



2018 Morgan Family Cookbook

Comments from Trish

I'm late getting started with this cookbook. Horrendously late for me - I'm writing this on January 1, 2019, having just picked out the cover photo this morning! Shame!

On the other hand (because there is always another side to everything), we've had a gloriously restful winter break, after a rather crazy year. So I'm simplifying this year. We're using the same fonts as last year. Same recipe format. New recipes, however!

So, what else to say about this year. Again, not getting fancy - just listing things as they strike me.

Zoe's graduation from American University and an amazing trip to DC. Staying in the comfort and coziness of Phillip and Eun Young's home - and the truly generous party they threw so we could celebrate Zoe and Ryan and get to meet the Molinaris. They got a cake (which I would never have thought of in a thousand years - what is wrong with me?!!) A giant storm blowing through DC, right as we were there - and walking to the corner Mexican restaurant with Zoe in the midst of it, getting soaked to the skin. Then the warm tortillas rolling out of the tortilla machine (did you know they had such a thing?) as the Molinaris pretended we weren't dripping onto the floor of the restaurant. Lisa Jungherr making a special trip to see Zoe graduate. Meeting Alex and Ed. Getting a chance to hug Isaac and Rachel. Looking out the windows of Zoe's apartment at the National Cathedral. Tom and I both are so very, very grateful to Phillip and Eun Young for their hospitality and friendship. It was a trip to remember for the rest of our lives.

Zoe and Ryan moving to Grant's Pass, Oregon. Bears in the summer on the streets and nutcrackers in the winter. This is a town that knows how to accessorize it's downtown. Zoe and Ryan are taking such a thoughtful curated approach to their lives and it's really interesting and cool to see.

Life seemed to have meaning and density this year. That may sound weird and I can't quite explain it, but it feels true.

Tom landed in the hospital with a nice case of sepsis, which discombobulated me. But there, at about 2am, Zoe appeared in the emergency room. I fell on her, metaphorically and literally - it was such a blessing to have her be able to get here just hours after the ambulance raced away down Middlefield Road. She and Ryan both came to help and cheer and advise. Again - so much gratitude to them, to the Hollenbaughs who came to the hospital twice to bring us food and keep us company. To Lisa Jungherr, for a great Thai meal catered in. To Margaret, who appeared in the emergency room half an hour after I got there - just to find out how she could help. And to Mari, who brought us Japanese curry - one of the homiest comfort foods in the world. It just keeps going with meals from all of my Stanford family - tea salads from Julie, a meal from Tara, soup from Jen Kitt, offers of help from so many. Tom and I felt so very cared for.

We ended the year watching *Mary Poppins Returns*. While I didn't leave the theater singing, like when I saw the original movie at about age 5, it made both Tom and me feel good.



That was a month and a half ago and this is now, mid-February. Tom died on January 27, 2019 on the lawn under the redwoods outside our apartment. We were trying to get him to the emergency room and we didn't make it. I was dragging my feet on finishing this cookbook and I couldn't figure out why, but now I'm glad I didn't finish it. I can add the coda to 2018.

I feel like Tom is still with me. Zoe and Ryan came for two weeks and they threw themselves into helping me clean up (and clean out) the apartment. Zoe's organizing genius was in high gear and Ryan made more trips to Goodwill than I can count. And the outpouring of love and support I've gotten has really humbled me. From Deb and Hank and Diane, who all rushed to me Sunday night after he died, to Lisa Selzer who made a 5 am trip to see me the next morning before work. My brother Phil came in early that morning. My CPB card group (we are proudly Cheater Pig Bitches) who let me alternately sob and laugh uproariously, to my team... My sister Ep came when I needed her badly in April. Is this sounding like the last page? Well, I guess that's what I'm trying to say. I am not worthy of all this help and love, but I'll greedily take it right now. And hope that I can repay or pass it on one day soon. And, yet, I feel Tobber beside me. I loved him with my whole heart for 35 years and I do still.

But I have a rare opportunity to be thoughtful and mindful as I move into the next stage of my life. I'm 59 and can make something new. Something fresh. Tom will be with me as I do this. I'm not leaving him behind, but I am moving forward in these early days. We'll see what comes. I'm on another adventure.





Vaguely Indian Butternut Squash Soup

This is a deep and mysterious soup, with real depth of flavor. You can easily make this a vegan recipe by using vegetable broth. It is very different from the simple butternut squash soup I featured in the 2016 cookbook. This is the kind of soup you want on a dark and stormy night.

1 2-pound butternut squash, peeled and cut in 3/4-inch cubes	1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1 tablespoon olive oil	1/2 teaspoon ground sage
Salt and pepper	1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
5 large garlic cloves, still in skin	Dash of cayenne pepper (optional)
	4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
	1/4 cup chopped cilantro (optional)
1 tablespoon olive oil	
1 medium red onion, diced	Sprinkling of cilantro or parsley for serving
1/2 teaspoon curry powder	Sour cream (optional)

Preheat oven to 375°F. On a rimmed baking sheet, toss the squash, oil, salt, and pepper with the garlic cloves. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the squash is pretty soft and slightly browned. Squeeze out the garlic and discard the skins.

Meanwhile. In a 3-4 quart pot over medium heat, heat the oil, then add the red onion. Cook over medium heat until the onions are beginning to soften and very slightly brown. Lower the heat just a smidge and continue to cook the onions until they are caramelizing and browning (should take about as long as the butternut squash takes to cook). Add all the spices and cook for about 30 seconds to one minute.

Add the baked squash and garlic, along with the broth. Raise heat to medium again and bring to a boil slowly, stirring occasionally. Cook for about 10 minutes more, then blend with an immersion blender. (If you want to use a regular blender, please cool the soup at least slightly and cover the top with a doubled kitchen towel to prevent burns and leaks. Blend until smooth, adding the cilantro (if using) right at the end. Serve with a sprinkling or two of fresh cilantro or parsley. A dollop of sour cream also tastes good.

Serves 4





Chopped Spring Salad

Delightfully fresh tasting. I made it with Parmesan chicken and they went together like a dream.

salad

2 cups chopped kale
2 hearts of romaine, finely chopped
1-1/2 cups chopped persian cucumbers
1-1/2 cups chopped sugar snap peas
1 cup chopped fennel
1 cup frozen peas, defrosted
1/2 cup golden raisins
1/4 cup grated Parmesan

salad dressing

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup finely diced onion
2 clove crushed garlic
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all veggies and the pistachios in a large bowl.

Pour the dressing over the top and gently toss together until everything is mixed well. Top with lemon zest and enjoy.

Serves 4-6

Parmesan Chicken

This was Tom's recipe and it is delicious!! When I was working late, he would often call me and offer to make this for dinner. With a big salad, it is a deeply satisfying dinner. It also is wonderful cold, for a picnic, or just a morsel out of the fridge.

3 chicken breasts, cut in half horizontally to make two thinner cutlets
1/4 cup butter, melted, or sub with olive oil
3/4 - 1 cup parmesan cheese, grated
1/2 cup seasoned bread crumbs (if you don't have seasoned, just add some dried basil & oregano to regular breadcrumbs)
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
2 tablespoons parsley

Preheat oven to 400°F. Mix together the parmesan, bread crumbs, garlic salt, and parsley in a wide flat bowl (like a pie plate). Dip the cutlets quickly in the butter, then roll in the parmesan/bread crumb mixture. Place in a 9x13 pan. Bake in the oven for about 15-20 minutes, or until the chicken is just cooked through.

Serves 4-6





Celery Rice

Cauliflower rice is all the thing now, but I've made a little change that makes it irresistible to me. On a whim, one day in the summer, I substituted celery for the cauliflower. It was beyond belief - like a special fried rice. Tom loved it too. Honestly, I think you could put whatever veggie you loved in this recipe and you'd be fine. Just chop it up small. If you used brown rice, I think I'd make it 1-1/2 cups of water.

2 cups minced celery (or other veggie)
1/3 cup medium grain rice
1 cup water

1./2 teaspoon salt (optional)
1 tablespoon butter (optional)

In a rice cooker, place the rice, then the celery. Add the water and salt and cook the rice. When it is done, add the butter and mix.

Serves 4





Sauteed Cabbage

This is just plain delicious. It is such a homely humble vegetable, the cabbage, and yet I seem to crave it in all its forms. When I made this in January, we had a beautiful savoy cabbage. I made this to go with meatloaf and roasted potatoes. Lip-smacking good.

You are always entitled to add garlic or ginger or both. You might even want to add a glug of soy sauce or Maggi (a glug being about a tablespoon).

1 small head cabbage, including outer green
leaves (2 1/2 pounds)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Cut the cabbage in quarters vertically, then remove the core from each section. Shred the cabbage into 1/4-inch strips.

Melt the butter in a large saute pan or heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat. Add the cabbage, salt, and pepper and saute for 5-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the cabbage is just tender and begins to brown. Serve warm.

Serves 4





Cod You Put on the Ritz?

This kind of sounds ridiculous - particularly when you are told this will transform cod into lobster (yeah, right)! It doesn't, but it does make a mighty fine tasting piece of fish and is a little bit of fun.

Any white, lean fish will work with this recipe. In New England, cod, haddock, pollock and hake are traditional, but walleye, catfish, bass, snapper, Pacific rock cod, striped bass or Gulf Coast redfish will all work.

2 pounds skinless cod fillets

Salt

1 sleeve of Ritz crackers (about 34 crackers)

5 Tbsp unsalted butter

Lemon and parsley for garnish (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a small baking pan or casserole pan with butter or a little oil. Rinse off the fish fillets with cold water, pat dry. Use long nose pliers to remove any pin bones from the fillets.

If you want, cut the fillets into large serving pieces. Place the fillets at the bottom of the pan, sprinkle with salt.

Melt the butter. Crush the Ritz crackers and place in a bowl; they should look like coarse breadcrumbs. Mix the melted butter with the breadcrumbs. Pack the crumb mixture over the top and sides of the fish fillets.

Place in the oven and bake for 20 minutes, or until the fish flakes easily. (Thin fillets may take less time, very thick fillets may take longer.)

Serve the fish with lemon and parsley.

Serves 4-6





Cod Sautéed in Olive Oil with Fresh Tomatoes

This is a deceptively easy dish that requires a little attention while you are cooking it. You are cooking the fish very gently in the pan, then making what is essentially a warm vinaigrette with the tomatoes and olive oil. We recommend using a thin fillet for this recipe. The thicker fillets take more time to cook, and therefore more time is needed to baste. Served with fingerling potatoes that had been halved lengthwise, tossed with olive oil, salt, and pepper and roasted on a rimmed cookie sheet at 380oF for about 20-25 minutes. Also steamed some fresh okra. It was a wonderful summer dinner.

1 pound thin skinless fish fillets, like cod
Salt
1/4 cup olive oil
2 large fresh tomatoes, cut into chunks

2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
A splash of Tabasco or other hot sauce (optional)
Black pepper to taste

Remove any pin bones from the fillets and pat them dry. Salt the fish fillets well and set out on a cutting board. Heat the olive oil in a saute pan and set it over medium heat for 2 minutes. Add the fish fillets, which should sizzle gently. Cook undisturbed for 90 seconds.

When you see the bottom of the fish fillets turn opaque, tilt the pan and, using a large spoon, baste the tops of the fish with the hot oil. Do this constantly until the top of the fillets begin to flake, about 3 minutes.

Add the tomato chunks, the Italian seasoning and the splash of Tabasco. Swirl around in the pan to combine and let this cook for 90 seconds. Turn off the heat.

Put a fish fillet on everyone's plate. Swirl the tomatoes in the pan and add black pepper to taste; this swirling should emulsify the sauce. Spoon out some tomatoes and sauce for everyone and serve at once.

Serves 4





Balsamic Tuna with Italian Slaw

I found this recipe in Family Circle as we were sitting at Kaiser waiting for a follow-up appointment to Tom's hospital stay. It looked healthy and goooood. And it was. The first time I made it I didn't have enough regular balsamic, but I did have golden balsamic, so I used that for the salad. I also didn't have shaved Parmesan, but did have grated - so I used a pile of that. The recipe survived those changes just fine and tingled our taste buds!

2 fresh tuna steaks (about 6 oz each)
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

salad

1 cup each shredded Tuscan kale, radicchio and escarole
2 tablespoons golden balsamic (could be regular balsamic as well)
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 plus 1/8 teaspoons salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/3 cup shaved Parmesan

Place tuna steaks in a large resealable plastic bag and add 1/4 cup vinegar. Let marinate on the counter while you make slaw.

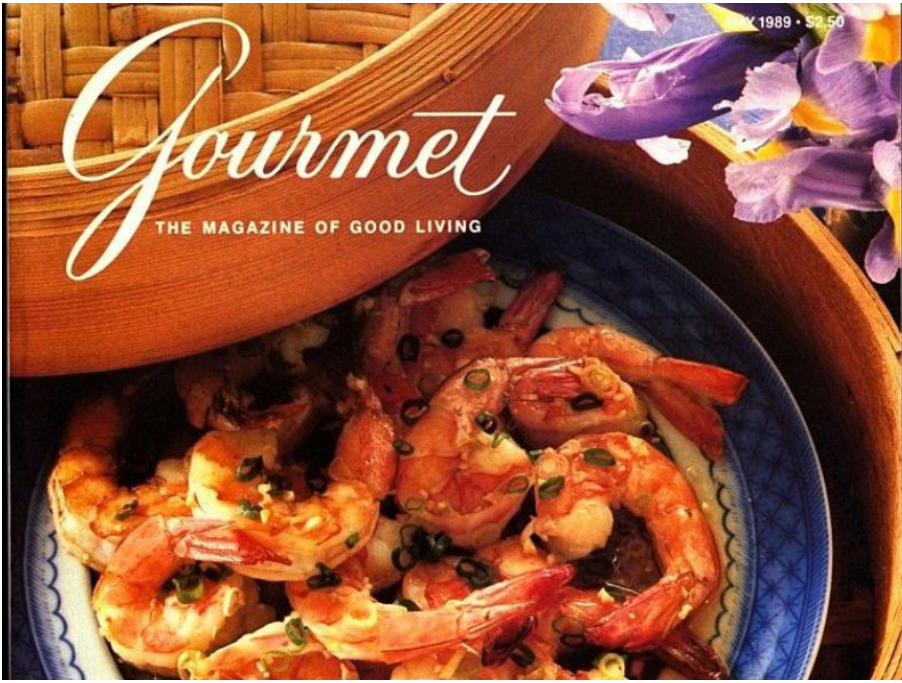
In a bowl, combine kale, radicchio and endive with Parmesan, 2 tbsp oil and 1 tbsp vinegar; toss to combine. Season with 1/8 tsp each salt and pepper.

In a medium nonstick skillet, heat 1 tbsp oil over medium to medium-high. Remove tuna from marinade and season with 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Sear 5 minutes, turning once. Serve with Italian Slaw.

Serves 2

Note: If you can't get fresh tuna steaks, swap in thawed frozen ones or even boneless, skinless chicken (cook 3 more minutes per side).





Steamed Shrimp with Garlic & Scallions

I got this recipe out of Gourmet magazine while we were living in Davis. It was in regular rotation for years. I can remember how cheery it made cold snowy Chicago days. Then it just dropped out of my brain. Over twenty years later, I found it again and was thrilled. This is such a simple preparation, but so amazingly good. The only tricky thing is lifting the bowl out of the steamer. It takes iron hands or the dexterous management of tongs. Or, if you're really brilliant, you arranged a crisscross of butcher's twine under the bowl. It's totally worth it, because this is sum-yummy!

1 pound (about 24) large shrimp, shelled, leaving the tail intact, and deveined	3 scallions
1 teaspoon salt	1-1/2 tablespoons soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon baking soda	1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
	1 tablespoon minced garlic
	2 teaspoons finely grated peeled ginger
	2 teaspoons Asian sesame oil
	1 teaspoon sugar
	1/2 teaspoon dried hot pepper flakes
	1/2 teaspoon salt

In a small bowl, combine shrimp, salt, baking soda, and just enough cold water to cover. Set aside while you prepare the steaming mixture.

Mince the white part of the scallions, reserving the green tops. In a large bowl stir together the minced scallions, the soy sauce, the vinegar, the garlic, ginger oil, sugar, pepper flakes, and salt. Add the shrimp, rinsed and patted dry, toss them to coat with the marinade and let them marinate at room temperature for about 15 minutes.

Set up a steamer that is large enough to put the dish in which you mean to steam the shrimp, with at least an inch or more on each side to let you lift the dish out. Add water so it is just below the level of the steam rack and bring the water to a boil over high heat. While it comes to a boil, transfer the shrimp with the marinade into a wide flat bowl (a glass pie plate works). Put the bowl into the steamer and steam for 4 to 8 minutes, or until the shrimp are just firm to the touch.

Carefully remove the bowl from the steamer. Sprinkle the green onion tops (chopped) over the shrimp. Serve with rice.

Serves 2-3





Scallops with Honey-Grapefruit Drizzle

Tom and I both loved scallops, but we kept them as a special treat. These are marvelously easy, but we both absolutely loved the combination of the scallops with the tart grapefruit citrusy tang. If I had the choice, however, I would sub pink pomelo for the grapefruit.

18 fresh or frozen sea scallops (about 12 ounces total)

1/8 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon black pepper

1/4 cup fresh grapefruit juice

1 to 2 tablespoons honey

1 tablespoon snipped fresh mint

1/2 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 cups fresh baby arugula or sliced fresh baby spinach

1 cup fresh grapefruit sections, coarsely chopped

Thaw scallops, if frozen. Rinse scallops and pat dry with paper towels. Thread one scallop on the end of eight 6- to 8-inch skewers. Sprinkle scallops with the salt and pepper. Set aside.

In a small bowl combine grapefruit juice, honey, mint and ginger. Set aside. Coat an unheated nonstick indoor grill pan with cooking spray. Heat pan over medium-high heat. Add skewered scallops. Reduce heat to medium. Cook for 4 to 6 minutes or until scallops are opaque, turning once halfway through cooking. (Or to broil the scallops, coat the unheated rack of a broiler pan with cooking spray. Place skewered scallops on the rack. Broil 3 to 4 inches from the heat for 4 to 6 minutes or until scallops are opaque, turning once halfway through cooking.)

To serve, divide arugula among eight small appetizer plates. Top with coarsely chopped grapefruit. Place one scallop skewer atop arugula on each plate. Stir the grapefruit juice mixture to make sure honey is dissolved and drizzle evenly over the scallops.

Serves 3-4 as a main dish salad or 6-8 for an appetizer





Heavenly Chicken Wings

This recipe came from Sunset in the early 1990s, from an article about the owners and chef at Marnee Thai in San Francisco. I have loved this recipe ever since. It's spicy and sweet and just... well... heavenly. If you can't find Thai basil, just use the ordinary variety.

3 pounds chicken wings

Thai sweet garlic sauce

1 cup chicken broth

3/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup fish sauce

2 tablespoons cider vinegar

1 tablespoon cornstarch

2 teaspoons paprika

1 tablespoon cooking oil

1/3 cup minced garlic

3 tablespoons minced jalapeno

About 20 fresh Thai basil leaves, slivered

1 red bell pepper, cut into strips (optional)

Rinse wings and pat dry. Cut apart at joints; reserve wing tips for other uses. Place wings in 1 layer in a 10- by 15-inch pan.

Bake, uncovered, in a 400|degrees~ oven until browned and crisp, about 1 hour and 15 minutes; turn occasionally. Drain off fat. If making ahead, cool, cover, and chill up to 1 day. Reheat, uncovered, in a 350|degrees~ oven until hot, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the Thai sweet garlic sauce. Mix together broth, sugar, fish sauce, vinegar, cornstarch, and paprika. In a pan or wok, heat the cooking oil up until quite hot. Add the garlic and jalapeno, stirring until the garlic barely starts turning golden. Add the broth mixture and stir until it boils and thickens. Continue to boil, stirring occasionally until it is reduced to about 1-1/4 cup (about 10-15 minutes).

With a slotted spoon, transfer wings to warm garlic sauce; mix well. To serve, pour wings onto a platter; scatter with basil and red pepper. Eat hot or cold.

Serves 4-6





Chicken Meatballs with Feta and Spinach

This is a fabulously good meatball recipe. They were very moist and the whole meal cooked very fast - about 45 minutes from start to finish without hurrying. The sauce is a take on Marcella Hazan's tomato butter sauce. Serving this over zoodles means you are truly getting your veggies! I used a whole bunch of spinach - it looked like a huge amount, but when I packed it in a 1-cup measure it just barely overflowed, so I went with all of it. Yum, yum, yum.

1 pound ground chicken breast or turkey	1 tablespoon olive oil + 1 tablespoon for foil for broiling
1/2 cup bread crumbs	1 egg
1 packed cup spinach &/or baby kale, rough chopped	
2 teaspoons Montreal steak seasoning	3 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon dried oregano	1 small onion, quartered
1 tablespoon dried basil	2 15-ounce cans diced tomatoes
1/2 cup crumbled Feta cheese	Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1/2 cup grated Parmesan	
1 bunch green onions, chopped small	

Line rimmed baking sheet with foil and spread around 1 tablespoon olive oil.

In medium size bowl, mix together meat, bread crumbs, spinach, seasoning, herbs, feta, parmesan, green onions, olive oil, and egg. Mix well. Form meatballs that are about 2 inches in diameter, and place on prepared baking sheet. Broil until tops are golden brown.

While the meatballs are cooking, put the butter and onions in a wide deep pan (I used my wok, which was perfect) over medium-high heat. Get the butter bubbly and the onions beginning to turn translucent. Add the tomatoes, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil and then turn to medium and allow to burble away until the meatballs are finished.

Add meatballs to sauce and allow to cook for about 5-10 minutes. Serve over regular pasta or just barely blanched zoodles, with some more parmesan on the side.

Serves 4-5





If you want to make the Quick Jus:

Meanwhile, heat remaining 1 tablespoon (15ml) oil in a small saucepan over high heat until shimmering. Add chicken spine and cook, stirring frequently, until well browned, about 3 minutes. Add onion, carrot, and celery and cook, stirring frequently, until beginning to brown, about 3 minutes. Add bay leaf and deglaze with vermouth or sherry and 1 cup (240ml) water, using a wooden spoon to scrape up any browned bits from bottom of pan. Reduce heat to maintain simmer and cook for 20 minutes. Strain out solids and return liquid to pan. Boil over medium-high heat until approximately 1/3 cup (80ml) remains, about 7 minutes. Whisk in soy sauce, butter, and lemon juice off heat. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



Spatchcocked Roast Chicken With Quick Jus

For some reason, I always have trouble roasting chickens. The thighs are bloody and the breast overdone. This recipe fixes that quite simply. The most difficult thing is breaking the breastbone.

This comes from J. Kenji Lopez-Alt, who develops recipes for Serious Eats. I am sincerely in love with almost every recipe of his I've ever read or tried. Tom and I spatchcocked a lot in 2018. Don't take that to mean anything other than that.

Making a simple but perfect roast chicken is a technique that should be in every home cook's arsenal. But the reality is that perfection is difficult to achieve, especially if you're trying to roast that chicken whole. The problem is that chicken breasts dry out if cooked beyond 150°F (66°C) or so, but legs need to come up to 175°F (80°C). Spatchcocking, or butterflying, is the solution: By flattening out the chicken, you expose its legs to higher heat, helping them cook a little faster than the breasts—which is exactly what you want for juicy meat. It also yields crisper skin and a much faster cooking time than traditional roasting. In and out of the oven in 45 minutes or less! Adding the baking powder to the salt and pepper you rub the chicken with will make the skin super duper crispy.

1 large chicken, about 4 to 5 pounds (1.8 to 2.3kg)
2 tablespoons (30ml) light olive oil or other neutral-flavored oil, such as canola or vegetable, divided
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon (5g) baking powder
2 teaspoons (10g) chopped fresh parsley, thyme, rosemary, oregano, marjoram, savory, or a mix (optional)

Quick Jus (if you wish to make it)

1 medium onion, roughly chopped (about 1 cup)
1 medium carrot, peeled and roughly chopped (about 1/2 cup)
1 medium rib celery, roughly chopped (about 1/2 cup)
1 bay leaf
1 cup (240ml) dry vermouth or sherry
1 teaspoon (5ml) soy sauce
3 tablespoons (45g) unsalted butter
2 teaspoons (10ml) juice from 1 lemon

Place oven rack in upper-middle position and preheat oven to 500°F (260°C). Using sharp kitchen shears, remove spine from chicken and cut spine into 5 to 6 one-inch-long pieces. Set spine aside. Flatten chicken by placing skin side up on a cutting board and applying firm pressure to breastbone. Transfer to a wire rack set in a foil-lined rimmed baking sheet. Position chicken so that breasts are aligned with center of baking sheet and legs are close to edge.

Drizzle chicken with 1 tablespoon (15ml) oil. Combine 1 tablespoon (15g) kosher salt, 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper, and 1 teaspoon (5g) baking powder (if using) in a small bowl. Sprinkle all over chicken. Sprinkle chicken with herbs, if using. Rub chicken to distribute seasoning evenly all over skin.

Roast chicken until thickest part of breast close to bone registers 150°F (66°C) on an instant-read thermometer and joint between thighs and body registers at least 175°F (80°C), about 45 minutes, reducing heat to 450°F (232°C) if chicken starts to darken too quickly.

Remove chicken from oven, transfer to cutting board, tent loosely with foil, and allow to rest 5 minutes before carving. Serve with hot jus.

Serves 4-6





Mustard Milanese & Arugula Fennel Salad

Made on December 19, I think this has to rate as one of the finest of the year. The original recipe from the Smitten Kitchen Cookbook used chicken, each breast sliced horizontally so one breast becomes 3 pallairs. I thought it would be way better with pork and I am convinced I was right (while never actually trying it with chicken). I pounded the pork cutlets really, really thin - I could almost see through the resulting slices of pork heaven. I subbed seasoned breadcrumbs for the panko the recipe called for. Then I made a few more changes, so the below reflects what I actually did. It was dreamy.

1 teaspoon garlic salt	1/2 cup all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (from 1 large lemon)	2 eggs
1 tablespoon whole-seed or coarse Dijon mustard	1 tablespoons smooth Dijon mustard
1/3 cup olive oil	2 garlic cloves, pressed
1/2 pound baby arugula leaves	1 teaspoon dried oregano
Small fennel bulb (6-7 ounces)	Freshly grated lemon zest, from one lemon
	1-1/2 cups seasoned breadcrumbs (seasoned with garlic and parsley)
3/4 pound thin boneless pork cutlets, pounded to about 1/8" thick (or as close as you can get)	Mix of butter and olive oil, for frying (I probably used about 2 tablespoons of each)
Table salt	
Freshly ground black pepper	

In a small bowl, whisk garlic salt, lemon juice and mustard together, then whisk in olive oil in a thin stream. Thinly shave your fennel bulb on a mandoline, or cut it as thinly as you can with a sharp knife, and add this to a large salad bowl. Pour the dressing over and mix well. Place arugula on top, but don't toss until you are ready to serve. It can wait in the fridge while you do the pork.

Start to heat a cast iron skillet or other wide pan over medium heat.

Grab three shallow wide bowls or big plates, and line them up on your counter. Pour the flour into the first one. In the second bowl/plate, whisk together the eggs, smooth Dijon, garlic, oregano, and lemon zest. In the third plate, spread out the breadcrumbs. Dredge each piece of pork lightly in flour, then in the egg-mustard mixture, then in the breadcrumbs. Set aside on a fourth plate. (You can arrange the breaded cutlets on a large tray, and chill them in the fridge for 1 hour, or up to 1 day covered with plastic wrap.)

Preheat your oven to 175 degrees.

To the heated cast iron skillet, add 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter. Allow butter to melt and start foaming. Fry the pork until golden brown on both sides, about 2-3 minutes on each side (timing will depend on how thinly you pounded the cutlets). As you cook the cutlets, transfer the pork to a tray to keep in the warm oven. Repeat with additional oil and butter and remaining pieces of pork.

When you're ready to serve it, toss the salad. Arrange one piece of pork from the warm oven on a plate. Pile some salad on top. Season with salt and pepper, and eat immediately.

Serves 3-4





Asian Beef and Cabbage Salad

This was easy and stupendous. I admit there are a lot of Chinese sauces in here, but it is divine and I always have all of these on hand. If you don't wing it with what you do have. I really like the hot beef on the cold cabbage salad. The touch of heat from the spicy black bean sauce is making my mouth sing as I write this.

1 tablespoon neutral oil
1 shallot, minced
3 large cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons ginger, minced
1 pound ground beef
1 tablespoon hoisin sauce
1 teaspoon spicy black bean sauce
2 tablespoons black bean and garlic sauce
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon Chinese rice wine or dry sherry

Salad

8 cups shredded cabbage
4 sliced scallions
2 large carrots (cut into thin strips)
1 cup cilantro or parsley
1/4 cup seasoned rice vinegar
1/4 cup canola or vegetable oil
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper

In a wok, heat the oil over medium high heat. Add the shallot, garlic, and ginger and stir fry for about 1 minute. Add the ground beef and brown, leaving it to get a nice sear before tossing. Once cooked through, stir in the hoisin sauce, both black bean sauces, soy sauce, and rice wine. Allow to boil off most of the liquid.

Meanwhile, combine the cabbage, scallions, carrots and cilantro/parsley in a large bowl. Toss with the rice vinegar, oil, and white pepper. Top with the ground beef mixture and serve..

Serves 4





Chimichurri Steak Kabobs

These had tons of flavor and were absolutely marvelous.

1 packed cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
3/4 packed cup fresh cilantro leaves
1 tbsp. fresh oregano leaves
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
6 cloves garlic
1/2 jalapeño, stemmed or 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Salt and freshly ground white pepper
1/2 cup plus 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
4 6-8oz. filet mignons or beef tenderloin or sirloin steaks
12 (more or less) bamboo skewers

In a food processor, combine the parsley, cilantro, oregano, vinegar, garlic, jalapeño, red wine vinegar, and salt and pepper, to taste. Pulse until everything is coarsely chopped in there. Now, while pulsing the food processor, drizzle in 1/2 cup of the oil until the mixture becomes a creamy yet slightly coarse sauce. Transfer the chimichurri sauce to a bowl and set aside.

Soak the bamboo skewers in water for at least 30 minutes. This is to prevent them from catching on fire on the grill. You could use metal skewers to skip this step.

Cut the filets into large cubes, about 1 inch thick. Put them all in a large bowl. Season them with salt and pepper. Pour 3/4s of the chimichurri sauce over them and toss until they are all evenly coated (reserve the remaining chimichurri to top when they are cooked). Cover the bowl with saran wrap and put in the fridge to allow them to marinate for about 20 minutes or so.

After steak is marinated, thread all of the steak onto the bamboo skewers.

On a heated charcoal grill, place the skewers on the grill. Sear each side and allow the steak to cook to your liking. It shouldn't take more than about 5-7 minutes for a medium cooked steak. Be careful not to overcook them—if you think they are still rare, they are probably done! Check a piece and see!

Remove from grill. Drizzle remaining chimichurri over the kebobs. Serve immediately!

Serves 4





Salisbury Steak with Mushroom Gravy

Absolutely wonderful! Tom and I both thought this was a recipe just like our mothers would make. I made it with a mashed cauliflower dish for which I used one head of cauliflower and one Yukon gold potato. Once cooked in boiling water until just soft, I drained them and mashed with 2 tablespoons of butter and about 1/3 cup cottage cheese (milk or cream would be great - I just didn't have it). The cottage cheese, however, added a subtle tang and made the dish taste denser. I'd seriously consider adding some white sharp cheddar to them.

Steaks

1 pound ground beef
1/3 cup plain breadcrumbs
2 teaspoons Montreal Steak Seasoning
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 large egg
2 tablespoons neutral-flavored oil cooking oil

Mushroom sauce:

8 ounces crimini or brown mushrooms, sliced
1 small yellow onion, sliced
1 clove garlic, chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 1/2 teaspoons prepared yellow mustard
1 1/2 cups low sodium beef broth
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 tablespoon water
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Make the beef patties: In a mixing bowl, use your hands to mix together the ground beef, breadcrumbs, egg, salt, and pepper. Divide the mixture into four equal pieces, then use your hands to gently shape each piece into a 1/2-inch-thick patty.

Sear the patties in a skillet: Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the oil is shimmering, sear the patties on one side for 3 minutes, then flip them with a thin, flexible spatula. Sear them on the other side for another 3 minutes. Transfer the patties to a plate.

Cook the mushrooms, onions, and garlic: There should be a few teaspoons of fat left in the pan from cooking the patties, but add additional oil if needed. Still over medium heat, add the mushrooms, onions, and garlic to the skillet. Cook, stirring often, until the mushrooms have given up their liquid and just begun to brown, 6 to 8 minutes.

Stir in the liquids and braise the patties: Stir the tomato paste, mustard, and beef broth into the mushrooms and onions. Use a spoon to scrape up any brown bits from the skillet.

Return the patties to the skillet, spooning a bit of the cooking liquid, mushrooms, and onions over each one. Cover the skillet turn the heat down to low. Let the patties braise in the covered skillet for 30 minutes.

While the patties are simmering, you can boil a pot of noodles, make mashed potatoes, and/or prepare any other quick vegetable side dishes.

Thicken the cooking liquid into a gravy: Uncover the skillet and use a spoon to nudge the patties to the side of the skillet. In a small bowl, stir together the cornstarch and water. Stir in the cornstarch mixture and let it boil for about a minute, until the gravy has thickened, then turn off the heat.

Serve the Salisbury steaks: Transfer the patties to plates and ladle the gravy over top. Sprinkle with chopped parsley, if you like, and serve hot with egg noodles or mashed potatoes alongside.

Serves 4





Charlotte's Meatloaf Rubric

Meatloaf was one of mom's basic meals. If we had been up to Baguio, we often got this with tiny, tiny new potatoes and a veggie. This recipe could be used to make meatloaf, burgers, stuffed peppers, stuffed cabbage, and so forth. It was infinitely expandable, so she really only has a set of rules about how to scale up. Every pound of meat need one egg and one slice of bread and a chopped small onion, along with 1/4 teaspoon pepper, and 3/4 teaspoon salt. Fresh parsley was always present. The dill pickle is my addition, and optional.

1 pound ground beef	1/4 cup chopped parsley
1 pound ground pork	1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 eggs	1-1/2 teaspoons salt or garlic salt
2 small or 1 medium onion, chopped (1/4 inch)	2 large or 4-5 mini dill pickles, chopped (1/4 inch)
2 slices bread (anykind), soaked in water for a minute or two and then squeezed gently	4 slices bacon, cut in half

Preheat oven to 375°F,

Mix together all of the ingredients except the bacon. Mix well so everything is combined. In a 7x11 baking dish (or, really, any kind of baking dish that has sides of at least 1-1/2 inches), shape the meat into a long meatloaf - I usually go end to end and about 4 inches wide. Arrange the bacon slices on top of the meatloaf and put in the oven. Bake for 1 hour, 20 minutes.

Allow to rest for a few minutes, then serve.

Serves 6 with a few leftovers

Note: I like to throw some cubed potatoes (or halved small potatoes) into the oven about 30 minutes into the cooking. Toss the potatoes with some olive oil, salt, and pepper, then spread out in a baking dish.

Also, meatloaf sandwiches are divine!





Cranberry Butter Spread

This is hugely addictive - just a warning. It's a heavenly thing to have around on cold winter mornings with some toasted English muffins. It's just right.

1/4 cup dried cranberries, chopped
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 tablespoon maple syrup or golden syrup or
honey

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix all together. Use for toast, fruit bread, french toast.

Serves: who knows? 1? 8?





Atlantic Beach Pie

We had this for Labor Day dinner with Nancy Houtz. It came after a dinner of Ginger Garlic Ribs, Chinese Smashed Cucumber Salad, Gingery Tomatoes, and rice. We pulled it together late in the afternoon. It cooled in the freezer and was a perfect coda to the evening.

Like a dreamy mash-up between a key lime and lemon meringue pie, this surprisingly fast and easy dessert is adapted from Bill Smith, the chef at Crook's Corner, a Chapel Hill, N.C. restaurant that specializes in Southern comfort food. While a food processor makes quick work of the saltine cracker crust, you don't really need any special equipment — you can just as easily make it with your hands. Top it with whipped cream just before serving, and if you're feeling flush, sprinkle it with flaky sea salt as they do at Crook's Corner, and citrus zest as we do: a lazy summer's day in pie form.

Crust

1 ½ sleeves saltine (with salt) crackers (about 60 crackers/200 grams)
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
½ cup/113 grams unsalted butter (1 stick), at room temperature

Pinch of kosher salt

2 teaspoons of lemon and lime zest

Fresh whipped cream, whipped with about 1/4 cup powdered sugar

Lemon or lime zest and flaky sea salt, for garnish (optional)

Filling

4 egg yolks
1 (14-ounce/396-gram) can sweetened condensed milk
½ cup/120 milliliters lemon and lime juice (I used two large limes and one lemon)

Make the crust: Heat oven to 350°F. Using a food processor or your hands, pulse or crush the crackers finely (stop before all the crackers turn to dust; it's O.K. if you have some little pieces). Add sugar, then butter.

Pulse to combine or work the butter in with your hands until the crumbs hold together like dough. Press into and up the sides of a 9-inch pie pan. Freeze for 15 minutes, then bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until the crust gets a little color.

Make the filling: While the crust is cooling (it doesn't need to be cold), in a medium bowl, whisk egg yolks into condensed milk, then whisk in the lemon or lime juice (or both), and salt, making sure to combine them completely.

Pour into the shell, and bake for 14 to 16 minutes until the filling has set. Refrigerate until completely cold, 4 hours up to overnight. Serve with fresh whipped cream, lemon or lime zest and a sprinkling of flaky sea salt, if desired.

Serves 6-8





Cranberry Bliss Bars

Tom and I both overindulged in Cranberry Bliss Bars from Starbucks on our way up to visit Zoe in November and then again for Christmas. Then I found this copycat recipe, which I tweaked some more. I love these damn things.

3/4 cup butter, cubed
1-1/2 cups packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs
3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 cup dried cranberries
6 ounces white baking chocolate, coarsely
chopped, or chips

Frosting

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon grated orange zest, optional
6 ounces white baking chocolate, melted
1/2 cup dried cranberries, chopped

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large microwave-safe bowl, melt the butter; stir in the brown sugar. Cool slightly.

Beat in eggs, one at a time, and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon; stir into butter mixture. Stir in cranberries and chopped chocolate (batter will be thick). Spread into a greased 13x9-in. pan.

Bake until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean (do not overbake), 18-21 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack.

For frosting, beat cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and, if desired, orange zest until smooth. Gradually beat in half of the melted white chocolate; spread over blondies. Sprinkle with cranberries; drizzle with remaining melted chocolate.

Cut into triangles. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Makes 3 dozen





Hillevi's Margarita Pie

This was ridiculously good. I had a bad headache when I tasted it, but the flavors cut clean through. This is from a new friend at MCD. Delicious!!! Yes, it is a lot like the Atlantic Beach Pie, but not entirely. They are both really great summer pies.

3/4 cup heavy whipping cream

Zest from 2 limes

1/2 cup freshly squeezed lime juice (4-6 limes)

4 tablespoons tequila

14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk

1/2 teaspoon salt

Graham cracker crust

Whip heavy cream until soft peaks form. Stir lime juice with tequila and sweetened condensed milk until smoothly incorporated. Add the salt and recombine. Fold the whipped cream into the lime juice mixture

Spread the mixture into a graham cracker crust.

Top with the zest from the limes. Freeze for 8 hours.

Serves 8





Aunt Herta's Cake

Every year for our birthdays, Aunt Herta (who was really our step-grandmother) would make each of us a special cake. It was small - loaf pan size - and decorated with maraschino cherries, almonds, walnuts, or sprinkles. It was just for the family celebration - never for our birthday parties. The rule was that the birthday child had to give a slice to each of the family at the table. Whatever was left over was the sole property of the birthday child. Most of us cut slices about a quarter of an inch thick. One of us (no names, but she was the skinniest) cut slices so thin you could practically see through them. It is the birthday cake that we always celebrated with on Zoe's birthday. I love this cake out of all proportion.

Aunt herta, of course, made a homemade pound cake. I don't. I use a frozen Sara Lee pound cake. If I'm going to go to the trouble of making a pound cake, then I want the pound cake as is.

3/4 cup butter or coconut oil, melted
2 eggs
1-1/4 cup sugar
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa

Dash of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 tablespoon espresso
1 pound cake, cut into 3 horizontal slices

Melt butter and allow to cool a little. Line the pound cake pan with waxed paper or foil, allowing some overlap at the ends.

Meanwhile, beat eggs until thick and pale. Add sugar very slowly and then allow to beat for about 2 minutes. Add cocoa, salt, vanilla, and espresso and beat well. Add slightly cooled butter and beat well.

In the prepared cake pan, alternate layers of pound cake with 1/3 of chocolate mixture to make a 6-layer cake. Refrigerate or (preferably) freeze until time to serve.

Serves 10-12



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Zoe and Ryan graduated in 2018 and moved to Grants Pass, Oregon, so Zoe could take a job as a reporter at the Grants Pass Courier. It was so lovely to have them back on the West Coast. On the cover is a photo of one of the walls at Oki Bowl in Georgetown. It was a favorite restaurant of Zoe and Ryan while they were in college.