about 5 minutes (if you are using a larger chicken, boil for longer, up to 20 minutes for a 6-lb chicken). Turn off the burner; leave the bird in the pot and the pot on the burner. After one hour the chicken is done. Remove and cool. Debone the chicken and tear the meat into small strips. Place on a large platter.



If you are using chicken breasts: Put the chicken breasts in a medium pot. Cover with water and add the ginger. Bring to a boil, cover with a lid, and allow to sit for one hour. Shred chicken meat.

Clean 2 bunches of green onions and split each onion lengthwise down the middle. Then cut up into 1-1/2-inch pieces. Place onions over the mound of chicken. Add 1 Tbs. soy sauce and 1 Tbs. Sesame oil to the chicken.

Pour 1-2 teaspoons salt over the top of the onions. When ready to serve pour 1/2 cup smoking hot peanut oil over the onions and chicken. Toss like a salad.

Serves 4-6

Ida's Thai Red Curry

When I worked for the hospice foundation in Mountain View, we were right near a fabulous cafe that served the most amazing wild nutty turkey sandwiches (recipe some other time). Every day Ida Ma, the owner, prepared a new and delicious soup. This was one that we all waited for anxiously. It's so simple (if you have the ingredients) and comes together quickly.

1 onion, slivered
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 inch piece of ginger, minced
2 chicken breasts, sliced thinly into strips
1 13.5-ounce coconut milk
2 8-ounce cans sliced bamboo shoots
1 red pepper, cut into 1/4-inch strips

6 makrut lime leaves, shredded
3 tablespoons fish sauce
1 1/2 tablespoons palm sugar or brown sugar
2 tablespoons red curry paste
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup fresh Thai basil leaves

Drain bamboo shoots from the jar. In a medium pot, bring 5 cups of water to a boil then add bamboo shoots. Let boil for 15 minutes, drain and cut into smaller size pieces (to your preference). Set aside.

In a medium pot, heat half of the coconut milk, and cook until it boils. Add the red curry paste, and stir until fragrant. Reduce the heat, and continue to stir while cooking until a thin film of oil appears on the surface.

Add the chicken, stir until it starts to cook. Add remaining coconut milk slowly. Bring to a boil then add bamboo shoots and water. Season with fish sauce and palm sugar, when bring it up to a boil again. Add lime leaves, fresh red chili and basil. Stir well, remove from heat.

Serve with steamed Thai jasmine rice. Enjoy!

Serves 4



Lemongrass Chicken with Sugar Snap Peas

On May 4, the 35th anniversary of Tom and my marriage, I slept from mid-afternoon clear through until almost 10pm. I hadn't been hungry all day, but I was suddenly ravenous, and specifically ravenous for lemongrass chicken. This is an adaptation of a recipe from Grace Young, who writes Chinese cookbooks replete with delicious recipes. One important technique in this recipe is adding the chicken to a hot pan and then not fussing with it. That time lets the meat actually sear rather than steam. Resist the urge to mess with it.

10 ounces chicken breast, sliced lengthwise, then crosswise into 1/4 inch strips
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 tablespoon lemongrass smush
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper

2 tablespoons neutral oil, like canola or peanut, divided
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 small red onion, slivered
6 ounces sugar snap peas, cut into 1/2 inch lengths
1/2 cup chicken broth
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon oyster sauce

In a small bowl, mix together the chicken, cornstarch, lemongrass, fish sauce, salt, and pepper. Mix well and allow to sit while you prep the garlic, onion, and sugar snap peas. In a separate small bowl, mix together the chicken broth, cornstarch, and oyster sauce, blending well. Set that aside.

Heat a flat-bottomed wok or skillet over medium heat and allow the pan to get really hot. Add 1 tablespoon of the oil and the chicken mixture, spreading it out fairly well. Then don't touch it for about 2 minutes, or until the bottom is nicely golden. Flip the pieces and again let it rest, undisturbed, for another two minutes. Shake the pan, and toss a few times, then remove to a serving dish and reserve.

Add the other tablespoon of oil, then add in the garlic and onions. Flip and saute for about a minute, then add the sugar snap peas. Saute, tossing frequently, for about another minute. Add the chicken and any juices back into the pan and toss together. Stir well and then add the cornstarch slurry and bring to a boil, until the sauce is thickened and coating all the ingredients.

Serves 2 generously or 3 lighter

Note: If lemongrass smush is not something carried by your local supermarket (look in the produce section), then buy a stalk of lemongrass, cut off the bottom inch and the top until you have a length that is about 5-6 inches. Peel the outer layers until you get to soft bendy pale layers, then mince that.





My cousin Linda Peterson with me in Pacific Grove; Ryan, Phyllis, me, and Zoe in a socially distanced photo; Phillip Min and I display why we were friends in high school; me amidst the wisteria of Gamble Gardens. Gardens, flowers, and especially vistas of sky restored my soul this year.



Braised Daikon with Pork

From one of my favorite Chinese food sites, The Woks of Life, this dish is happy, homey food. It's like a warm hug. Daikon does have a hint of bitterness, and that gets more pronounced as the daikon gets fatter. So for the least bitterness (it's really just a tinge), go with slimmer daikons.

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon Sichuan peppercorns
1 tablespoon minced ginger
3 cloves garlic, smashed and finely chopped
4 scallions, chopped and separated by white and green parts
8 ounces ground pork (but any ground meat will work)
1½ pounds white Chinese turnip, peeled and cut into ½" x 1" pieces

8 large fresh shiitake mushrooms
1 tablespoon shaoxing wine
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon dark soy sauce
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
1 tablespoon oyster sauce
½ teaspoon sugar
1 cup water
1½ tablespoons cornstarch mixed with 3 tablespoons water

Heat the oil in your wok over low heat. Add the Sichuan peppercorns. Let them infuse the oil for 10 minutes, taking care not to let them burn.

Scoop out and discard the peppercorns, and leave the oil in the wok. Add the ginger, garlic, and the white parts of the scallion, and turn up the heat to medium-high. Stir for a minute or so. Add the ground meat, and stir-fry until browned. Next, add the turnips and shiitake mushrooms. Stir and mix everything well.

Add the Shaoxing wine, salt, dark soy sauce, light soy sauce, oyster sauce, sugar, and water. Mix everything well, cover, and let simmer for about 15 minutes over medium heat—until the turnips are cooked through and translucent. While the contents of the woks are simmering, prepare the cornstarch mixture and set aside.

Once the turnips are fully cooked through, uncover, turn the heat up to high, add the cornstarch mixture. Stir-fry for a minute—the mixture should thicken into a sauce. Stir in the green parts of the scallions and then serve over rice.

Serves 4



Chorizo con Papas

My friend Phyllis introduced me to soyrizo, which I think is wonderful with peppers, onions, and eggs. Then I saw this recipe, with potatoes (!). So good. It could be breakfast, lunch, or dinner. I love that it can be vegan or carnivore-friendly. You can make eggs with it, but I like it just the way it is.

1 pound red skinned new potatoes, cut into small (1/2-inch) dice)	1 small onion, diced
1 tablespoon vegetable oil	1 green pepper, diced
10 ounces Mexican pork chorizo or soyrizo, casings removed	Kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper
	Chopped cilantro or parsley

Place the potatoes, just covered with water and with about a teaspoon of salt in a pot. Bring to a boil and then lower the heat to simmer for about 5-7 minutes or until the potatoes are just barely cooked (they will continue to cook with the onions and peppers). Drain the potatoes and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add the chorizo and cook, breaking up the clumps, until dry and crisp, about 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the chorizo to a paper lined plate to absorb any additional oil. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of fat from the pan.

Add the onions, green pepper, and boiled potatoes to the pan and saute until brown, about 10 minutes. Stir in the cooked chorizo and season with just a little salt and pepper, to taste. Sprinkle with cilantro or parsley. and serve.

Serves 4



Phyllis and I took a ride on the carousel in Tilden Park before COVID-19 hit. It was a blast and I couldn't stop smiling.

Guisado

I don't know what to say about this except it is a basic, essential Trish recipe. I can't really believe that I've put together 10 cookbooks and never before included this recipe.

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
3/4 pound pork, cut in 1/2" cubes
1 small shallot or onion, slivered
1 small roma tomato, cut in cubes
3-4 cloves garlic, minced
Salt & Pepper

1-1/2 pounds vegetable - green beans, bok choy, bean sprouts, cabbage, or chayote, cut in bite size pieces
1-1/2 cups chicken broth (can use a cube or powdered with water)

In a large skillet (with a lid), heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the pork cubes and saute for a few minutes until beginning to brown (I usually let them sit for a minute or two to get the browning started, then stir and leave alone again for another minute).

Add the onion, tomato, and garlic and saute for another few minutes until the meat is browned and the onions have become translucent. Add the rest of the ingredients and cover the skillet. Cook for about 10-15 minutes at medium-low. The vegetables should be tender, not crisp.

Serves 4



My brother Phil found this picture this year - I was about 8 and he was off to college at a mature 17!

Patola & Misua

If you're not Filipino, you're probably saying, "What & what soup?" But, so, so good. This just takes me home to Manila. I learned so much about Filipino food from our maid Gloria Perez. She made the meals for our help and generously allowed me to snatch a little from time to time. While my mom had always made some Filipino dishes herself, Gloria opened me up a whole host of dishes. This is one of them. Patola (also called luffa or loofah squash) is a spongy squash covered in the most hideously ridged exterior. If you allowed it to come to full ripeness and then dried it, you would get the loofah that we use to clean ourselves in the bath. But harvested young and peeled, it is tender and delicious. Where can you find patola and misua? Well, a Filipino market if you're lucky enough to have one near you. I can find both at my pan-Asian market. I also frequently see patola at farmers' markets. When picking patola, go for firm, not floppy. Misua, an exceedingly fine wheat noodle that takes about a minute to cook, can be ordered on eBay and Etsy. Go figure. I swear, when you need a warm comforting bowl of soup, when life just feels overwhelming, this is the answer.

3 medium patola
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 onion
4 cloves garlic
1/2 pound pork cutlet, cut in 1/2-inch cubes

1 tablespoon fish sauce (or 1 teaspoon salt)
1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
3 cups chicken broth
About 2 ounces misua noodles

Cut off both ends of the patola and discard. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the skin until you get to the tender white. Be gentle, Despite the exterior, this is a fragile beast.. Slice the peeled gourd into 1/4-inch rounds.

In a 3 quart soup pot, over medium heat, heat oil. Add onions, garlic and pork and saute until the pork is lightly browned. Add fish sauce and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, for about 1 to 2 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil. Lower heat and cook for about 10 minutes or until pork is tender.

Add patola to the soup and cook for about 5 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, very gently break up any patches of misua noodles that are stuck together; set aside. Add misua noodles to the soup and cook for about 1 to 2 minutes or until softened.

Serves 3-4 (or maybe 2 or maybe just one hungry eater)



Pork Tacos with Pineapple Salsa

These tacos are so delicious, my mouth is watering days after I ate the last little bit of the salsa. These taste like Korea met Mexico and settled happily in Hawaii. I've been on a cucumber and fruit salad binge this year and this salsa fits the bill perfectly. I love this recipe, which is adapted from Creme de la Crumb. Solid recipe that takes very little time to get to eating! Never mind the table.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 teaspoon minced garlic | 1 cup diced pineapple |
| 2 tablespoons soy sauce | 1/4 cup diced red onion |
| 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes | 1 bunch cilantro, chopped |
| 1 tablespoons brown sugar | 1 cup diced Persian or English cucumber |
| 1/2 tablespoon oil | juice of one lime |
| 1 tablespoons water | Pinch or two of salt |
| 1 small boneless pork loin, thinly sliced into strips | |
| soft tortillas, corn or flour | 3 tablespoons mayo |
| | 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce |

Combine all ingredients for the pineapple salsa, stir, and set aside. Whisk together garlic, soy sauce, crushed red pepper flakes, water and brown sugar, set aside. Stir together mayo and sriracha, set aside.

Over medium high heat, drizzle a pan with oil, then add pork strips and saute 2-3 minutes until no longer pink on the outside. Add soy sauce mixture to the pan and stir once, then let the pork caramelize by not stirring for about a minute. Stir again, then rest for another minute. Repeat until pork is browned and caramelized on the outside.

Fill tortillas with pork, top with the pineapple salsa and drizzle with chili sauce. Garnish with chopped cilantro and lime wedges if desired and serve.

Serves 4



Rad Na

A few years ago in Mountain View there was a restaurant called Bangkok Bistro. There I tried Rad Na (which has more spellings than I can imagine) for the first time. I absolutely positively loved it. But Bangkok Bistro folded and so did my ability to find a decent Rad Na in Thai restaurants around here. They either use regular broccoli or add all sorts of other vegetables or the sauce is awful. I tried making it myself a couple of times, but each time it turned out awful also. Then I happened across a YouTube Channel from Hot Thai Kitchen. The right recipe. Just right. I have been reunited with my adored Rad Na!

1 lb fresh wide rice noodles
1–2 tsp black soy sauce
2–3 stalks Chinese broccoli, stems thinly sliced on a bias, and leaves roughly chopped

1/2 pork, sliced into bite sized pieces, about 1/2" thick
2 Tbsp tapioca starch or cornstarch
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
2 tsp soy sauce
2 tsp oyster sauce
1/4 tsp white pepper

1/4 tsp sesame oil
1 egg white

2 Tbsp chopped garlic
2 Tbsp tao jiew (fermented soy bean paste)
2 cups chicken or pork stock
1 Tbsp soy sauce
1/2 Tbsp Golden Mountain sauce
2 1/2 tsp sugar
1–2 Tbsp tapioca starch or corn starch
1/4 tsp white pepper

Mix the pork with the tapioca starch, baking soda soy sauce, oyster sauce, white pepper, sesame oil, and egg white. Let sit for about 15 minutes.

Heat a large wok or a pan with enough oil to coat the bottom over high heat. When the pan is very hot, add the noodles and the black soy sauce to the pan and toss the noodles quickly to coat in the sauce. Then let them sit and char a bit without stirring. When the noodles start to clump up together a bit as they dry, remove them from heat and set aside. Wipe out wok/pan.

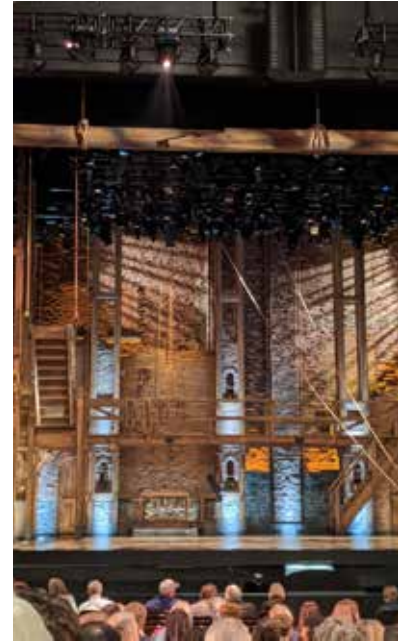
In the same wok/pan over medium heat, add about 2 Tbsp vegetable oil, chopped garlic and fermented soy bean paste. Saute until the garlic starts to turn golden brown. Add the stock, soy sauce, Golden Mountain sauce, sugar and white pepper; bring to a full boil.

While waiting for the sauce to boil, dissolve tapioca starch or cornstarch in about 3 Tbsp of water to make a slurry and set aside. Once the sauce reaches a full boil, add the pork and spread the pieces out quickly.



When it comes back to a boil, add the Chinese broccoli. Pour half of the tapioca/corn starch slurry slowly into the sauce while stirring and bring to a boil. The sauce will thicken, and if you want the sauce to be thicker, add the rest of the starch slurry. Remove from heat when you are happy with the sauce consistency. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed. To serve, pour the sauce over the noodles.

Serves 4.



Tigre, Eun Young & Phillip, the Hamilton stage, a beautiful comfy chair, Freddie taught me to print on fabric, our jewel of a pool, and my darling daughter delivering me groceries mid pandemic!



Thai Pork & Glass Noodle Soup

This year I discovered hot-thai-kitchen.com. And there I found this simple, but very satisfying soup. I love the simplicity of the pork "meatballs" - just spooning the ground pork into the pot - so easy. You may think there aren't a lot of noodles, but as the soup sits those noodles absorb the broth and bulk up. It made me very happy hot and I enjoyed it ice cold on a hot afternoon.

2 ounces dried bean thread (glass) noodles
3 cloves garlic, chopped
5 cups pork stock
1/2 pound ground pork

3 cups napa cabbage, chopped
Green onions and cilantro for garnish
Seasoning to taste: Soy sauce, fish sauce, salt, and white pepper

Soak glass noodles in warm water for 10 minutes to soften, then cut them into shorter sections.

In a pot, fry chopped garlic in vegetable oil over low heat until golden and crispy, remove and set aside. Add pork stock and bring to a simmer. Meanwhile, mix ground pork with a little soy sauce and white pepper. When the stock is simmering, spoon the ground pork into the soup in chunks. Season the soup with soy sauce, a splash of fish sauce, white pepper, and a little salt if needed. When the pork's exterior looks done, add napa cabbage and let cook until the leaves have wilted. Add glass noodles, bring to a boil, and it's done!

To serve, garnish the soup with the fried garlic and some of the garlic oil. Top with chopped green onions and cilantro, and serve immediately.

Serves 4



Dorito Casserole

I sought out this recipe to honor my favorite show of 2020 (and most of the past six years): Schitt's Creek. I just loved that show. This casserole was featured in a very special episode that just cracked me up. So, I had to find out what this was all about, having never encountered one before. It is, as one person wrote, like a taco in a casserole. Particularly when you top it with shredded lettuce, chopped fresh tomatoes, and a little sour cream. It was yummy. Diane Silverman, Ryan, and Zoe all liked it, with Zoe calling it "absolutely scrumptious." Try it. Comfort in a 9 x 13 pan.

2 teaspoons olive oil
1 pound ground beef I use 90% lean
1/2 cup onion finely diced
1 14-ounce can black beans
1 packet taco seasoning
1 cup salsa
1/4 cup water

1 cup sour cream
2 cups shredded cheese I used cheddar and Monterey Jack
4 cups Dorito chips I used nacho cheese flavor
1/2 cup tomatoes diced
1/4 cup green onions sliced
Shredded lettuce, pico de gallo, sour cream, cilantro, avocados, or olives for serving

Preheat the oven to 375F. Coat a 9 x 13 baking dish with oil or cooking spray.

Heat the olive oil in a large pan over medium high heat. Add the beef and cook for 4-5 minutes or until just browned, breaking up the meat with a spatula. Drain the meat if there is more than a tablespoon of liquid. Add the onion and cook for an additional 3-4 minutes or until onion is translucent. Add the black beans, the taco seasoning, salsa, and water. Simmer for 3-4 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the sour cream.

Lightly crush the Doritos. Spread 1/3 of the chips over the bottom of the prepared pan. Place 1/2 of the meat mixture on top of the chips, then add 1/3 of the cheese in an even layer. Repeat the process with another 1/3 of the chips, the rest of the meat, and 1/3 of the cheese. Add the remaining chips, then the final layer of cheese. Cover the baking dish with foil.

Bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for an additional 10-15 minutes or until cheese is melted and starting to brown.

Sprinkle the tomatoes and green onions over the casserole, then serve. Top with additional taco flavorings such as sour cream, olives, etc. if desired.

Serves 6-8



Samosa Tater Tot Casserole

Oh, goodness gracious, this is good. I made it in early March for a bridge evening with Lisa and Jeremy Jungherr and Ryan. We just kept inhaling it. It looks super complicated, but it's really not. It took me less than two hours from start to finish, which isn't bad for a casserole. One of the interesting things about this recipe is that you start caramelizing the onions without any oil/butter at all - just dry. I didn't think it would work, but it did!

4 medium yellow onions, chopped
3 tablespoons butter or olive oil, divided
(approximate)
2 tablespoons jalapeño, seeded and minced
6 medium garlic cloves, minced
4 teaspoons fresh ginger, minced
2 tablespoons garam masala
2 teaspoons cumin
2 teaspoons coriander
4 teaspoons turmeric
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 lb. ground beef or lamb
1 teaspoon pepper, or to taste
Salt, to taste

6 Roma tomatoes, diced
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 16-oz package frozen spinach
Juice of one lemon
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped, divided
1 cup frozen peas
1 32-oz package of tater tots

Toppings

Plain Greek yogurt
Mango chutney
Minced red onions
Bhel sev (crunchy Indian chickpea noodle snacks)

Using a Dutch oven, start cooking onions with no oil or butter at all, stirring frequently. In a couple of minutes, they will begin to start to brown on the edges. Then add a couple of tablespoons of butter, ghee, or oil to the pan and give them a pinch of salt or two and cook until they are a medium golden color. Lower the heat if they start to get too brown too quickly. You really want them to become golden with darker edges. Be patient — this can take a little while but it really lays the groundwork for all the layers of flavor in this dish.

Clear a space in the pan, adding more butter, ghee, or oil. Throw in the jalapeño, ginger and garlic and fry for a minute or two until fragrant. Stir to combine. Add the garam masala, cumin, coriander, turmeric and cinnamon and stir to coat everything. Add the ground meat to the pot, sprinkle with salt and pepper and brown as you combine it thoroughly with the onion mixture. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350F.

Add the tomatoes, tomato paste and sprinkle with just a little more salt. Simmer on low, covered, about 15-20 minutes or until the tomatoes melt into the stew, stirring occasionally. Stir in the frozen spinach, lemon juice and about half of the chopped cilantro. Turn off the burner. Taste and adjust spices, salt and pepper as needed. Stir in the frozen peas, if desired. Transfer to a 13x9 (3-quart) casserole dish. Top with a single layer of tater tots. Bake for about 40-50 minutes or until the tots are crispy and golden brown.

Serve with the remaining fresh cilantro, plain yogurt, chutney and whatever other bonus chaat toppings you like!

Serves 8



Korean Beef Stew with Pickles

Originally from Food & Wine, this was created for a slow cooker. But mine is a pain to drag from the top cupboard, so I converted it to a stovetop/oven dish. This is such a great winter meal. It's interesting and yet familiar and comforting. You can increase the heat by adding more jalapeños or leaving in the seeds and pith. Such a happy meal.

1 tablespoon vegetable oil	6 large garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
3 pounds trimmed beef chuck, cut into 3-inch pieces	2 large jalapeños—halved, seeded and sliced 1/2 inch thick
Salt and freshly ground pepper	2 cups mung bean sprouts
1/4 cup soy sauce	1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/4 cup sugar	4 cups coarsely chopped Napa cabbage
1/4 cup dry white wine	1/2 cup thinly sliced sour pickles
2 cups beef stock or low-sodium broth	Steamed short grain rice, toasted sesame oil and 3
2 medium red onions, quartered through the core	thinly sliced scallions, for serving

Preheat the oven to 300F. In a dutch oven, heat the oil. Season the meat with salt and pepper and sear the pieces over moderately high heat until richly browned all over. Add the soy sauce, sugar, wine and stock and bring to a boil. Add the onions, cover and place in the preheated oven. Cook for 2 hours. Add the garlic and jalapeños to the stew, cover and cook for 1 hour longer, until the meat is very tender.

Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add the bean sprouts and blanch for 30 seconds; drain and reserve.

Put the cornstarch in a bowl and whisk in 1/2 cup of the liquid from the cooker.

Bring the dutch oven to the stovetop and place over medium-high heat. Whisk the cornstarch mixture, then whisk it into the stew, and let simmer until the stew thickens. [Optional: With 2 forks, very coarsely shred the meat.] Add the Napa cabbage and pickles to the dutch oven, and cook until the cabbage is just wilted, about 5 minutes.

Spoon steamed rice into bowls. Ladle the stew over and around the rice. Top with the beans sprouts, a drizzle of sesame oil and the sliced scallions and serve.

Serves 6-8



Carrot & Orange Cake

One Sunday night, Palm Sunday actually, in the midst of the first round of sheltering-in-place, I made this cake. I took the majority of the cake over to Zoe and Ryan and Eli. I then couriered a section over to Phyllis (me being the courier, but keeping a strict 6-foot distance.) It amused me that each weekend of the first couple of months of lockdown I made a luxurious dessert. Of course, I shared - that was undoubtedly the whole point. This was a cake from Food & Wine, but as usual I changed things up - almost entirely in terms of the spices. I just needed more spice.

CAKE

1 pound carrots, peeled and finely grated (about 4 cups)
3 ounces dried apricots, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
2 ounces raw pistachios, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
1 1/2 cups grapeseed oil or other neutral-tasting oil
2 cups packed dark brown sugar
4 large eggs, at room temperature
1 1/2 tablespoons grated orange zest plus 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

GLAZE

1/4 cup cream cheese, at room temperature
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
1- 1/2 cups powdered sugar, divided
1/4 cup sour cream
1/2 tablespoon grated orange zest plus 3 tablespoons fresh orange juice, plus more orange zest, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a tube or Bundt cake pan with a generous amount of baking spray. Combine carrots, apricots, and pistachios in a large bowl. Combine oil, brown sugar, eggs, and orange zest and juice in a high-speed blender or the bowl of a food processor. Pulse on high speed until mixture is emulsified (about 10 pulses). Fold oil mixture into carrot mixture in bowl.

In a separate large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cloves, allspice, baking soda, and salt. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture; add carrot mixture, and fold to incorporate until there are no visible flecks of flour left behind. Spoon mixture into prepared pan; shake pan lightly to even out the batter and release any air bubbles.

Bake in preheated oven 55 minutes to 1 hour, rotating pan on rack halfway through baking time. (The cake is done when a skewer comes out clean when inserted in center of cake and top of cake is firm to the touch and golden brown.) Let cake cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack. Let cake cool completely.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream cheese and butter on medium speed until mixture is light and fluffy, 4 to 5 minutes. Scrape down sides of bowl, and add 3/4 cup powdered sugar. Beat on low speed until mixture is smooth, about 1 minute. Add sour cream and orange zest and juice, and beat on low speed 1 minute. Add remaining 3/4 cup powdered sugar, and beat on low speed until sugar is completely incorporated, about 45 seconds. Scrape sides of bowl, and increase speed to medium-high; whisk until mixture is well combined. Drizzle glaze on cooled cake; garnish with orange zest.



Cinnamon Roll Cookies

From cookiesandcups.com. The original recipe made 10 very large cookies, cooked for 15-17 minutes. You can do that if you want. I made small walnut size balls that yielded 40 cookies and they were sweet delicious little bites. Your choice!

FILLING

1/4 cup butter, melted
1/3 cup dark brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

COOKIE DOUGH

3/4 cup butter, room temperature
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
2 teaspoons vanilla

3 tablespoons heavy cream
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
2 1/4 cups all purpose flour

ICING

1 cup powdered sugar
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1-2 tablespoons milk

For the filling, in a medium bowl combine the butter, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Set aside.

In the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment combine the butter and the granulated sugar, mixing on medium speed for 2 minutes. Add the egg, vanilla, cream, baking powder, and salt. Mix for 1 minute, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary. Turn the mixer to low and add in the flour, mixing until just combined.

On a lightly floured piece of wax or parchment paper, press the dough out into a 15x10 rectangle. This doesn't have to be exact or neat.

Spread the filling mixture on top of the dough, leaving about an inch at the edges. Roll the dough up tightly from the long edge. Cut in half, then roll each half out to about 10 inches long. Cut into 20 equal slices. Roll each slice into a ball and place on a lightly floured plate or baking sheet. Place into the freezer for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the dough balls onto the prepared pan, leaving space for them to spread a little. Place the remaining dough in the refrigerator while the first batch bakes.

Bake for 11-12 minutes, until the edges are lightly golden. The cookies will still be very pale. Allow the cookies to cool on the pan for 5 minutes, and then transfer to a wire rack to continue cooling.

For the icing, in a medium bowl combine the powdered sugar, butter and 1 tablespoon milk. Whisk until no lumps remain. Add more milk if a thinner icing is desired.

Dip the tops of the cooled cookies into the icing, or drizzle on top. Allow the icing to set.

Makes 40 small cookies



Key Lime Cheesecake of a Sort

It was a hot, hot night in September. The pandemic was at a low point and we had a dinner outside overlooking the pool, sitting six feet apart. We had had Corpse Reviver 2's before dinner, Moscato di Asti after, and it was still hot. These little dessert jars were a super-treat. Cool, fluffy, and with the floral yumminess of key lime. Very, very easy and equally good. No heat required to achieve.

6 whole graham crackers, crushed
1-1/2 tablespoon butter
2 ounces cream cheese, softened
3 tablespoons key lime juice

1/4 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 cup powdered sugar
2 cups Cool Whip
1 teaspoon lime zest

In the microwave or a small pan, melt the butter. Mix in the graham cracker crumbs. Using 1/2 cup mason jars or other containers, put a layer of the graham cracker crumbs and press lightly. Save a small amount of the buttered crumbs to sprinkle on top.

Whip the cream cheese with a blender or whisk until creamy and smooth. Add the lime juice and vanilla and whip a little more. Add the powdered sugar and whip well, until smooth. Add the Cool Whip and beat again until thick and thoroughly mixed.

Portion out the key lime cheesecake mixture on top of the crumbs. Sprinkle tops with reserved crumbs and lime zest.

Serves 8





Zoom bridge games, a trip to Mendocino, gorgeous skies, and the wonder of Zoe and Ryan's love for one another. It was a hard year, but not a bad year. Joy continued to spark.



Quint Brownies

Yes, quintuple chocolate brownies. And I made them three times in two weeks. From the very twee website Sheer Luxe, these are somewhere between brownies and fudge. I cut them in small 1-inch cubes and served two per person with a dollop of whipped cream on the top. Just a tiny taste, because they really are extremely rich. This recipe is a part of my gradual conversion to cooking with a scale. Zoe bought me a scale and convinced me. Hopefully, the dream of this recipe will convert you too.

115 grams butter
175 grams dark chocolate
60 grams unsweetened chocolate
2 tsp vanilla extract
200 grams sugar
50 grams brown sugar
2 large eggs

125 grams all-purpose flour
3 tbsp natural cocoa powder
3/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp baking powder
60 grams milk chocolate chips
60 grams white chocolate chips
60 grams walnuts, roughly chopped (optional)

Melt the butter and both lots of chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, making sure it does not touch the water. Meanwhile, line a 8 inch square cake tin with parchment, leaving some overhang. Stir the butter and chocolate mixture until smooth, then add the two sugars and mix well to combine and to help the sugar soften and emulsify a little. Add the vanilla and mix well. Let cool for about 10 minutes before proceeding.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. To the butter chocolate mixture, add the eggs, one at a time, whisking well after each addition until smooth. Combine the flour, cocoa powder, salt, and baking powder in a separate bowl and mix well.

Use a spatula to fold the dry ingredients into the chocolate mixture and combine until smooth. Then mix in both lots of chocolate chips and the walnuts until evenly incorporated. Pour the brownie mixture into the prepared tin, and spread it out evenly.

Bake for 35-40 minutes, until an inserted toothpick comes out just a little moist. Leave to cool slightly before removing the brownie from the tin. Then cut it into one-inch pieces, cleaning the knife with a damp kitchen towel between cuts. Serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream, if desired. You can store them in an airtight container for a week.

Makes about 50 tiny squares



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