

TAILORED TASTE TIDBITS

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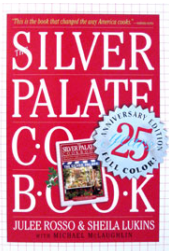
Silver Palate's 25th Anniversary

When I heard that Sheila Lukins and Julee Rosso were re-issuing their first Silver Palate cookbook and were adding color photos I was, well, frankly, horrified. For those unfamiliar with the original version, it is filled with line drawings of ingredients not slick, food-styled photos. Those drawings, coupled with the unusual layout and lots of chatty notes, gave this book its charm. Its incredibly delicious recipes emphasizing fresh ingredients (a novel concept in 1982) gave it credibility and success.

So I ran to the library to see for myself what havoc had been wreaked upon one of my favorite cookbooks. I need not have feared the worst as the line drawings are still there and the gorgeous color photos enhance this impressive 25th anniversary edition.

The content of the book has withstood the passage of 25 years. At the time it was revolutionary, at least to me. The pages were chock-a-block with foods I had never experienced, spurring me to search them out and experiment. Grocery stores here were not carrying items we now take for granted such as shallots, mangoes and kumquats. I remember driving all over the region to find kumquats for a holiday dinner.

In addition to the color photos sprinkled throughout the new book, some introductions to chapters and recipes have been updated to reflect current trends and the increased availability of formerly rare ingredients.



Some recipes have been tweaked now that 'zest' is common and food processors adorn nearly every kitchen counter (even those whose owners have never pushed its buttons)! For example, I cannot remember the original book specifying Italian or flat-leaf parsley as there was only one kind of parsley and it was *curly* around here in the early-1980s.

Now I'm hoping that in two years, a similarly updated version of the red Silver Palate cookbook – *Silver Palate's Good Times Cookbook* – will be published. That book is my all-time favorite as evidenced by my copy's pitiful state of disrepair. It automatically falls open to page 154 where a very stained and oft-referenced recipe for the best Caesar Salad lives.

Although, I won't be giving up my original tattered Silver Palate cookbooks, there just may be room on my bookshelves for their newer, slicker iterations.

Clouded Leopards



The clouded leopard is one of the least understood of all Asia's beautiful cats. Little is known about these elusive cats in the wild & only 6 have ever been radio-collared. Loss of their habitat & rampant poaching has caused their population decline. Successful breeding of *captive* clouded leopards is challenging due to male aggression & high cub mortality.

The National Zoo is partnered with the Nashville Zoo, the Zoological Park Organization of Thailand & the Clouded Leopard Species Survival Plan to develop a breeding program in Thai zoos. To date, 12 cubs have been born & 2 have been imported to the US with hopes of breeding.

The work with these clouded leopards is near & dear to two of my clients. You can see these cats at the National Zoo in the Asian Trail section. For more info, visit www.savethecloudedleopards.org.

July –National Ice Cream Month, Running of the Bulls (Pamplona, Spain)

August – World Bog Snorkeling Championship (Wales), US Personal Chef Association Conference (Philadelphia), Burning Man Festival (Nevada)

September – Labor Day, Back to School, Autumnal Equinox, Oktoberfest (Germany)



Compound Butters

are merely softened butter (or, if you *must*, margarine) laced with herbs, spices, or sweeteners. Chill, slice & serve on top of hot meat or spread on warm breads.

Here's the basic procedure:

- 1) Soften a stick of butter at room temperature for about an hour.
- 2) Finely chop 1 Tbsp of fresh herbs (your choice) by hand or in a mini food processor (with a little olive oil to prevent sticking to the bowl).
- 3) Mix herbs & butter with a wooden spoon.
- 4) Lay herbed butter on a sheet of waxed paper & shape into a log. Twist ends to close.
- 5) Chill at least 2 hours in refrigerator or freeze until ready to use.
- 6) Open waxed paper & slice off a ¼" of the butter.

Also, mixing about 1 Tbsp of Honey into a stick of softened butter makes a nice spread for hot biscuits!

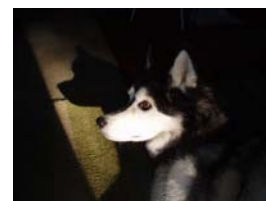
SAFE PET FOOD?

The most recent food scare has not been the e.Coli outbreak in spinach tainted by contaminated ground water, but rather what we feed our pets. For those of us who cherish our little critters as family members (okay, I'm guilty!), this was a rather scary situation – that we might indeed be giving our pets food that could actually kill them.

The answer for many of us has been to cook for our pets using food products intended for human consumption which are subjected to more rigorous levels of inspection.

Coincidentally, about a month before this pet food scare, my dog became very ill due to a liver tumor. I decided to indulge her with whatever foods she *would* eat since her time was limited. Her favorite food has always been salmon – grilled, sautéed, fried, poached, micro-waved and, I'm assuming, even raw, if I gave it to her that way. So for the last 6 months, she's been dining on Brown Rice & Salmon doused with organic Chicken Broth. I've even made her dog biscuits as well, which she thoroughly enjoys.

A neighbor suggested including sweet potatoes but my pup is not a huge fan of vegetables, preferring cheese as supplement to her fish-heavy diet. She's not too spoiled now, is she?



If you too would like to indulge your pet and don't have the time or inclination to cook for them, Tailored Taste can prepare dog dinners as well.

PICNIC, ANYONE?

We've been lucky this early summer to enjoy several stretches of non-humid, untypical-Washington weather which beckon us to dine *al fresco* or *en pleine aire* or, in plain English, outside.

Whether you go all out, pack a picnic and head to a park or just enjoy something off the grill in the backyard, it's time to savor the weather and the season's food. Strawberries are just past their peak but peaches are coming into their own. Watermelon is sweet and so is the corn. Soon the tomatoes will taste like tomatoes again and we'll have more yellow squash than we can handle.

This is the beauty of the seasons – different foods and different appetites to match. With the warm, long days heavy stews are replaced by vegetables plucked from the garden and enjoyed right away. Rather than a long cooked spaghetti Bolognese, thin pasta noodles can be tossed with a fruity olive oil, topped with chopped tomatoes, shredded basil and a handful of parmesan. A salad takes on an unexpected brightness when fresh mint leaves & cilantro are part of the mix.

If you'd like to lighten up your meals this summer, Tailored Taste will be glad to help!

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