



# TAILORED TASTE TIDBITS

VOLUME VI, ISSUE II SPRING 2011 FOOD NEWS FROM TAILORED TASTE PERSONAL CHEF SERVICE

## Deadlines

It's April, the month with THE big deadline so I thought that would be a good theme for this quarter's newsletter. When I researched the origin of the word 'deadline' two possibilities arose.

The first refers to a perimeter set around Civil War era jails beyond which escaping prisoners would be shot. Wow – a literal dead line. The second and more likely origin for the way we use the term comes from the printing industry. The area past which a printing press could carry ink was known as the deadline. This led to the notion that an article had to be submitted on time so it would fit within the physical boundaries, within the deadline.

As we all know, the tax deadline is this month, but thankfully for the procrastinators among us, this year it's three days later than normal, Monday, April 18. This deadline looms from about January 2 forward. It pushes me to finish sorting receipts, tally up mileage and pore over year-end summaries from my credit card company, ensuring I find every allowable deduction and to report all income accurately.

But it's the smaller deadlines that motivate me daily. To keep my business humming, I have to plan menus, create shopping and equipment lists, and print labels. Twice a month I must have lessons planned for the chef's club at my adopted school.

My library sends me a notice three days before a book is due. This has been known to spur me to finish reading a book or say "uncle" and admit I don't really like this one. (One joy of being an adult is no longer slogging through books I don't like!)

An onerous as deadlines can be, they do keep us chugging along.



## Back from Extinction

The rather cute native American black-footed ferret had already been declared extinct when in 1980, 18 were found, greatly surprising scientists. About this time, one young veterinary scientist, JoGayle Howard, arrived at the National Zoo and began a quest to bring these 18 ferrets back from extinction. She pioneered the use of then-new artificial insemination techniques to help diversify the gene pool in this tiny population.



JoGayle's breeding program has produced over 6,500 black-footed ferret kits which are now being returned to the prairie.

JoGayle's work expanded to other animals with reproductive difficulties. In spring 2005 she successfully artificially inseminated the Zoo's female giant panda Mei Xiang resulting in the birth of Tai Shan.

Recently, the Smithsonian Channel aired a documentary about JoGayle and her extraordinary work called, *Nature's Match-maker*. If it ever is re-aired be sure to watch.

One of her lesser claims to fame was that she was one of my clients. We collaborated on two great fundraising events which we called Cocktails & Cloudeds - she spoke about the endangered clouded leopard and I made cocktail fare.

Sadly, JoGayle lost her battle with melanoma in March. To quote the Washington Post, "She had no immediate family but her survivors include the ferrets, pandas, cheetahs and clouded leopards she helped bring into this world." Quite a legacy.

## Deadline Dinner

Here's a quick dish for a busy night when your stomach is setting a deadline!

½ cup rice (white, brown, or basmati)  
½ tablespoon butter or olive oil  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
1 cup water or broth  
½ cup frozen veggies (your choice)  
2 chicken breasts, boneless, skinless\*  
8 oz chutney (Trader Joe's Mango Ginger!)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a small roasting pan and set aside.

Place rice, butter (or oil), salt and pepper in a loaf pan or other oven-safe container. Bring water or broth to the boil and then pour over rice. Cover container with foil or a tight-fitting lid and place in hot oven. Bake 20-40 minutes (depending on type of rice – white takes 18-20; brown takes 35-40). This is a quick no-fail way to cook rice.

Meanwhile, place chicken breasts in prepared roasting pan and cover with chutney. Place in hot oven and bake 20 minutes.

Check rice about 5 minutes before estimated cook time is up and if you see small "holes" in the undisturbed rice, pull from the oven and stir in veggies. Re-cover and let rest on counter for 5-10 minutes while chicken finishes cooking.

Serve chicken atop or beside rice. Enjoy.

\*You could use fish fillets, thick slices of root vegetables such as sweet potatoes, or pork medallions as well. Reduce cooking time for fish.

**For other recipes and previous Tailored Taste Tidbits, visit**  
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## My Inspired Office

One of my self-imposed deadlines was to organize my office before the end of the first quarter. As any of you who saw the article about me in Personal Chef Magazine may have noticed, my desk was a mess. My entire office measures 5 feet x 3 feet and is situated in a niche in my kitchen. I love my office and yet it had become a nightmare of jumbled papers, receipts and recipes.

So, I bit the bullet and asked for help. I hired Kacy Paide of *The Inspired Office* to organize me. On a Thursday in January Kacy arrived with labels, file folders, a fine-point Sharpie and an amazing brain for sorting papers.

Before Kacy arrived, I began the purge of papers I no longer needed or never needed at all, and discovered my desk was basically a clown car. After moving every box, file, paper, envelope, book, pen and pencil from my desk, every other flat surface in the kitchen and family room was covered.

Two full recycle bins, one enormous shopping bag of "to be shredded" and three hours later, Kacy and I had made a huge dent in the project and I was on my way to organization. The next deadline (regaining access to kitchen counters and living room furniture) spurred me to complete the project by week's end.



**AFTER!**

I spent a wonderful hour at the Container Store (only one hour so I didn't break the bank) and found beautiful letter boxes to hold items I need close at hand but not in sight. I moved boxes of envelopes and reams of paper from under my desk to an unused section of cabinet in the family room. My files in the file cabinet are no longer strictly alphabetical, but rather topical, which makes more sense when trying to retrieve something. For instance, there's an entire section devoted to classes – both taken and taught – set up under those titles.

I'm proud/happy to say that the system is working well. The neat desk is motivation to keep it that way. Now when more than three pieces of paper pile up to the right of my computer, I get a little antsy and deal with them. After three months, order still reigns.

If your office needs help, check out Kacy's website. She can even organize you remotely via Skype! [www.inspiredoffice.com](http://www.inspiredoffice.com)



**BEFORE...**