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The Sophisticated Gourmet

By Lois Mead

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The Sophisticated Gourmet By Noel Tyl

So·phis·ti·cat·ed (s&- 'fis-t&- "kAt-d)

adj. Having acquired worldly knowledge or refinement; lacking natural simplicity or naivete.

Very complex or complicated: the latest and most sophisticated technology.

Suitable for or appealing to the tastes of sophisticates: a sophisticated drama. **Gourmet** (gur-"mA, gur-)

n.

A connoisseur in eating and drinking; an epicure. There has always been something about the words "gourmet" and "sophisticated" that intimidates me. While browsing through local book stores, I find myself shying away from any title that includes the word gourmet so when I saw the name of this new cookbook *The Sophisticated Gourmet* it felt almost like a "double whammy" since I don't consider myself to be a gourmet and no one has ever called me sophisticated. You know the old saying "You can't judge a book by its cover?"... well, Noel Tyl's cookbook fits that description. There is something for every stage of a cook's expertise... novice to gourmet... ordinary to sophisticated.

Noel Tyl has been termed "a true renaissance man." He earned his degree in social relations from Harvard University, is one of the "foremost astrologers in the world," has written twenty-nine books (including astrology textbooks), is a world-traveler, lecturer, opera singer, and now cookbook author. On a personal note, I think Noel Tyl should also be known as a humorist because of some of the names of the recipes included in his book, including "Happy-as-a-Clam Sauce," "Who-was-Alfredo-Anyway? Fettuccini," "Jumpin' Catfish," "No-Laughing-Matter Prune Sauce," "Crabby Sea Salad," and "Eat-Your-Heart-Out Belgium Chocolate Sauce."

Throughout this cookbook, Tyl not only gives detailed recipes but also adds a unique style of instructions and background descriptions on preparing the dishes as well as origins of various dishes, ingredients, and serving ideas. As Tyl himself states in the introduction, "A good cook dispenses

happiness. It's an expression of art. It's a joy of civilized living. When we eat well, we think well. We behave well. We smile. Share the fun of cooking! Read, experiment, and grow in skill!"

Tyl is a very descriptive writer even to the point of being verbose in some instances. But his descriptions are fun to read. In the first part of the book, for example, when he discusses the various types of pasta available and the manner to cook them, he catches the readers' interest by giving the following method to determine the doneness of the pasta.

Take one strand off your fork; taste it. If it says, "I'm still too tough and I need to cook a bit more before I get to the plate," count out another bit of time (1 minute for the heftier pasta). The timer has got you to this point of judgment ahead of time, which is better than later! You are in control.

There are several instances in this cookbook where I had to use substitutions for brand names of products which are not available in my small Midwest location. But the recipes I did try turned out good. I still do not consider myself to be a sophisticated gourmet, but maybe with trying more of Noel Tyl's recipes, those words could be added to the phrases used to describe me.

Red Pasta Sauce for All Seasons

With Elegance and Punch!! A delectable sauce with dozens of uses.

4 servings

Ingredients for four portions:

1 28-ounce can skinless, whole Plum Tomatoes in their own juice

1/2 cup Olive Oil (it will be divided among 4 portions)

1/2 big yellow Onion, chopped

4 cloves Garlic, chopped

1 fine-sized Carrot, shaved and chopped

1 stalk Celery, shaved and chopped

1 Tbsp freshly chopped Parsley

1/2 tsp sugar

Salt to taste

A few shakes of dried rep Peppers Preparation time: about 15 minutes, cook for about 2 hours

Loosely chunk the tomatoes in the can (when you open the can, take a sharp paring knife and plunge it into the can, among the tomatoes, and cut back toward the sides of the can, slicing the tomatoes a bit into chunky pieces, and chop the onion, celery, carrot, and parsley.

Put the olive oil into the skillet, and heat it up.

When the oil is quite hot, almost ready to smoke, put in the onion, carrot, and celery; turn heat down to medium.

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After about 3–1/2 minutes, add the chopped garlic. Saute everything for 1–1/2 minutes.

Add the full can of tomatoes and juice.

Add the sugar and salt, and pepper flakes. Stir things up.

At simmer/low, keep tiny bubbles visible in the sauce for about one hour. (You may let the sauce cool and use a short while later, or store overnight in the refrigerator to heat up the next day.)

Final heat–up in the skillet, which will be bubbling lightly, add the parsley and stir in lightly, simmer for about 15 minutes while you are preparing the rest of the meal.

Ladle the sauce anywhere you wish; over pasta, over chicken breasts, lightly over garlic–roasted potatoes, over fried eggplant slices, even lightly over a firm fish, pork chops, etc.

Pollo Parmagiana – Without The Problems!

A classic entree, simplified. Try your best to sing "O Sole Mio"–at least the first three works–loud enough for your neighbors to hear!

4 servings, or 2 meals for 2

Ingredients

2 Chicken Breasts, skinless, boneless; cut through their thickness to form four pieces. (Use your very sharp knife, cutting parallel to your work board; press down lightly with your free hand to stabilize the breast as the knife goes through it smoothly.)

Italian–style Bread Crumbs

Cooking Spray

2 ounces Capellini Pasta per portion.

Red Pasta Sauce for two or four

Freshly grated Parmesan Cheese

2 Lemon Wedges Preparation time: 25 minutes

Give your skillet a spritz of cooking spray and heat it quickly.

Dredge the sliced chicken breasts in the Italian bread crumbs (you do not need the egg wash for the crumbs to adhere!)

When the skillet is very hot, add the breasts; turn heat down to medium. (Your skillet will hold four sliced breasts; if you're cooking ahead to another meal, use a second skillet.)

Start the water boiling for the pasta.

Turn the breasts over every 2–3 minutes for no more than 15–18 minutes.

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Cook the Capellini pasta for about 2 minutes after the boil, drain, portion out on the plates.

Add the breasts to the plates; squeeze the juice of a lemon wedge onto each breast.

Add the sauce on the pasta, a bit spilling onto the breasts.

Sprinkle the Parmesan over everything.

Note: I personally used American Beauty brand pasta rather than the "unheard of in Kansas" brand Capellini.

Corn All Jazzed Up!

2 Servings

Ingredients

Portions (2 big handfuls) of golden corn kernels, frozen

One-half handful of Green Beans, frozen

Margarine or Butter

Peanut Sauce (recommended: Bangkok Padang brand, House of Tsang) Preparation time: 6 minutes

Boil water, about 2" deep in a medium-sized, lidded pan

Put corn and green beans into the boiling water, cover, lower heat to medium.

Set timer for 5 minutes.

Drain off water into a colander; return corn and beans to the hot pot; add margarine or butter and four or five shakes of the Peanut sauce; stir around; replace lid. Put the pot aside, half-on the turned off burner.

Lois Mead is an Editor for The 1001Recipes2Send.com Recipes Database. Become a member to receive the weekly newsletter alert:

What Is So Special About Gourmet Pizza?

By Melinda Carnes

Pizza has been around for thousands of years. When did out of the ordinary and delicious gourmet pizza make its debut? What would the forefathers of pizza think of this culinary masterpiece?

Everyone knows that a standard pizza comes with pepperoni, cheese, ground beef, peppers, onions,

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anchovies and sausage. Today gourmet pizza is created with any kind of topping. They are topped with anything from broccoli to chocolate. There are gourmet pizzas for breakfast that can be topped with scrambled eggs, bacon and cheese. And, there are vegetarian gourmet pizzas that are topped with a medley of vegetables.

The gourmet pizza is relatively new and was created for the privileged. It has grown in popularity in nearly every household in the United States. Pizza parlors are popping up all across the country. A Sunday afternoon of football will be a definite hit with the gang if a gourmet pizza with all the toppings is served. A sure pleaser for chocolate lovers is a dessert pizza topped with marshmallows and chocolate.

Gourmet pizza was conceived with the belief that less is better. Only by using the finest quality ingredients and one or two toppings, can a pizza acquire the status of a gourmet pizza. Only the freshest and highest quality meats and freshest mozzarella can be used. The difference in a standard pizza and a gourmet pizza will be proven with each bite.

An ordinary consumer, with a little imagination, can create a gourmet pizza at home. A variety of pre-baked pizza shells are available in all types of food stores. With some imagination and experimentation, a home chef can make a mouth-watering work of art. Most food stores carry a line of pizza shells, cheeses and gourmet sauces. Cheeses other than Mozzarella can be used.

Gourmet pizza shops continue to grow, offering a variety of pizzas from different cultures. Every culture brings an innovative way to make the gourmet pizza. These tasty delights will bring dining pleasure for years to come.

Melinda Carnes is a staff writer at

and is an occasional contributor

to several other websites, including

.

What Is So Special About Gourmet Pizza?

Pointers In Serving Gourmet Cheese

What Is Gourmet Popcorn?

Gourmet: A Defining Moment

Easy Gourmet Recipes you and I can do!

1000 Atkins Diet Recipes

How to become a Chef!

News Letter Genie Pro

PHP CGI Scripts Collection

The Public Domain Reports



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