

CULIGRAM

Newsletter of The House of Culinary Inventions
Winter - 2004

COOKING CLASSES

Package # 1 – for Newcomers

I am launching another season of classes. New readers of Culigram please note that classes are offered in a series of four sessions in which I try to cover all those foods that I consider very important: grains and legumes, herbs and spices, fruit and vegetables, tofu nuts and seeds, and a few other good things.

You will find out not only the “how” of good eating, but also the “why”. It is far more than just a cooking course, but a very thorough grounding in what’s good about food and what isn’t - and the reasons why (often contradicting what the “health authorities” try to tell us!). Along the way you will be entertained and enlightened, become more creative and have your culinary horizon enlarged, awareness raised and myths debunked.

The students who enroll in the classes come for many different reasons: because they realize that there is a strong connection between the type of food consumed and the state of their wellbeing – because they suffer from various allergies, food sensitivities and often more serious disorders. Many are referred to me by their doctors and other health practitioners. Whatever the cause, they are usually helped.

Class duration and frequency

Each class is a good three hours long. You arrive hungry and you go home rather well fed!

Registration Fee

The fee for the whole series of four classes is \$275 (or \$75 for a single course) which includes tax, extensive written notes and lots to eat, including take-home samples, and some health food store discounts.

How to register

Let me know, either by phone or email whether you wish to enroll and then follow up by sending me a cheque (made payable to Edith Carter) at 144 McLeod Street, Ottawa ON K2P OZ7.

A few day prior to start of classes you will receive information about last-minute details, including how to get to my place, parking and other such things.

COURSE SCHEDULE - Package # 1

GRAINS – LEGUMES – THE WHATSITS – CURRY WITHOUT TEARS

This very comprehensive “package” comprises four classes spread over a month and introduces students to grains and legumes, fruits and vegetables (including the lesser known “Whatsits”), herbs and spices, tofu, nuts and seeds – and a few other good things. By the time you get to the end of Package # 1 you will have changed your outlook on food very considerably.

Schedule of Classes *

Wednesday 6.30 pm - March 10 – 17 – 24 - 31
Thursday 10.00 am - March 11 – 18 – 25 – Apr. 1
Thursday 6.30 pm - March 11 – 18 – 25 – Apr. 1
* alternative dates arranged according to demand.

March break: if need be, we can skip that week.

Multicultural influences in meal preparation and consideration of diets to meet specific health needs are an integral feature of all the courses.

Remember: everything we prepare is quick and easy, delicious and nutritious.

YOGURT WORKSHOP

Legend has it that the yogurt made in my workshop is the best in the world. Being more modest than that, I claim it to be the best this side of Greece (they have better milk!). You simply can’t buy any this tasty. We don’t use gadgets of any kind to produce a yogurt that has many different applications, sweet and savoury. **Many people with lactose intolerance have no problem consuming yogurt like this**, since the fermentation process makes it so much easier to digest.

A Saturday am or Weekday pm – t.b.a.

Pre-registration for all courses is essential.

How to contact The House of Culinary Inventions:

By Phone: (613) 233-8371
By Email: edithcarter@healthycompany.com
Website: under construction

COMFORT FOOD

This is the stuff you like to come home to on a cold winter's day, but why not have it for breakfast – on a blustery winter morning.

"Golden Sunshine Soup"

1 large Spanish onion
a sliver cinnamon bark
a teaspoon cumin seeds
2-3 strips lemon peel

Sauté the above ingredients in a quarter cup extra virgin olive oil or a dollop of unsalted butter. (Remember cold-pressed/first pressed olive oil helps reduce cholesterol, and butter too is a 'heart-friendly' fat). When the onion begins to look translucent, add:

several cups of cubed pumpkin or squash
1 cup washed red lentils
1 teaspoon turmeric powder
a few cloves garlic, crushed (optional)

stir well and add water. How much? There should be about 2-3 inches of water above the surface of the mixture. Let the contents come to a vigorous boil, cover with a well fitting lid and then reduce the heat to quite low, that is to say, to a 'comfortable bubble'. You should feel comfortable walking away from it while the soup is cooking at low heat. This leaves you free to do other things. In about 15-20 minutes the soup should be ready.

By varying the amount of water you add you'll have either a soup or a stew. As a last thing add some sea salt and a squirt of fresh lemon or lime juice.

What to have with it? A sandwich of good bread: dark, chewy, hearty, made of rye or spelt, perhaps with sourdough rather than yeast. Spread it thinly with some butter and even more thinly with some Miso, cover with very thinly sliced garlic, some finely chopped herbs and if available, some sliced tomatoes. You may find that this makes quite a substantial meal which could easily double as supper. The garlic should keep the flu and evil spirits at bay.!

Herbal Brew

And what could be nicer than a steaming cup of tea, fragrant and delicate. For a 6-cup pot of tea you need:

1 stick of cinnamon
6 whole cloves
a 2-inch stick of ginger, peeled and sliced
a sprig or two of fresh mint

pour boiling water over the spices and let steep for a good 15 minutes. Keep adding boiling water, and you'll be able to keep this going the whole day.

Did you know that.....

Butter is a good fat, in fact, a very good one. Butter's saturated fat molecules are extremely short, making them easy for the body to digest and burn as fuel. Butter is good liver food and helps bowel flora stay healthy. It also has anti-viral, anti-fungal, anti-bacterial and anti-tumor properties.

Butter consists of 3% polyunsaturated (omega-6 and omega-3) and 25% mono-unsaturated, and the rest of the fats are other forms.

Have you ever wondered how margarine* and shortening are made?

The manufacturers begin with the cheapest form of oils, those that have been extracted with high heat and solvents. These oils are then mixed with tiny metal particles, usually nickel oxide. Nickel oxide is very toxic in the human system, yet it is impossible to totally eliminate it from the finished product.

The oil with its nickel catalyst is then subjected to hydrogen gas in a high-pressure, high-temperature reactor. Next, soap-like emulsifiers and starch are squeezed into the mixture to give it a better consistency. The oil is yet again subjected to high temperature, when it is steam-cleaned to remove its horrible odour. Margarine's natural colour, an unappetizing grey, is removed by bleach. Coal-tar dyes and strong flavours must then be added to make it resemble butter.

Shortening, margarine and other partially hydrogenated oils are even worse for you than the vegetable oils from which they are made, because of chemical changes that occur during the hydrogenation process. These man-made trans-fats cannot be broken down by digestive enzymes, but unfortunately the body does not eject them. Instead, these artificial molecules are incorporated into the body's cell membranes as if they were cis-fats.

Once in place, trans-fatty acids with their misplaced hydrogen atoms wreak havoc on cell metabolism. These altered fats actually block the utilization of essential fatty acids, causing many deleterious effects including paralysis of the immune system.

These products have been accepted by the government and pushed by registered dieticians for years; just one more example of what happens if we apathetically trust an industry whose ultimate purpose is, after all, to make money, not to care for us.

*I am indebted to Roberta Histed for her research on the subject and information available from The Consumer Health Organization of Canada (1220 Sheppard Ave., Ste. 412, North York ON M2K 2S5.

BLESSINGS

I was delighted to learn that the **Canadian School of Natural Nutrition** now offers credits to their students for taking my courses as part of their Practicum. I must be doing something right!

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