



**HOSPITALITY
TRAINERS & ASSOCIATES**

News

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SCA 2nd Year Trainee wins Pillsbury Bake-Off



Kgomotso Rasepae, a 2nd Year Trainee Chef at the HTA School of Culinary Art in Ferndale, Randburg, recently won the National Final Cook-off of the inaugural Pillsbury Bake-Off competition held at the South African Chefs Association's Skills Kitchen at the University of Johannesburg's campus.

Finalist for the competition had to submit a baked goods recipe using any of Pillsbury's versatile products. The public then judged finalists via the Internet and they decided who would constitute the final chefs, as opposed to normal culinary competitions where a panel of



Andrea Mansfield

judges selected the contestants.

It was never going to be an easy challenge as the final competitors were selected by the public and was therefore quite a random selection with most chefs not really knowing whom they are up against. As trainee chef Kgomotso said upon winning, "It was tough, and stressful, but I made it, and surprised I won!"

Prize money for the competition amounted to R 5000 for the winner and a Pillsbury Hamper. Participants' recipes will also be featured in a special Pillsbury commemorative recipe book.

This was the 11th National Competition that a student of the HTA School of Culinary Art has won in six years. Incidentally, Andrea Mansfield, also a HTA student, came an overall third in this competition.

Let us hope that our prestigious local culinary school, HTA School of Culinary Art, will continue with this fantastic legacy and keep on producing the culinary heroes of tomorrow.



Story By:
Chef Morné

"The trouble with eating Italian food is that 5 or 6 days later you're hungry again", George Miller



From the desk of the HOD: Culinary Muses



Story By:

Chef Morné

This month instead of my normal canter on school events –as I am sure other articles will cover all the “need to knows”- I’ve decided to mention a few inspirational culinary excursions and products I’ve experienced over the last month and thereby hopefully emphasize that finding culinary passions are often just down the road from the place where you live, and where we are most likely to oversee it! Perhaps you will look with a fresh set of eyes at your culinary environment, and find some gastronomic inspiration at the least expected places.

Over the course of this month I rediscovered an often neglected vegetable, but one which I have totally fallen in love with all over again: the aubergine. By sheer luck, I guess, I had to prepare a couple of different consecutive aubergine dishes, which surprisingly reignited my long lost love affair with aubergine I’ve had ever since my childhood. Grilled, roasted, pickled, brined, garlicked, infused, chopped, sliced, diced, steamed, broiled, you name it, it’s *all* good ... damn good, in fact. I love the way it feels on your tongue and how the skin just breaks with the slightest pressure, and how easily it lends itself to tomato, garlic, Parmesan, basil and passion and then finally culminates in a centrifuge of true Mediterranean harmony. Ever faithful, ever resourceful, always seductively impressive.... mmm ... aubergine ... even sounds sexy. See, I’m hungry all over again!

My most favourite spice this month must be cumin. Unique and very, very versatile, try it slowly infused whole in heated garlic cream, then poured over crushed cooked potato (with skin on) and grilled ever-so-slightly under the sally. I almost fainted of sheer bliss with the first taste.

I also had the privilege of tasting a Panna Cotta at the 2nd Year’s Final Exam, which reminded me once again just how genius a Panna Cotta is in its simplicity when perfectly set. Well-done Nicola da Mata!

I’m also presently reading the autobiographical *The Apprentice* by Chef Jacques Pepin and was pleasantly surprised with his recollection of his apprentice years in the French rural kitchens, then later in some of the best kitchen in Paris, some of them, arguably, the best in the world at the time. It is still an amiably enlightening reading experience and I am often delighted by his narration of true authentic French cuisine as it was meant to be and the many, many different disciplines in the brigade system. I highly recommend this book to any young chef that wants to understand the heart of a kitchen, and a chef, and any old chef who has lost touch with his chef’s heart.

Then, by sheer accident I stumbled across my local Chinese Supermarket, which also happened to be the best one I’ve ever been in to. Actually, I’ve known about the supermarket for some time, but have strangely never gone in. But, it turned out to be quite a serendipitous decision as I now frequent the supermarket and spend fasts amounts of my wife’s money in there (yes, she’s not all that pleased). The selection of foodstuff and fare is truly overwhelming and I absolutely love this adventure of new discoveries.

Maybe, possibly, a new, life-altering ingredient lies just behind the hundreds of labels, which I cannot read. Tinned galangal, straw mushrooms, Golden mushrooms, chrisantium and honey juice, Black Lake tea, smoked river eel, palan curry, Sichuan pepper, parracress, rambutan, any imaginable type of noodle and even 99% pure MSG, it’s all there. On Tuesdays they even receive a shipment of fresh Chinese greens. It’s definitely worth a visit if you are in that neck of the woods and is a true inspiring culinary journey. I’m like a kid on Christmas morning in that shop! Wong Fong Chinese Super Market, Harvard Ave, Clubview, Centurion, 012 6603 3796.

Next, after hearing so many raving recommendations from my circle of friends regarding the Hazelwood Food Market (approx 2 min from Menlyn Shopping Centre), I finally succumbed to pressure and went past there with the wife and kid on fine Saturday morning ... and cursed myself ever since for not going there sooner! What an amazing culinary experience it turned out to be. Unpretentious and small, the main emphasis of this food fare is just that: food!

Grand, robust and honest food where every single vendor is a true master of his craft. The morning was filled with so many “best-overs” I’ve seen or had”- best brie, best koeksisters, best decorated cupcakes, best looking radishes, best aubergine (!), best smoked filet, best marinated olives, and, and... I also put my taste buds through some epicurean exploits and tasted some unusual dishes, for example, beetroot and dark chocolate fondant with a white chocolate raspberry frosting, wild boar terrine and a cumin beetroot chutney.

All truly awesome! If you are ever in the mood for really, really, no really!, good food, take a trip to Pretoria one Saturday morning and visit the Hazelwood Food Market. It’s just off the N1 highway by Menlyn Shopping Centre and very easy to find. From Johannesburg/ Centurion: Take the N1 North towards Polokwane. Take the Garsfontein off-ramp and turn left at the traffic light. Turn right at the T-junction with Dely Rd. Turn right into 18th Street just after the BP station but before the first traffic light. At the stop street turn right into Pinaster Rd. You’ll find us on your left opposite Spar and the Fire Station.

This month I also discovered that boxed wine can be ever so good as bottled wine and at the right event, the age old wine saying holds true: the wine that’s best is the wine that is best for *you*.

I also attended the Sunday Times Food Awards launch this month with Mr. Billingham at The Local Grill in Parktown North and although they do best what their name suggests, cook fine steaks really fine, I was pleasantly surprised that they can cook fine kingklip just as fine. However, what stood out for me about the whole evening weren’t really the restaurant or the great food and company, but the unexpected discovery Zwilling J.A. Henckels shop right next to it. If you know me you would know that Zwilling knives is by far my preferred brand of knives as apposed to the ever popular Wusthof and Global knives that trend seeking chefs prefer these days. Everybody seems to forget that Wusthof learned their craft from Zwilling, literally. Roland Granitzer, a former chef (is there such a thing?) and shop owners took me on a knife tour and in discussions with him I realised that this man actually lives by what his business card says: “Passion for the Best!” Students would be wise to visit this shop as his knife collection is something to witness and on top of that, they will also receive a nice student discount. Contact Roland Granitzer on 083 235 0230 or on roland@hvi.co.za or visit the shop on the cnr 3rd & 7th Ave, Parktown North.

Culinary Regards,

Chef Morné





Henry VIII

The Origin of the Chef's Uniform

The image of a chef in a pristine white jacket and toque is today recognized the world over as that of a skilled professional. Yet, we find individuals dressing up in this uniform in order to give credibility to products and services, based on an association with a profession steeped in history. A history in which the evolution of this uniform forms an integral part.

The traditional uniform with which we are familiar consists of a hat, jacket, trousers, apron, neckerchief and shoes. A woodcut print from Germany, dated 1540 show a cook in a uniform and Dutch prints from 1742 and 1745, show ginger-bread makers and pie-makers wearing matching shirts, hats and trousers in kitchen environments. Throughout history each of these items has evolved into the items we wear now. Let us start from the top and work our way down.

The Hat: Whatever the true origin of the chef's hat, it will always be surrounded by debate, with many theories for your reading pleasure. The traditional chef's hat, or toque blanche, dates back to the 16th century when hats were common in many trades. At this time Antonin is said to have taken to wearing a raised hat, a sort of toque, in contrast to the white nightcaps usually worn in kitchen in those days.

When asked why, Antonin replied that a chef should not dress as for a sickbed. In the 1800's Careme decided that the hats worn by chefs should be different sizes to distinguish the cooks from the chefs. The chefs wore tall hats and the cooks wore shorter hats, more like a cap. Should we never truly determine the origin of the toque, it is the most distinguishing and recognizable part of the chef's uniform today.

The Jacket: Staying in the 1800's when chef Careme redesigned the uniforms of the day into the white, double breasted jackets which we know. Both Escoffier and Careme thought the cleanliness of the cook's uniform was very important, that it promoted professionalism and that the colour white denoted cleanliness in the kitchen. The jacket evolved from simple shirts to the double-breasted jacket for various reasons, including reversal to hide stains and double layer cotton to insulate against heat. Even the knotted cloth buttons were made as they withstand the constant washing and abuse in kitchens.

The Neckerchief: Today, this item is mainly worn to give our uniform assembly a more finished look. In the very hot environments of kitchens from the past, cotton cloths were worn around the neck to soak up the sweat from the slaving chefs and cooks.

The Trousers: Though executive chefs often wear black, working chefs and cooks usually wear trousers with dizzying check patterns of hound's tooth in blue or black, which camouflages minor spills and stains. A wide variety of designs and prints are available nowadays, which does lead to some controversy with regards to tradition versus non-tradition.

The Apron: As with most uniform items, a variety of styles and designs are available in this essential component. Most chefs prefer to wear white half aprons that fall from the waist and are made from sturdy cotton or a cotton mix. Some prefer the full bib variation with front pockets, but there are more to choose from, including half bistro, square waist, tapered and four-way aprons.

The Shoes: Since people have been wearing some form of protective foot covering through the ages, the requirements of kitchen environments would have dictated the evolution of what chefs in the kitchen wore on their feet. Simply put, kitchens are very slippery places where food and liquids fall on the floor and feet, causing a hazard before we can clean it up. Adding to the problem, chefs are on their feet all day long, which makes it vital that all chefs wear enclosed shoes with excellent traction and support for the body and feet.



Story By:

Chef Amelia

Welcome to 1st Years group B 2010

The 1st Year Group B Block Release students are almost finished with their 6-week program that they started on the 19th July. We would like to welcome these new chef trainees and wish them all the best in their studies and future careers as professional chefs. HTA also welcomes the following new clients onto our long list of existing clients; Delmont Caldow Caterers, Oregano Catering, Leriba Lodge, Radisson Blu Hotel Sandton, Pomodoro Ristorante, Kyalami Country Club and The Michelangelo Hotel.

All our new 1st year chef trainees are reminded that everyone at HTA is committed to their education and you are encouraged to contact us for advice or just for a chat if you need to do so. Our resource room is available during office hours for research purposes, if you require help or information for your assignments or with your workbooks please feel free to come in and utilize the facility.



Story By:

Chef Morris



HTA
In-Service
Chef Apprenticeships

1st YEAR BLOCK RELEASE GROUP B 2010



CULINARY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 1:

Recently, while paging through a cookbook at home, I read a chapter on classic preparations of sauces and soups. Halfway through reading the chapter, I started asking myself what the difference is really between a soup and a sauce as both of them really do look the same and can possibly be used the same. I hoped the book would answer my question, but it didn't. Can you?

Although one can easily, and understandably, be misplaced as a substitute for the other, I can assure you there is most definitely a big, and unmistakable, difference.

True, both soups and sauces are liquid preparations of various textures and consistencies, and may have very similar underlying preparation techniques, but in general, soups are less intense in flavour, while sauces are fundamentally meant to be a concentrated enhancement of the main ingredient's intrinsic flavour. Although certainly closely related, sauces are essentially meant to only compliment and accompany the main component or ingredient of a dish, while a soup is a complete dish in itself, and is not meant to be an accent. I guess the shortest way to a direct answer is to say it is all in the manner of its eventual application.

Question 2:

I researched a limpet soup recipe that I really want to make for my mother. She grew up in a small village near Rostock in Germany and they use to eat this soup all the time as children. Some time ago she reminisced about those times and I thought that I might spoil her. The problem however is that I am not sure precisely what a limpet is in the first place or where to find (buy) it? Any help here?

Sure! Limpets are molluscs, like mussels, clams and oysters. The mollusc itself grows in a concentric lined cap-shaped shell and lives on mostly intertidal rock surfaces. Although most species average in size between 20-40 mm, some species grow quite big actually - up to 200 mm in size! The limpet itself typically varies in colour - white, pink, a drab brown or grey, depending if they are inter- or sub-tidal.

Unfortunately limpets are not necessarily a commercial feasibility and are rarely grown and harvested for retail purposes, certainly in the case of South Africa. I have seen limpets being sold in small coastal fishing towns however, but mostly as bait for fish. Your best option would probably be to harvest them yourself if you live close to the coast or substitute them with another mollusc - possibly clams or mussels, which are readily available inland.

A word of caution though: limpets are notoriously tricky to cook successfully as any prolonged cooking will toughen them. Fact is, although they are very tasty, they are rather tough. Lightly tenderise them before cooking, or you can try to marinate them beforehand. In any event, it would be prudent to follow the recipe very closely.

Question 3:

Being a little bit more health conscious these days, I brought a lot of fish into my diet, mostly oily fish that are rich in Omega 3 fatty acids. I've got a nagging question though as I often struggle to source the right types of fish at a reasonable price. My question to solve my present predicament is: can I substitute sardines with pilchards, and are they both oily fish?

The answer is simply yes, absolutely! And here's why: sardines and pilchard are actually one and the same fish - sardines are just young pilchards. The term sardines are actually mostly used by the British to describe older sardines, which South Africa has unsurprisingly inherited.

Sardines/Pilchards, or Sardina Pilchardus, are most definitely fish belonging to the oily fish classification and is also therefore a recognised and approved source of Omega 3 fatty-acids and part of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of South Africa's heart healthy eating plan. So, knock yourself out - you're making the right good here!

Incidentally, sardines were the first type of fish to be canned in 1834 and were, until fairly recently, thought to be two different species of fish, a fairly common misconception ... even today.

Question 4:

I've recently noticed the increased availability of absinthe in liquor stores. I thought it is banned - am I wrong?

Of all the alcoholic beverages, the anise flavoured, but bitter tasting Absinthe surely has the most notorious and fascinating cloud of mystery and controversy surrounding it. You are justifiably misinformed that absinthe is still banned, whereas it was in fact never fully globally banned in the first place, for example in Switzerland, and was only very recently unbanned in countries where it was previously banned, for example in the United States.

So, what's the hype all about then? Well, the previously thought effects and impacts of drinking absinthe is possible best described by the following quote by an unknown absinthe critic in the early 20th century when it was first campaigned to be banned:

"Absinthe makes you crazy and criminal, provokes epilepsy and tuberculosis, and has killed thousands of French people. It makes a ferocious beast of man, a martyr of woman, and a degenerate of the infant, it disorganizes and ruins the family and menaces the future of the country."

That the effects of absinthe were somewhat ... exaggerated in the 19th and early 20th century by concited conservative opinions are a fact, but much can also be contributed to the very real destructive properties of true absinthe. Excessive and/or prolonged use of true absinthe may in reality cause auditory and visual hallucinations, intense excitability, intellectual retardation, devastating addiction (called *absinthism*) and in extreme cases, brain damage.

Absinthe has very often been portrayed as a dangerously addictive psychotic substance, hence the eventual banning of it by 1915. Much of it absinthe abuse's impact and damage can be attributed to the *absinthism* itself, much like alcoholism, and as much can be contributed to the elevated alcoholic levels of the drink itself (68-70% per volume, often much higher) and the presence of the chemical *thujone*, which may or may not be responsible for absinthe's reported harmful psychedelic effects, but which, if taken in large amounts, is certainly toxic.

The absinthe you'll legally buy in South Africa will most probably be a "watered-down" version of true absinthe (only 60% or so alcohol per volume) and also without the presence of *thujone* - a traditionally essential component of absinthe derived and distilled from the plant Woodworm. Woodworm is the key ingredient of true absinthe and the absence of Woodworm, hence also *thujone*, will thus make the drink an imitation really, although I am sure the present day absinthe producers will disagree.

Very interestingly though, it is commonly believed that it was absinthe that in fact drove Vincent van Gogh to commit suicide. Be wary. Use in moderation!



FIFA WC 2010 SCA Luncheon

In recognition of their superb services rendered during the FIFA WC 2010, the HTA SCA hosted all the 2nd Year students who participated in the event to a celebratory luncheon at Carvers Restaurant.

All attendees dressed up in full soccer kit for the lunch and blew their vuvuzelas to hearts content. Remember, while they whole world were blowing theirs, we were to damn busy to blow ours.

It must have looked like quite a spectacle that we kicked up so much FIFA WC dust well after the dust has settled.



Story By:

Chef Morné



HTA SCA's Trip to Italy!

HTA SCA, in partnership with Cook Chill, PKS and Electrolux Professional, are proud to host 4 SCA students to a unique opportunity to attend a 5- Day Workshop in the state of the art facilities at the Electrolux Head Office in Venice Italy. The visit to Italy will comprise of 5-day training module with some sightseeing and entertainment in between, of course!

The students will depart from JHB on the 8th January 2011 to Venice via Paris and return on the 14th January 2011. Electrolux will receive the student delegation at the Airport and transfer them to the accommodation provided in Venice and will provide for all their needs while in Italy. Electrolux will also host a Formal Dinner for the Student Delegation before returning and will provide transport to and from the Airport and Electrolux Commercial Kitchens (Head Office). The sponsorship includes Travel insurance, Visas and Spending money.

Chef Morné will accompany Grant Baxter, Albin Nell, Kea Mokwena and Madelein Koen on this trip and hopefully (if they behave!) this will become an annual sustainable arrangement between Electrolux, PKS, COOKHILL and HTA.



Bizarre Food Crazes

Have you ever wondered what people eat around the world? While thinking about unusual and bizarre delicacies do you still feel hungry??

Have you ever wondered what people eat around the world? Before ordering your food at the restaurants or buying food at the street vendor. What make the food sounding bizarre and peculiar? Certain eating cultures seem to be bizarre to us but normal to the eaters. That means the food might be terrible for some, but delicious for others. The answer can be obtained between tasty and nasty foods, to which it makes not much difference as it its merely one letter difference.

In other words certain foods that we classify as a strange foods are instead exotic delicacies for others, its simply concluded that the cuisine may be objectively regarded as crazy and bizarre, but they appeal as normal and usual delicacies to their respective eaters. Each culture has their own traditional foods that they enjoy, although occasionally certain foods that appeal to a person in one place but may not be appealing to someone in another part of the world.

When I say bizarre I actually refer to uncommon 'unusual' unlikely 'healthy' foods to different cultures around the world. So next times while eating out of your country think twice before ordering the delicacies that are stated in the menu. E.G Imagine a plate of food with Tacos and Grasshoppers topped with cheese, which is said to be Crunchy and Crispy to chew and it is claimed to be a source of health. People in some countries eat it like popcorn. These grasshoppers are most flavour to be eaten in between August-January, which is during the raining season.

This seasonal delicacy is prepared with the thin legs of the grasshoppers breaking off. It actually doesn't sound delicious and appetizing for me. Rather it won't be considered as a fair game for these grasshoppers.

YEH BIZARRE
Done by Chef: Kabelo Segone



Story By:

Chef Kabelo

RECIPE FOR MUTTON

Preheat oven to 475 degrees.

Take your mutton quarter, sized for the family, put it in a turkey pan on an oak board.

Bake for 4 hours, basting every 20 minutes with a mixture of 4 eggs, one quart of apple brandy, two jiggers of good vodka.

Remove from oven and let sit for 10 minutes.

Throw away the mutton and eat the board.

The iPad Menu



The Apple iPad has already been installed in cars for entertainment, DVD's and as a GPS, and airlines are thinking about adopting it as an in-flight entertainment system for its passengers. Now a restaurant owner in Australia has found another use of iPad, to replace printed menus in restaurants with iPad-based interactive menu cards!

If you happen to visit 'Global Mundo Tapas' in the North Sydney Rydges Hotel, you'll be presented with an iPad that runs a special menu app made for the said restaurant instead of the normal printed menu cards that you'll find elsewhere.

The iPad is not only entertaining, interactive and the perfect marketing tool, but also environmental friendly as it saves trees from being killed to make paper, but then again you must ask yourself is the production and daily use of the iPad environmentally friendly?

Advantages of the iPad as a menu:

Diners can look through the dishes on offer and see a picture of what the dish looks like along with tasting notes and customers comments before compiling their order and sending it wirelessly to the kitchen.

The iPad menu can also suggest the best wines to go with certain dishes and suggest the best food pairings.

When ordering steak, users can even specify how they'd like the meat cooked and which sauce they'd prefer. It will even ask them if they'd like fries with that.

Mundo's iPad menu app can also help keep track of stock levels so if certain dishes and wines sell out they will automatically disappear off the on-screen menu.

The iPad can be directly linked to your stock levels on your computer and the iPad when inform you when you are running low of a specific ingredient and even tell you how much you should order to keep stock at optimum levels.

Your patrons will be really impressed and probably come back just for the chance to play with the iPad.



Story By:

Chef Morris



What is the Acai Berry?



Acai is a small, round, black-purple berry about the size of a small grape and has a single large seed. It is from Central and South America and is mainly grown in Brazil. It comes from the Wild Palm Berry, and only two crops of the fruit are produced each year.

The fruit has always been consumed in Brazil and the people there believe that the Acai is very important for a healthy lifestyle. They believe it provides energy, which aids in reducing the appetite. Acai is traditionally mixed with Guarana, a natural Caffeine source and therefore sceptics tend to believe that the instant energy actually comes from the caffeine instead of the Berry.



None the less, Acai, commonly pronounced as "a-sigh-ee" has been pretty wide spread in the news lately and its ability to help losing weight has been discussed by many including Oprah and CNN.

Acai is very rich in anti-oxidants, vitamins, minerals, omega-3's and omega-9's and is also high in fibre, low in fat and filled with anthocyanins and resveratol. This combination of nutrients, and in such high levels, is incredibly powerful. For these reasons the Acai is considered to be a Super Food.

Acai is not only used in food and health products, but also in beauty products such as conditioners. The rich flavour of a mix between Blueberry and Dark Chocolate also inspired the make of Acai Vodka.

Just a note of caution... Just because a product contains acai, doesn't mean that it is healthy! Cereals, Protein Bars and Smoothies can be really high in sugar, calories and preservatives.

Acai berries are difficult to harvest and process and they are also extremely perishable. The berry is ripened on the tree and is then harvested and processed in to a pulp. The pulp is then frozen and then transported. It is also available in powder form.

The world demand is very high and it is therefore very expensive, so don't throw out the blueberries and pomegranates just yet!



Story By:

Chef Carien



The Importance of Basic Knife Skills

The essence of good knife skills comes down to three things; how you hold your knife, how you hold your ingredients and how you move your knife.

For most of us in the industry, it is taken for granted that anyone can follow a recipe, but can they really perform the basic knife skills required? Every recipe starts with an instruction, for example, to portion a chicken, dice an onion or mince garlic. Surely everyone can use a knife to perform these basic instructions efficiently, you might think. Recently it was brought home to me, rather abruptly, that this is in fact not the case.

We tend to forget that at some time or another, someone had to show us how to cut an onion. Helping a parent or grand-parent in the kitchen may have been our first exposure to knives and using them to perform tasks, but few of us would have been fortunate enough to use proper, sharp knives, let alone learn professional methods. These skills most of us would have had to learn from an experienced chef. As we gain experience though, we forget that we also used to slice an entire onion, before painstakingly dicing each individual slice.

Having been reminded that basic knife skills is not a gift, but a skill acquired through learning and repetition, it made me stop and think about this skill we take for granted.

First, let us think about the knives we are holding. Am I using a sharp, clean knife, which is so much safer than hacking away with a blunt blade? Learning to wield a knife correctly will speed up my preparation time and ingredients cut in uniform shapes and sizes will help guarantee even cooking throughout a dish.

Second, how am I holding the ingredients being prepared? Have I secured my ingredient on a clean cutting board, suitable to the purpose? Am I holding my ingredient in such a matter that I can effectively use my knife to perform cuts? The mastery of classic knife cuts and methodology will vastly improve the look of your food, garnishes and plate presentations.

Third, how am I moving my knife? Do I have a firm grip on the handle, cutting away from – never towards – myself? Am I keeping my eyes on the blade while working?

With good, basic knife skills, cooking becomes fun, chopping onions is no longer a chore, but a meditation and preparing food becomes a time of great satisfaction.



Story By:

Chef Amelia



New Nutritional Labelling Regulations in South Africa

New nutritional labelling regulations have been recently passed in South Africa to prevent companies and marketers from misleading consumers through deceptive advertising. The South African government is giving companies until March 2011 to include additional information on product labels so that consumers can make healthier and more informed choices.

The most important changes in labelling in South Africa have to do with nutritional value information on products. For example, smoothies can no longer be advertised as 98% fat free. Instead, the label must show that they contain 2% fat. Under the new regulations, manufacturers will not be allowed to make nutritional claims about food products unless:

1. The food has been analysed in an accredited laboratory.

The nutrient content is greater than a specified amount per serving.

Highlights of the New Labelling Regulations in South Africa

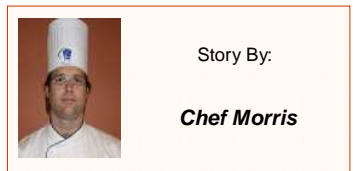
1. The heaviest mass should be listed first. So if a whole nut chocolate bar has whole nuts mentioned as the last item under 'ingredients', you'll know that the chocolate bar contains hardly any whole nuts.
2. The 'Use By' date must appear on perishable pre-packaged food items that may not be sold after the expiry date.
3. The 'Best Before' date must appear on non-perishable items but these may still be sold after the expiry date.
4. Common allergens such as gluten, milk, eggs, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish or crustaceans, or significant cereals (wheat, rye, barley and oats) must be indicated clearly on food labels.

Additives such as Tartrazine, MSG, sulphur dioxide and related compounds also have to be declared on labels.

Words Banned from Product Labels in South Africa

The government under the new rules has banned certain labelling terms. These labels include word and phrases such as 'rich in', 'excellent source of', 'enriched with X', 'with added Y', and 'contains Z'. Words and phrases that are still allowed include 'low', 'free', 'virtually free', 'high', or 'very high'.

These new food labels are meant to ease the confusion we sometimes feel when trying to make sense of the nutritional labels on food products, and to protect consumers from the misleading advertising and false claims that we currently find on our foods. Get into the habit of reading and understanding the nutritional labels on food and find out what you are really eating and feeding to your guests.



Taking it for granted? *Fast cars. Fat allowances. Education. Friends. Family.*

Are you taking it for granted?

Do you believe that it is your right to have these things? Do you believe that the silver spoon will just always be there, heaped to the max? Do you even know what is happening around you? Let me ask you this...Are you sure you want to be here?

Are the assignments too much? Are the hours too long? Are the rules and regulations too strict? Are the exam fees too expensive? Are the Chef's too harsh and the tests too difficult?

I wonder if you can imagine a time before Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay made cooking fashionable...

Before technology made cooking easier... Before electricity, paid leave and Teflon pans...

Think back to Escoffier, Point and Carême. Remember them?

Now, those guys had it difficult. Those guys worked themselves to death. They had nothing to work from, nothing to refer to, and no one to inspire them. Yes, those guys had the right to complain!

Where would we be today was it not for our Brigade System, The Mother Sauces and the Larouse Gastronomique? Do you even know what these things are? Do you even care?

Do you think that they minded getting a poor salary? Do you think they asked their parents to cover for them when their work was not done? Do you think they didn't come to work because they had a headache, a stuffy nose or a sprained finger?

They worked hard, sacrificed a lot and received very little respect, but absolutely loved what they were doing.

Careme died before the age of 50, burnt out, according to some, "by the flame of his genius and the coal of the spits". But this may even have been the glory he sought, for he once wrote the following:

"Imagine yourself in a large kitchen at the moment of a great dinner... See twenty chefs coming, going, moving with speed in this cauldron of heat, look at the great mass of charcoal, a cubic meter for the cooking of entrees, and another mass on the ovens for the cooking of soups, sauces, ragouts, for frying and the water baths.

Add to that a heap of burning wood in front of which four spits are turning, one that bears a sirloin weighing 45-50 pounds; the other fowl or game.

In this furnace everyone moves with speed; not a sound is heard, only the chef has the right to speak, and at the sound of his voice, everyone obeys.

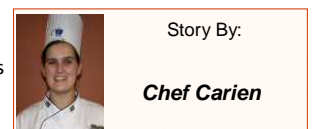
Finally the last straw; for about half and hour, all windows are closed so that the air does not cool the dishes as they are being served.

This is the way we spend the best of our lives. We must obey even when physical strength fails, but it is the burning charcoal that kills us. Charcoal kills us, but what does it matter? The shorter the life the greater the glory."

May Careme's passion inspire you, just as it inspired me as a young chef, to always be thankful for the things we have today and never to take anything for granted.

It's a tough world out there and the career you have chosen is not the easiest. Man up! Suck it up! Grow up for goodness sake!

My favourite words again... Be Passionate, Dedicated and Inspired!



Guess the Dish!

Ingredients:

- 225g Sugar
- 300ml Cold Water
- 1 tbsp Golden Syrup
- 1 tsp Warm Water
- ½ tsp Bicarbonate of Soda
- ½ tsp Cream of Tartar

Method:

Place the sugar, water, golden syrup and cream of tartar into a heavy bottomed saucepan; heat gently until the sugar has completely dissolved.
 Boil the mixture without stirring, to a temperature of 154° C.
 Remove from the heat to prevent further cooking.
 Quickly mix the bicarbonate of soda with the warm water and add to the sugar mixture, stirring gently.
 Pour the mixture into a non-stick baking tray to a depth of at least 2.5cm
 Allow to cool for a few minutes before marking into bars or squares.
 Eat as soon as cool, as if kept it becomes soft and sticky.

Answer: Honeycomb

An old Arab saying goes like this:

Our servant is green.

Her children are born white, and then grow black.

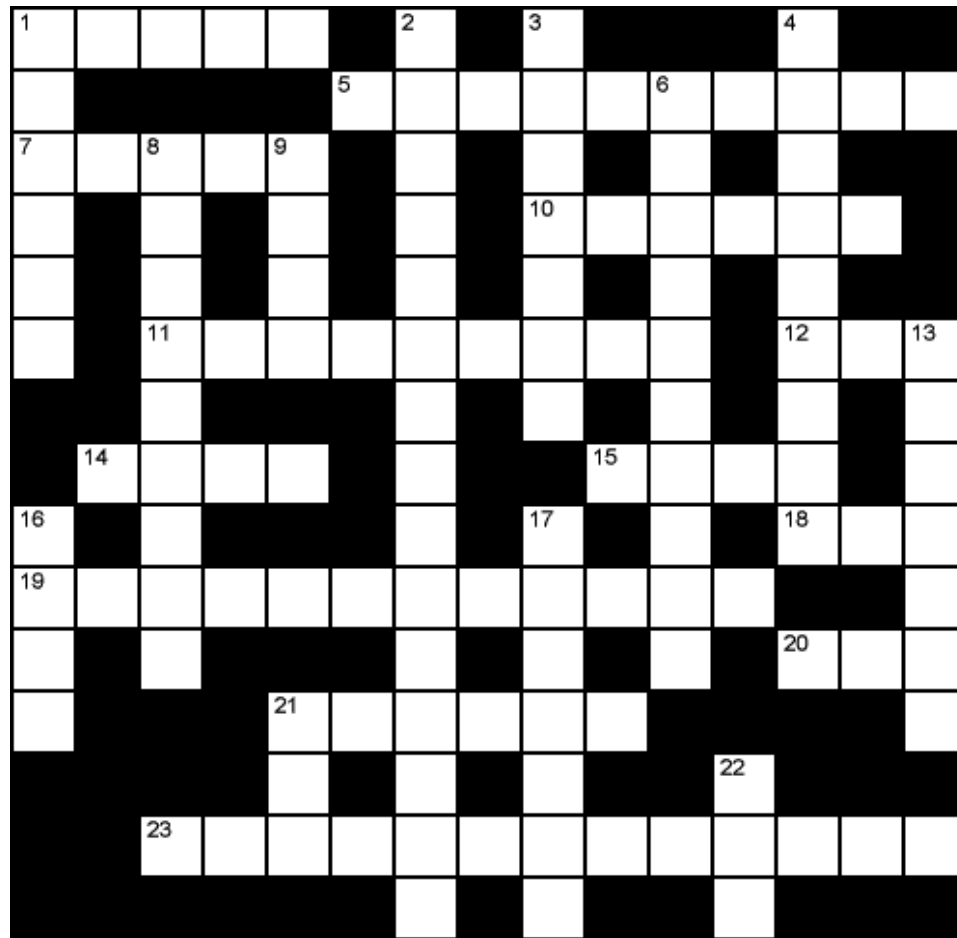
Who is she?

Across

1. French city, known for it's spa and mineral water
5. Wines that are not effervescent
7. Bottom fermented beer stored at low temperature for a period of time
10. A beverage believed to cure all ills
11. Thin syrup made from pomegranate juice
12. An old name for a strong ale
14. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses
15. Fermented juice
18. Fermented beverage heavier than beer
19. Originally, water from Nieder Selters, Germany
20. ___ Whiskey
21. Barrel maker
23. Rum and lime or lemon juice with sugar and sometimes bitters

Down

1. Red Burgundy wine from Cote de Beaune; favorite of Louis XI
2. One of the ingredients of the original martini
3. A liqueur made with gin and the sour fruit of the blackthorn
4. Darjeeling, Assam, and Travancore are 3 examples
6. Made from white grapes or red grapes with skins removed
8. The last ingredient in a Moscow Mule
9. A light pink wine, usually best when young and drunk cool
13. A full flavored gin with a malty flavor and aroma; Dutch gin
16. A city of northwest Italy southeast of Turin noted for its sparkling wines.
17. A fortified dessert wine made on an island off Portugal
21. Japanese for tea
22. Distilled from fermented molasses



Question: You throw away the outside and cook the inside. Then you eat the outside and throw away the inside. What did you eat?



Answer to the riddle:
An olive tree

Answer: Corn on the cob: You throw away the skin or sheaf, then cook it, eat the corn, then throw away the cob.

ELEPHANT STEW

- ~ 1 Elephant, Medium size
- ~ 2 rabbits (optional)
- ~ gravy

Cut elephant into bite size pieces and cover with gravy.

Cook over kerosene fire for about 4 weeks at 465 degrees F.

This elephant serves 3,800 adults and 35 children. If more are expected, two rabbits may be added. Do this only if absolute necessary, as most people do not like to find a hare in their stew.

