



TAILORED TASTE TIDBITS

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HAPPY 2008!

I am constantly wishing for more time – more hours in the day, more days in the week – to accomplish *most* of the items on my ever-expanding To Do List. Well, this year I get my wish (as does the rest of the world). Yes, it's **Leap Year** and we have one extra day to accomplish our goals – both large & small.

That's 24 hours, or 1,440 additional minutes to use catching up on our sleep, exercising more, eating better, spending a day entirely devoted to family, or perhaps throwing that party you promised you'd have last year but somehow never got around to hosting. You know Tailored Taste can help with that last possibility and can also afford you more time *every week* by answering the "What's for Dinner" dilemma. Whatever you choose to do with those precious extra moments, enjoy this once-every-four-year gift.

FOOD FROM AFAR: Conch (Ugly but Yummy)

On a recent trip to the Turks & Caicos Islands, I visited the world's only Conch Farm. Established in 1984 by marine biologist Chuck Hesse in order to provide jobs for locals, supply a low-cost source of protein, and protect wild conch from over-fishing, this unique aqua-farm is thriving.

Chuck has spent over 20 years studying Conch & perfecting the art of farm-raising them. He's overcome the terrible odds of a microscopic egg surviving to adulthood (in the wild, only 1 out of 500,000 eggs survives). And The Conch Farm has become commercially viable despite the 5 years needed for a conch to become an adult. The egg sacs are retrieved from offshore pens & fed in larval tanks vastly increasing the number of conch surviving their critical first year. And in a stroke of marketing genius, Chuck sells Ocean Escargot (1 year old) & Island Princess Conch (2 year old) to upscale US restaurants, primarily in Florida, thus creating new & desirable products. These younger conch are more tender, lighter to ship and faster to market than the



traditional fully grown conch. Conch are higher in protein than most seafood and are second only to Salmon for Omega-3s fatty acids. The photo above shows the tour guide showing off Sally, one of the two resident 'trained' Conch. Yes, ugly...but yummy.

WELLNESS

The New Year makes us focus on ways to improve ourselves and to keep well. A nearby business, The Still Point Mind & Body in Takoma Park, MD, offers a full range of wellness services including Acupuncture, Therapeutic Massage, Nutrition Counseling, and Life Coaching. It's at this tranquil oasis that I personally experience the calm & healing of acupuncture.



For me, the daily toll of my work has been chronic tendonitis of an elbow. At The Still Point, my acupuncturist (and owner) Tori Paide took a holistic look at my situation. She suggested ways to make my movements more efficient, minimize the amount of equipment I carry, and then treated me with acupuncture. Periodic 'tweakings' along with traditional ice/heat treatments and a small brace help keep my elbow pain-free.

For more info, visit:
www.stillpointmindandbody.com
or call 301.920.0801

January – “Invite a Neighbor to Dinner” (12th in PA), MLK Birthday Holiday (21st)

February – Super Bowl (3rd), Super Tuesday (5th), Mardi Gras (5th), Chinese New Year (7th), Leap Day (29th)

March – Daylight Savings Time (9th), Spring (20th), Easter (23rd)

Recipe:

Asian dishes strive for a balance among the sweet, salty, sour & bitter. This simple appetizer includes all these tastes.

Bacon-Wrapped Water Chestnuts

16 water chestnuts
1/3 cup soy sauce
2 teasp. Balsamic vinegar
1/3 cup brown sugar
8 slices raw bacon, cut in half horizontally & again lengthwise
16 toothpicks

Rinse water chestnuts in warm running water. Soak in soy sauce & balsamic for 2 1/2 hours. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Remove water chestnuts from soy sauce, roll in brown sugar, & wrap a piece of cut bacon around each, securing with a toothpick. Place on a rack in a shallow pan. Bake for 30 minutes, turning once. (Or broil 5 - 6 minutes).

Can be prepared ahead & frozen for 2-3 months before cooking.

Adapted from a recipe on *About.com*

Enjoy!

CHINESE NEW YEAR

The hubbub of the 2007 holiday season is past and you never got around to hosting that holiday party. The winter doldrums are setting in. So why not shake it up this year with a New Year's party – Chinese New Years, that is. Gather your friends for an evening of Eastern food and fun. Here are some possible menu items:



Potstickers

Chicken, Pork, Shrimp or Tofu with a zip of chili paste and a coconut milk sauce

Thai Tomato Soup ‘Shooters’

Shots of Smooth Tomato Soup warmed with Chilies and cooled with Coconut Milk

Far East Gazpacho

Sesame & Cilantro shift the flavors of this traditional cold Spanish soup

Bang Bang Turkey Salad

Shredded Turkey tossed with a Spicy Peanut Sauce atop Mint & Cucumber-studded shredded Lettuce

Satés

Asian Kabobs of Chicken or Beef marinated in either peanut or cashew sauce

Sesame Noodles

Linguine tossed in a Soy/Sesame/Chili Oil Sauce topped with shredded Carrots, Scallions & toasted Sesame Seeds

Thai Basil Flank Steak

Thinly sliced & seared Steak marinated in Fish & Soy Sauces with hints of Basil & Ginger

Tandoori Salmon

Stretching the Asian theme a bit, this marinated Salmon flavored with Garam Masala & Ginger, makes a lovely centerpiece or starter

Vietnamese Tofu & Pork with Ginger

A Vietnamese version of a Classic Chinese Dish

Southeast Asian Lime Bars

Graham Cracker Crusts hold sweet yet tangy Lime filling

Lychee Coconut Sorbet

Sweetened, lime-scented, puréed Lychees form the base of this refreshing dessert

These are but a few of the dishes Tailored Taste can create for your next event or even for your weeknight dinners.

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