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A Note from Glen

The autumnal equinox, Sept. 23, 2007 at 5:51 A.M. EDT, marks the beginning of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere. This means shorter days and longer nights. Don't you just love fall? Enjoy those colors before you get out the leaf rake!

We will soon be off to Boston for 7 days, and we are excited about that. This will be our first trip to the East Coast. We are looking forward to all of the historical sites of the area.

Fun Facts and Trivia

The first drug to be sold in the form of a tablet was Aspirin.

The plastic things on the end of shoelaces are called aglets.

Brain Teaser

What is the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form but fresh.

Answer at the bottom of page 3.

Indulge in the Exotic at Every Meal

WHY not pamper your taste buds with vibrant colors of Mexico, enticing aromas from the Mediterranean, distinctive styles of Asia, and captive flavors from India?

By incorporating exotic flavors in your meals, you can send your senses on vacation without ever leaving your kitchen.

You can add worldly flair to everyday meals in a matter of minutes. By folding in one or two new flavors with those you already have at home, you can achieve the authenticity of native dishes!

Here are a few simple suggestions to help you turn the common chicken dish into chicken cuisine extraordinaire.

- ✓ Try substituting couscous for the rice. Although rice and couscous have similar appearances, couscous contains strong North African roots, with flavoring the whole family will love. This new side dish, with flavors such as mango salsa, parmesan, and even plain for picky eaters, is also naturally low in fat and cholesterol. It is also very simple to make.
- ✓ Make it Mexican! Add some cumin and chili powder to the breadcrumbs and Parmesan before coating the chicken breasts. These seasonings provide a festive feel. Try my recipe for Pollo Mexicana at http://glensplace.com/files/Chicken/Pollo_Mexicana.htm.
- ✓ Spice up supper by preparing delicious Indian food. It does not need to be complicated. Simple Indian barbecue marinades, available in your supermarket's ethnic foods aisle, can add a tangy twist to chicken, with no extra effort. The blend of spices boosts flavor like no other, enticing friends and family to keep coming back for seconds!
- ✓ Another simple meal for even picky eaters is stir-fry, the ancient Asian tradition. The basic cooking techniques used in Asian cooking, stir-frying, deep frying, and steaming, are still practiced by families today. Adding pre-made stir fry sauce to chicken and vegetable dishes saves time and enhances the flavor.

Half the fun of cooking is being adventurous in the kitchen. There are many web sites that were created to cater to those with exotic tastes, and those just looking for the chance to treat themselves to something a bit different. Why not indulge in an exotic meal soon? It's more exciting, and healthier, than going out for every meal.

Tips and Techniques

So many chilies. So little time. How do I know which ones to use for a spicy meal? Here are some tips.

- **Anaheim** - These are long and slender and can be red or green. They are great for Chiles Rellenos, or stuff them with some cheese and bake.
- **Jalapeno** - This is one of the most common pepper that you will see. They are very green and they are larger at the top than at the bottom. They have a bit of heat, but also have a very rich flavor. If you can't find them fresh, you can buy them canned. You can use them in any Tex-Mex dish.
- **Poblano** - These peppers look a lot like a skinny bell pepper. They have a mild flavor and are good roasted or stuffed. They are also good in soups, stews, or casseroles and sauces. They provide the taste of chilies but not the heat.
- **Serrano** - These chilies look a lot like a torpedo. They have thin green walls and are best used raw in salsas or salads.
- **Chipotle** - These are jalapenos that are smoked in adobo sauce and most commonly found in cans. They have a smoky flavor that is great in soups and with meats.
- **Habanero** - These chilies are somewhat lantern shaped and commonly yellowish to orange. They are extremely hot. If you decide to use them, try a small amount and taste often until the appropriate hotness has been reached. These are best in sauces and Caribbean cooking.
- **Cayenne** - These are often used in Cajun recipes.



Celery: A Crunchy Household Staple



Celery has become a common household staple along with carrots, onions, and potatoes. Although it is available throughout the year, you will enjoy the best taste and quality of celery during the summer months when it is in season. Its crunchy texture and distinctive flavor makes it a popular addition to salads and many cooked dishes. It is the sixth best selling vegetable in supermarkets nationwide. Virtually all stocks, and many sauces contain celery, onions, carrots, and parsley. Celery contains highly aromatic oil that lends fragrance and flavor to numerous dishes. Its crisp texture makes celery a popular appetizer as part of a vegetable platter or a salad topping. The crispness of celery is due to the rigidity of its stalk combined with high water content. Its high water content also makes it exceptionally low in calories.

About 75 percent of the celery grown in the United States comes from California. Florida is a distant second. A small amount of celery is imported from Canada and Mexico. Most celery root also comes from California.

When selecting celery, choose a compact bunch with stalks that are a light green color with a glossy finish. The leaves should also be bright green and fresh looking. Dark green stalks tend to be tougher and stringier. You can check the crispness of the celery stalks by picking up a bunch and giving it a gentle squeeze near the middle of the stalk. If it provides a squeaky sound, the celery bunch is fresh.

To store celery, trim the base and remove any leaves or ribs that are damaged or bruised. Rinse, place in a plastic bag, and keep in the refrigerator's humid vegetable bin. It will last about two weeks. Add a small amount of water to the plastic bag to maintain the freshness of the celery.

When preparing celery it is important to rinse it thoroughly to remove any sand or dirt from the stalks. If you are preparing raw celery sticks, cut the stalks just prior to serving them. If you need to prepare them well in advance, put the cut celery stalks in ice water for up to an hour before serving.

To use celery in stir-fries, cut it into 1/4 to 1/2 inch crescents. For a crunchier texture Use the 1/2 inch crescents. In a wok or skillet heat a small amount of oil until hot then add the thinly sliced celery. Cook celery approximately 2-3 minutes until tender,

Tip: If you're in a hurry, or you don't want to buy a whole bunch of celery for one dish, check out the salad bar at your supermarket for already cut celery. Yes, it's more expensive per pound, but you won't be using that much.

The Wine Corner



Have you been seduced by Sangiovese? After all, there is more to it than a difficult pronunciation. Sangiovese, pronounced san-joh-VEY-zeh, is difficult to pronounce, so that may be a reason it is overlooked on wine lists by many people.

Because of its high acidity, Sangiovese goes well with tomato based pastas, pizza, and other Italian foods. Try it with chicken cacciatore. It's also great with spaghetti and meatballs!

This wine grape, believed to have its roots in Tuscany, was originally brought to California by Italian immigrants. But it wasn't until the 1990s that significant acreage was planted in California. It has proved to be successful in a wide range of viticultural areas of the state. For winemaking purposes, the Sangiovese grape is typically blended with another, such as Cabernet Sauvignon.

This wine is definitely a great food enhancement, so try some soon.

Quotable Quotes

Chaotic action is preferable to orderly inaction.

~ Will Rogers

We are masters of the unsaid words, but slaves of those we let slip out.

~ Winston Churchill

When you don't know what you're talking about, it's hard to know when you're finished.

~ Tommy Smothers

Recipe of the Month

Cornish Game Hens with Apple-Honey Glaze

2 Cornish game hens
Juice of an orange
1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
1 tablespoon fresh-ground black pepper
Apple-Honey Glaze (recipe follows)

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Remove the giblets, wash the game hens, and pat dry. Squeeze the juice of the orange inside and outside the birds. The natural sugar from the fruit juice will make the hens really crispy.

Fold the wing tips under each one. This will keep them protected and they'll get nice and crispy on the bottom while the top portion is roasting.

Season the hens inside and out with 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt and one tablespoon fresh-ground black pepper.

Place the birds on a rack in a shallow roasting pan, breast side up. Roast in the center of the oven at 350 degrees for one hour, or until the juices run clear when the thickest part of the thigh is pierced.

When the Cornish hens are almost finished, brush them with the glaze and put them back in the oven for two minutes. This will allow the glaze to set. After two minutes, remove the hens from the oven and let them rest for about 10 to 15 minutes before serving; this will allow them to firm up, while the juices inside keep the birds moist.

Apple-Honey Glaze

1 cup apple cider
1/2 cup white wine
1/2 tablespoon shallots, minced
1/2 tablespoon all-purpose seasoning blend
1 tablespoon honey

Pour apple cider and white wine into a one-quart sauce pan. Add shallots; whisk. Add 1/2 tablespoon of all-purpose seasoning blend, then whisk in one tablespoons of honey. Bring mixture to a boil, and then reduce the heat to a simmer. Allow to reduce by 2/3 its volume.

A Final Word

Thanks again for reading this newsletter. As always, if you have comments or questions, send them along to glendal@glenplace.com. You can find previous editions of the Glen's Place Newsletter at www.newsletter.glenplace.com. Until next time:

**That's all I'm sayin'
and I ain't sayin' no more.**

Answer to Brain Teaser: lettuce