

# • CULINARY HISTORIANS OF NEW YORK •

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CHNY encourages the  
submission to the newsletter of  
articles relating to culinary  
history, member news, and other  
pertinent information. Articles  
should be no longer than 1,500  
words. The editor has the right  
to edit for length, clarity,  
accuracy, and punctuation.

## THE CULINARY BOOKSHELF

### *A Gracious Plenty*

by John T. Edge

(G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1999)

REVIEW BY JEANNE LESEM

OVER the years many cookbooks have featured the cooking of the American South, but none so memorably as this one. The recipes are a walk down memory lane for Southerners, no matter where they live now. And the anecdotes and stories surrounding the recipes are as fascinating as a good novel in which descriptions of food and drink consumed move the plot along in ways that dialogue cannot. As Ellen Rolfes writes in the epilogue, "A good cookbook is a storybook compiled to document a time and place ... No matter what the food or the meal or the circumstance, when two or more are gathered at the meal table, we are connected—to the past, to one another, and to the future."

The title is a genteel Southern term for "I'm all full up," as in "I've had a gracious plenty, thank you," or, put another way, it means "an elegant sufficiency." Most of the recipes are drawn from community cookbooks, but a few came from research for *America Eats*, a book-length survey compiled by the Federal Writers Project between 1935 and 1942. During that time, the federal government ran a work-

relief program for unemployed writers and newspapermen (virtually no women had editorial jobs at that time in history). The writers project was part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal program designed to spur recovery from the Depression. Most of its publications were guidebooks to the (then) 48 states. *America Eats* was never published in its entirety. The Mississippi findings were published in a 1997 folklore journal, and the Library of Congress and various state libraries share repository responsibilities, according to Edge, who is director of the Southern Foodways Alliance of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

Stories and reminiscences cited in *A Gracious Plenty* came from many people, including Ed Scott, an African-American catfish farmer in the Mississippi Delta, who writes of feeding Freedom Riders during the 1960s. Others include bluesman B.B. King, who shares memories of the feast that he and other sharecroppers enjoyed on Sundays; author/editor Roy Blount, Jr. who recalls his mother's gravies; and author Shelby Foote, who reminisces about the Hot Tamale Man, who brought a taste of home to Mexican migrant laborers in the Mississippi Delta's cotton fields.

The community cookbook recipes are almost invariably

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attributed to individuals; and tend to reflect local, regional, and personal eating habits and preferences.

For Yankees and others who may not speak Southern culinary language, there's a useful glossary that demystifies such things as alligator pears AKA avocados (so-called because of the fruit's reptilian skin) and butter beans (limas).

One quibble: the Key Lime Pie recipe on page 288 inexplicably ignores the classic recipe using condensed milk, a recipe that was developed in the Florida Keys. In the days before good refrigeration, families relied on canned milk because they had no way of protecting fresh dairy products from spoilage in the hot climate.

Warning: you'll need a bright light and a magnifying glass to read some of the small print in the boxes labeled "Our Southern Receipt." Printing them on a white background would have helped a lot.

The book was written for the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, which was founded at the University of Mississippi, in 1977. The Southern Foodways Alliance is a newly formed institute of the CSSC; the Alliance publishes a quarterly newsletter, the *Southern Foodways Register*. For membership information, go to the website: [www.olemiss.edu](http://www.olemiss.edu) or Email [CSSC@olemiss.edu](mailto:CSSC@olemiss.edu). Additional information can be obtained from [www.southernfoodways.com](http://www.southernfoodways.com).

*Jeanne Lesem, a freelance journalist and author, was the first food editor of United Press International. Her most recent cookbook, Preserving in Today's Kitchen, won a James Bear Foundation Award when first published as Preserving Today.*

# TRAVELER'S JOURNAL

## Of Creole Sauce, Mountain Chicken, and Cannibals...

By Millie Delahunty

**A**VACATION spent sailing with friends affords an interesting perspective on an area's people, food, and economy. Usually, we charter a 44-foot boat and sail about the region, visiting various islands and points of interest. For this trip we had decided upon Guadeloupe and the neighboring islands of Les Saintes and Dominica. Christopher Columbus discovered Guadeloupe on his second trip in November, 1493, naming it in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe de Extremadura to thank her for protection during a storm on his first expedition. Guadeloupe is actually an archipelago of islands at the peak of the arc formed by the Lesser Antilles, between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. The principal island, Guadeloupe is made up of two parts, Grande-Terre and Basse-Terre.

Grande-Terre, to the east, is mostly flat with a dry climate and has sugar plantations which produce sugar with a light taste of molasses. The harvest is still transported by oxen-pulled carts. Basse-Terre, to the west, is mountainous and volcanic with abundant rain all year, tropical forests, and banana plantations. The active volcano, La Soufriere, towers above Basse-Terre.

Guadeloupe is French-

speaking and, because we knew only a smattering of French, flexibility in food shopping turned out to be essential. Produce, even including the local bananas, was in poor condition. Packaged cold cuts and cheeses did have "sell by" dates on them, so we felt safe with these. Milk came in aseptic packaging, as did orange juice. Bottled water was available in suspicious abundance, together with beer (German, American, and Jamaican), and wine. Since we planned to eat most meals ashore, we bought only the everyday necessities, snacks, and some canned tuna.

Our first meal in Guadeloupe was at La Bananeraie. It was highly recommended by the French charter staff as having both good and typical Creole food. With reservations for seven o'clock, we set out in our rental car and found the restaurant on a dark, not too well-paved, road in Sainte-Anne, east of the marina. From the outside it appeared unpromising, sort of a run-down, beaten-up, old-fashioned American roadhouse. Inside, we found an elegant air-conditioned interior and a courtly waiter who spoke some English and was very knowledgeable and helpful about the food, which turned out to be refined Creole. We also found that we were unfashionably early, since no one else arrived until after 8 p.m.

For a starter, we had *accras*—hot fritters made from cod and a dough. These are common in the islands with a variety of ingredients; they might be fish or vegetable, and once, to our regret, were just plain dough. Our seafood entrees came with purées of four local vegetables; *migan* (breadfruit, which was mashed with bananas); “yams,” a delicious green mixture for which we couldn’t understand the explanation (but which was probably partially the young leaves of dasheen, a spinach-like vegetable); and plaintain. The seafood itself had a “Creole sauce,” which was milder and thinner than one would expect, and had no tomatoes, but plenty of garlic. “Creole sauce” turned out to be different on each island, probably because of differing ethnic heritages. Of course, dessert had to be *banane flambée*, ripe bananas baked in the oven, placed under the broiler to color, then doused with rum and lit at the table. The only one of us who had room for this impressive dessert declared it excellent.

The next day found us on our way to Les Saintes, a small archipelago of nine islands six miles south of Guadeloupe. We sailed to the island of Terre de Haut and landed our dinghy near the town of Grand Bourg. We walked by street vendors selling all sorts of spices and fruits, many of them unfamiliar to us. We did recognize local nutmeg still wrapped in its delicate lace netting, peppercorns, and hot peppers.

Dinner that night was at Nilce’s Bar on the ferry pier. The set menu included blackened tuna (with the ubiquitous Creole sauce, this time a bit thicker because it was emulsified), an excellent salad (unusual since greens do not keep well in hot weather), and pigeon peas (another local vegetable). Dessert? We decided we had to have Tourment D’Amour Tarte (Torture of Love tart), which we had been told was made only in Les Saintes. There are various versions under different names among the islands, all containing some or all of the components of this specialty—custard, coconut,

crisp crust, and cake. Picture a tart about three inches in diameter, with four layers, all no more than one half-inch thick. First comes a very short pastry crust, then a syrupy coconut layer, followed by a pastry cream layer, with a final topping of a lady finger cake. I was told that the syrupy coconut takes three hours to prepare. The tarts reminded me of shoo fly pie, having the same very sweet and filling attributes.

Though we had enjoyed Nilce’s Bar, we decided the next night to try Les Amandiers on the town square. One choice on the menu was *Poisson en Court Bouillon*. Rather than a whole fish, we were served slices of a white-fleshed fish, cooked in broth with onions, garlic, lemon juice, and a bit of chopped chili pepper. Those of us who ordered tuna were served it with a spicier Creole mix than we had previously tasted. Also available was Colombo Sauce, similar to a curry sauce with a bit more of a “kick.”

Our sail the following day was to Dominica, not to be confused with the Dominican Republic. Dominica is an island unique in its lushness and natural beauty. Its mountains are the highest in the Caribbean; its evergreen oceanic rainforest is one of the last in the world. Although the official language is English, most Dominicans speak a French patois among themselves. Blue Bay, a beachfront restaurant just across from our mooring, had been recommended to us. At dinner there was a choice of the usual tuna, conch, and “seafood,” which probably was a local fish known as dorado. Our waitress was the



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owner and the chief cook. Everything was prepared to order and excellent. Our one regret was that we didn't have the local lobster; we discovered that the only couple eating it had called ahead and had it caught to order.

Of most interest on Dominica is the 3,700 acre Caribe Territory, home to descendants of the Carib Indians. The Caribs migrated from South America to Dominica via the other Windward Islands, ousting the Arawaks who had arrived by the same route about 1,000 years earlier. The Caribs were feared by Europeans because of their reputed cannibalism. It may be apocryphal, but the Caribs were even said to have a taste preference. Frenchmen were the most delicious, followed by the English and Dutch, while the Spanish were considered stringy and almost inedible. Although, mainly agriculturists, they still produce baskets woven so tightly from grass that they are waterproof, canoes, and other traditional items. Also grown are citrus fruit and carambola, which were at least three times the size, sweeter, and less seedy than those we've seen in the United States and made a refreshing snack.

The rainforest in Morne Trois Pitons National Park, in the south central portion of Dominica, contains plant life that will amaze you—from giant ferns and hanging orchids to sweet-smelling wild ginger.

Not far from the Park, we had a grand lunch, prepared while we waited and enjoyed watching the songbirds flying in and out of the restaurant. As there was only a single menu, one just asked for lunch. First we were served a vinegary slaw, which contained

## Cookbook Conservation Committee: Campaign Update

THE October dinner, featuring Chef Rocco DiSpirito, organized by pastry teacher and cookbook author (and collector) Nick Malgieri and Committee Chairman Andy Coe at the James Beard Foundation, raised \$10,000 toward the New York Public Library Cookbook Conservation Fund. Using the money raised as seed money, the CHNY Steering Committee is researching the setting up of a special account to which members as well as those outside the organization may make contributions.

Members willing to assist with the project are asked to call Phyllis Isaacson (212) 675-4984 or Andy Coe (718) 797-0029.



—Andy Coe, Chairman

julienned hot peppers. Then came a platter of delicious deep-fried chicken quarters accompanied by freshly baked baguettes. The perfectly prepared chicken had been marinated overnight in a secret sauce, then fried in extremely hot oil. When all the marinated chicken was gone, the restaurant closed for the day.

Though we did not have it, “mountain chicken” (*crapaud*), is reputed to be very good. It's really a very large frog (one eats only the legs) which may be trapped only by natives who have permits, and only in certain seasons.

Back in Guadeloupe selecting a restaurant for our last dinner was difficult. There was a choice of a pizzeria (serving ham-and-pineapple pizza, and other avant-garde types), several seafood places, a creperie, and a deserted Thai coffee shop. True to form, we chose a seafood restaurant where we once again had tuna. This

creole sauce was mostly hot peppers with vinegar and bit of oil. Our little-bit-of-English-speaking waitress informed us, with appropriate gestures, that one put the ingredients together and went zssst! (A blender, perhaps?) Accompanied by very thin, delicious French fries and the largest salad we'd had, our last meal turned out to be excellent.

On my return home, I located a recipe for *Tourment D'Amour Tart*. And yes, it does call for cooking the coconut for almost three hours in sugar syrup.

*Millie Delabunty*, owner of *Microwave Cuisine*, is a microwave-and-conventional food consultant, specializing in microwave recipe development. She has been published in *Cooking Light* magazine and *Publications International, Ltd*, and is the author of six microwave cookbooks and two texts on teaching microwave cooking.

# IF YOU MISSED THEM..

## The Wines of Thomas Jefferson

**T**HIRD president of the United States, author of the Declaration of Independence, originator of “the pursuit of happiness” notion, architect, inventor, musician, and much more, all describe Thomas Jefferson. He was also a great lover of wine. *The Wines of Thomas Jefferson* was the title of the October 17, 2000, CHNY meeting held at the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden. **Linda G. Lawry**, director of the International Wine Center, described Jefferson’s great passion for wine and revealed that he was known to spend up to \$3,000 of his annual \$25,000 income while President of the United States on wine alone, which he imported from Europe.

Lawry described Jefferson’s three-and-a-half month wine tour through France and Italy in 1787, shortly after he had been appointed Commissioner to the Court of Versailles. Traveling alone, incognito and sometimes through difficult terrain by mule, Jefferson sampled wines from vineyards which still produce some of the world’s great wines.

CHNY members participated in tasting wines from vineyards Jefferson probably visited, beginning with a German Riesling and including a Bollinger Champagne, wines from Burgundy and Rhône, a Tuscan Chianti Classico, and a Chateau Lagrange from St.-Julien, Bordeaux, France.

The tasting concluded with NV Blandy’s 15-year-old Rich Malmsey Madeira from Portugal, typical of the fortified wines so favored in America during Jefferson’s time.

—Doris Weisberg

## Old World in the New: Food Introduced to the Americas from Europe

**M**UCH has been made of the Columbian connection. As food historians we all know that before Columbus bumped into America on his way to India, there was no such thing as tomato sauce for pasta in Italy, no potatoes in Ireland, no turkeys in France to grace the tables of kings. They all were unheard of in Europe until Spanish explorers brought them back from their adventures in the New World. But we pay less attention to the foods that traveled in the opposite direction. On a cool, mid-November evening, **Raymond Sokolov** set the record straight.

He was introduced by Helen Studley, Program Chair, who pointed out that the cheeses, serrano ham, chorizo, almonds, filberts, olives, and wine we enjoyed upon our arrival at San Martin, the mid-town restaurant that hosted the event, were all foods unknown in pre-Columbian America. Looking like a dapper Daumier sketch of Mark Twain, Sokolov began by painting a picture of a 15th-century world where food choices, no matter which side of the Atlantic you lived

on, were extremely limited. He asked us, for instance, to imagine an America that had no dairy products and very little meat to eat (cattle), no vegetable cooking oils (olives), no tequila (distillation techniques), no citrus (lemons, limes, oranges), and no wine. When the Spanish introduced these foods and others to the New World and in turn brought New World foods back to the Old World, the change in cuisines around the globe was epic.

He went on to cite the Strawberry Synergy as an example of how cuisine continued to change. Despite attempts by botanists to make it bigger, the *petit fraise de bois* had remained petite. But during the 18th century, two strawberry plants from the New World—a small uninteresting one from Virginia and a big, insipid, “waterlogged” one from the Pacific coast—were installed nearby some *petit fraise de bois* plants in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. The strawberry plants cross-pollinated and produced the fat and flavorful strawberry that was the progenitor of the strawberry that we know today.

After the Q and A that followed, we had an opportunity to polish off what remained of the Old World foods that Spain introduced to the New World.

—John Jenkins

## Christmas Pudding and the Venerable Pudding Traditions

**A** 1638 recipe for Fond Pudding made with veal, spinach, parsley, sugar, and dates shaped into small pear-shaped

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morsels was just the beginning of a splendid talk and tasting of the pudding tradition given by **Stephen Schmidt** at All Souls Church on a chilly December 18, 2000.

The Fond Pudding was followed by a Hasty Pudding (1758 recipe), then a Rice Puding in Gutts (recipe circa 1650), a rice pudding stuffed into intestinal casings—in other words, a rice pudding sausage.

Next was a Lord of Devonshire Pudding, a bread pudding with currants, dates, and marrow, dated 1604; a Sweet-meat Pudding containing candied citrus from a 1758 recipe; and a Cranberry Dumpling or Grunt from an 1833 recipe.

The grand finale was a gorgeous Christmas Plum Pudding that Stephen flamed as the entire group launched into a rendition of *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. Everyone left this CHNY Christmas meeting deliciously full of pudding and holiday spirit.

—Doris Weisberg

## Cuban Cooking, Then and Now

**O**UR January 2001 event, held at All Souls Church to the beat of Cuban music, had some people dancing in the aisles. The display of yucca, plantain, pineapple, drums, and banners, the aroma of tostones, margaritas, yucca frita, croquettes, and black bean salsa, with generous offerings of Bacardi rum, left no doubt that this was a celebration of **Olga**

**Hernandez Rigsby** and **Vicky Rigsby's** love for the food and people of their native country.

While Olga recalled old-time culinary feasts and traditions, many going back to colonial times, Vicky, who visits Havana periodically, provided an insider's view of the current Cuban food scene. Her

slides of family members and friends, excursions to open air markets, *paladares*—makeshift restaurants set up by enterprising Cubans in their own homes—the joy of shared meals, were a touching tribute to the spirit of the people the Rigsbys left behind.

—Helen Studley



*L to R: CHNY secretary Lois O'Wyatt, Cuban program speaker Olga Rigsby, and CHNY program chairman Helen Studley.*

## WEBSITES

Our website column will be continued in the next issue. Please E-mail interesting "finds" to [hbrody2330@aol.com](mailto:hbrody2330@aol.com)

## COMMITTEES

Membership: Wendy Clapp-Shapiro ([culhistny@yahoo.com](mailto:culhistny@yahoo.com))  
*Send out welcome packets, welcome new members*

Newsletter: Helen Brody ([hbrody2330@aol.com](mailto:hbrody2330@aol.com))  
*Write book reviews, lead articles, new member news*

Nominating: Phyllis Isaacson ([beardlib@interport.net](mailto:beardlib@interport.net))  
*Assemble annual ballot for Steering Committee*

Program: Helen Studley ([helentruly@aol.com](mailto:helentruly@aol.com))  
*Engage interesting speakers*

Publicity: John W. R. Jenkins ([jjenkins@tvfood.com](mailto:jjenkins@tvfood.com))  
*Establish contacts to publicize the organization*

# MEMBER PROFILE

## ANNE MENDELSON

by Beth Crossman

**T**HE more cookbooks get published, the less cooking gets done.”

Anyone who reads food magazines can quickly pinpoint Anne Mendelson, a founding member of the Culinary Historians of New York, as the author of this quote.

When she married Martin Iger and moved to New York City in 1972, she made a career choice that did not seem an obvious one at the time: she brought her academic training, keen mind, and incisive wit to bear on the field of food writing.

Previously, she had taught Medieval English while working for her Ph.D. from Bryn Mawr College. Since the early 1970s were not boom years for new Ph.D.s, she followed a long-held desire to write and accepted a job with *Kirkus Reviews*. After three years on the staff there, she moved on as a freelancer and began writing cookbook reviews for *Bon Appetit*. She also worked at *Cuisine*, and in the last few years been writing cookbook reviews and articles for *Gourmet* magazine.

In 1981, she wrote an article about the 50th anniversary of *The Joy of Cooking* for *Cuisine* magazine and became interested in Irma Rombauer and her daughter Marion Rombauer Becker. Little, Brown and Company accepted her proposal for a book on the Rombauers in 1985. Then followed long years of research,



© Martin Iger

and a steady procession of new editors. Colleen Mohyde, her fourth editor, inherited the manuscript and after going to work for agent Doe Coover, sold the book to Henry Holt & Co. in 1992. In 1996, *Stand Facing the Stove* was published to universal acclaim. “Anne Mendelson is a sensitive and careful chronicler of a remarkable family, [and] of *The Joy of Cooking* as an emblem of American civilization,” said *The New York Times Book Review*; “wonderfully entertaining,” said *Smithsonian* magazine.

Her next big project, a history of food in New York City from 1624 to 2000, is being published by William Morrow & Co. in 2004. In September, she was named a fellow of the New York Public Library’s Center for Scholars and Writers, a position she holds until May. The center provides the fifteen annually named fellows with a large private suite of offices on the second floor of the library with computer facilities and easy access to the collections.

Anne focuses on two facets of food writing: trying to get a certain amount of information across to the reader in the easiest possible way (recipe writing) and the importance of food as part of the fabric of society. She worries that the recent increase in restaurant fantasy food cookbooks has discouraged home cooking, and that the whole agricultural cycle of growing food has become remote in the lives of most Americans. “People are ignorant of things no cookbook can fix,” says Anne.

*Beth Crossman is a food writer and cookbook author who was an editor-at-large at Henry Holt & Co., Inc., for eleven years. During that time she acquired Stand Facing the Stove. She is now a freelance editor.*

*Closing May 31, 2001:*

### **Dining In, Dining Out** New Jersey Historical Society

An exhibition exploring how diners, ethnic communities, and local produce growers have spawned a culture of dining traditions that have knit New Jersey’s ethnic communities together. Along with the diners, the importance of church suppers, firehouse dinners, and taverns are all examined. The interactive exhibition feature historic and contemporary photographs, oral history recordings, video clips and hands-on activities to draw visitors into these areas of dining experience that are germane to New Jersey’s culinary landscape.

**52 Park Place, Newark, NJ**  
(973) 596-8500

# MEMBER NEWS

**Ronnie Alejandro** returned from the Philippines, where he launched two books. They are *Pasig: River of Life* and *Selyo: Philippine History on a Postage Stamp*. He also introduced them to the U.S. at the Philippine Center in Manhattan.

**Alice Baldwin** reports that she attended the one-day conference titled “Rice as Self” at the Japan Society in December and found the program informative and the food excellent.

**Karen Berman** was recently named a contributing editor to *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*. Her articles on food and culture have appeared in *Techno-Culinary News* and Vertical.net’s Foodservice Central, food.traveler.com and other publications.

**Helene Berson** has completed her master of arts degree in Liberal

Studies at Brooklyn College with an emphasis on Food Studies. Her thesis was titled “Consuming Passions: Essays on Food in History, Literature, and Culture.”

**Helen Brody’s** columns on seasonings are published in newspapers in New Hampshire and Connecticut and on **cheftalk.com**. Her Cheftalk column, “Savor the Flavor,” is ranked among the site’s top ten most-read links.

**Elizabeth Crossman** reports that those who were too busy during the holidays to read *Gourmet* magazine should unearth it from their stack of magazines and turn to page 152 of the December issue.

**Anne Mendelson’s** article, “The Meal as Mirror,” which documents the importance of food in the writings of Charles Dickens. She asserts that every morsel has historic meaning.

**Andrea Cohen** reports that she recently stayed at the Whistler Chateau in Whistler, BC. She stayed in the “Elite Gold” section and rated the food, service, and accommodations as excellent. Although it came in second in *Skiing Magazine’s* report, she thought it surpassed the publication’s first pick, the Westin Resort and Spa.

**Bunny Crumpacker’s** children’s book, tentatively titled *Supposing*, is scheduled to be published by Dutton Books this spring. Crumpacker is the author of *The Old Time Brand Name Cookbook* and *The Old Time Brand Name Desserts*. Both books are based on old cooking pamphlets—issued from 1875 to 1950—and include original illustrations, quotations from the pamphlets, adapted recipes, and text about the periods in American food history that the pamphlets represent.

**Lynn Fredericks** received a \$90,000 sponsorship from Reynolds Kitchens for a national rollout in 2001 of the AIWF Dinner Party project she piloted in 2000. The project involves classrooms of fourth and fifth graders in public school, Scouts, and Boys and Girls Clubs. Participants plan a dinner party with and for their parents, design invitations, plan a healthy, ethnically diverse menu, and learn table etiquette. Their lessons culminate in a dinner party cooked by the kids, assisted by their parents, in the school cafeteria. Restaurant chefs are assigned to each party as “coaches.” Julia Child is the national spokesperson and Lynn is the project director. In February Lynn launched the

## IN MEMORIAM

**Marilyn Einhorn**, a founding member of CHNY, died December 8, 2000, after a short illness. Those of us who had the pleasure of knowing her miss her inquiring mind and enthusiasm for every project she undertook for CHNY. Like her husband, Larry Maxwell, who died in 1991, Marilyn’s contributions to our organization were largely behind the scenes. She was host of the CHNY book discussion club, which met monthly at their Greenwich Village apartment to talk about books whose subjects ranged from cannibalism to more conventional topics. After her retirement from one of New York City’s first HMOs, she began a second career as a mail-order bookseller who specialized in rare and out-of-print books about cooking and culinary history.

—Jeanne Lesem



Family Chef's Institute at Wegmans, a famed upscale supermarket chain. The Institute offers family cooking classes. It is piloting them in the Princeton, NJ, Wegmans' store monthly through 2001, with a plan to expand corporately in 2002. This project helps parents expand their culinary repertoire, broadens the palates of children, and encourages sit-down, homemade, healthy family meals.

**Gary A. Goldberg**, executive director of the New School Culinary Arts Program, announces the opening of its state-of-the-art facility for cooking and baking classes at The Inn on 23rd Street in Manhattan's Chelsea area. He notes that the new location "emphasizes our commitment to providing the best in adult education, in a congenial, comfortable and intimate setting. Only one class takes place at a time—and quality rather than quantity cooking is emphasized."

The new state-of-the-art kitchen features a sleek mix of professional and high-end home equipment. The adjacent separate dining room enables students to critique and enjoy the food they have prepared in quiet comfort and understated elegance. The New School offers a comprehensive culinary arts program including courses in cooking and baking, wine appreciation, culinary history, career training, culinary events and walking tours. More than one hundred different courses are offered by professionals representing a wide range of culinary experience and cuisines. Classes are offered seven days a week during morning, afternoon, and evening hours.

Professional-level courses are designed for those aspiring to careers as professional chefs, bakers, caterers, restaurant managers, restaurateurs, food stylists, food writers, and consultants. Courses offering a Certificate of Completion include the 25-session Master Class in Cooking, the 15-session Master Class in Baking, the 10-session Professional Catering Master Class, and the five-session Professional Cake Decorating Master Class. Other courses include the two-session Professional Food Styling Workshop and a variety of business and management classes.

The New School Culinary Arts Program's executive and administrative offices have also relocated to 127 West 24th Street, 4th floor, New York, NY 10011. Phone: (212) 255-4141; e-mail: NSCulArts@aol.com; Web site: www.nsu.newschool.edu.

The 2001 Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the Mall in Washington, D.C., features New York City. **Annie Hauck-Lawson**, coordinating scholar for Foodways of the New York City program reports that individuals who make their daily bread largely through various aspects of the NYC food world are poised to present food crafts that reflect a slice of contemporary life in our fair town. The festival takes place June 27–July 1 and July 4–8.

Former CHNY Chairman, **Tamara Holt** has left her job as food editor at *Redbook* magazine and has moved to San Francisco. Currently, she is freelancing as a food writer, editor, and consultant

for print, Internet, and marketing projects. She can be reached at tamara@tamaraholt.com

Bookseller **Ben Kinmont** published a Holiday List of Gastronomy called "*Eat, Drink & Be Merry*. The books spotlight wine and cookery – subjects that appeal at any time of year. He can be contacted at his website www.bkinmont.com or (917) 690-4326.

**Jacqueline M. Newman** spoke about Chinese food publications in the United States by Chinese authors at the International Conference of Chinese Contributions to America. She reports that it was a packed house of doctors, lawyers, and architects, among many other professions, who all conveyed a love and interest in food. She also spoke at the Smithsonian Institution on ancient Chinese foods and beverages. Jacqueline is the editor of *Flavor and Fortune*, the only English-language publication in the United States about Chinese food. *Fork, Fingers, & Chopsticks* calls the magazine "exemplary" while *Appetite*, the outstanding British journal about food research, recommends it to its readers as a source of ideas. The quarterly is in its eighth year of publication. A year's subscription costs \$19.50 and can be had by sending a check made out to the magazine or its parent organization, ISACC (the Institute for the Advancement of the Science and Art of Chinese Cuisine). For articles and recipes published in past years, visit [www.flavorandfortune.com](http://www.flavorandfortune.com) and consult the indices. Many book reviews and a few restaurant

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## Member News, from page 9

reviews are posted on the site, as well. For information, contact their editorial staff by fax at: (631) 265-9126.

**Peter G. Rose**, author of *The Sensible Cook: Dutch Foodways in the Old and the New World* gave a lecture and a hands-on food preparation workshop in March on “Early Dutch Cooking in the Hudson Valley” at the Elmendorph Inn, Red Hook, New York.

**Andrew Smith’s** introduction to *The Centennial Buckeye Cook Book* was recently published by Ohio State University Press. *The Peanut: A Culinary History of America’s First Snack Food* is scheduled for publication by the University of Illinois Press next year. Paperback editions of *Pure Ketchup: The History of America’s National Condiment* and *Popped Culture: A Social History of Popcorn in America* are about to be released by the Smithsonian Institution Press.

He continues to teach culinary history at the New School and serves as editor for the University of Illinois Press’ “Food Series” **(and yes, he is looking for good works to include in the series)**. Finally, he says, “I am deep into writing *The Turkey: A Culinary History of America’s Favorite Bird* and collecting material for books on tuna, bananas, and salsa.”

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## Give to a Friend: A CHNY Membership Application

At monthly meetings, the Culinary Historians of New York explore the historic, esoteric, and entertaining byways of food. These events are led by noted historians, authors, anthropologists, and food experts, many of whom are CHNY members.

Membership benefits include advance notice of all events, a membership directory, and the CHNY Newsletter with culinary history articles, news of members, events, and book reviews.

Individual – \$40 per year    Household – \$60 per year  
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Culinary Interests (12 words max; information to appear in the next CHNY directory)

Willing to help with: Programs: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to CHNY and send with completed form to: The Culinary Historians of New York, Wendy Clapp-Shapiro, PMB, 388 1173A Second Avenue, New York, NY 10021.

# An Introduction to the History of Madeira

**M**ADEIRA, in the manner of Champagne, Burgundy or Bordeaux, is named for an island governed by Portugal. The largest of an archipelago of islands called the Madeira Islands, Madeira is located in the Atlantic Ocean, approximately 400 miles due west of Casablanca and 500 miles southeast of the Portuguese mainland. Although it is not known who planted the first vines on the island, it is known that Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal in the fifteenth century was instrumental in developing the settlement of the island as a means of increasing the export of wine. The cultivation of vines was second only to that of sugar cane.

Although in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Madeira owes much of its wine trade growth to ships following the trade winds and stopping off at Madeira before crossing the Atlantic, the early Americans, to avoid paying the English tariff, preferred sending their own ships to Madeira to pick-up what was a popular wine of the period. It is believed that both the Declaration of Independence and the inauguration of George Washington were toasted with Madeira. Some history books also report that Washington drank a pint of Madeira with dinner.

An improved method of aging Madeira came about by accident. The story goes that a cask of the wine was accidentally left on board a ship to the American colonies and returned home with the flavor

improved. As a result, shippers began sending their wines on equatorial voyages to season the wines and also started establishing warmer storage conditions while aging the wines on the island.

Heat, normally the nemesis of wine, is a strange partner in Madeira's wine development. The island's volcanic soil improves its resistance to breakdown from heat, promotes earlier physiological maturity and enhances mineral components that accrue in wines. These factors coupled with the remarkable acidity of Madeira, due to earlier than standard harvest sugars make a wine close to indestructible. The island wines are for the most part so acidic as to make them undrinkable before heating.

Today, historic sea voyages are recreated in cellars where temperatures are systematically cooled and warmed similar to the experience a ship's cargo would have approaching and departing the equator. The fine vintage Madeiras, made solely from one of the traditional white grape varieties, are aged in casks for twenty to fifty years in attics of wine lodges where the seasons subtly and gently increase and decrease the temperatures.

Five grape varieties emerged after the scourge of phylloxera, which reached its peak in 1872. The four white varieties, Sercial, Verdelho, Bual, and Malmsey account for less than 10 percent of all grapes, and the prolific red variety Tinta Negra Mole

contributes the other 90 percent of the island's harvest.

The white varieties are arrested in their fermentation to different levels of sweetness. Sercial, generally the last of the four classic types to be harvested, is renowned for its mouth-puckering acidity. Verdelho, the most widely planted until the phylloxera devastation, today has the smallest production. It has a medium dry smokey flavor. Bual is considered a dessert wine though it is significantly drier than Malmsey. Cultivated since the fifteenth century, Malmsey is the only true classical grape of Madeira. It grows at the lowest elevation near the ocean.

Finally, Tinta Negra Mole is the backbone of the Madeira wine industry. It produces a semi-dry, light bodied wine that combines soft fruit with a dry, nutty quality. The popularity of this variety among winemakers lies in its amazing versatility, which allows the vintner to mimic the more mildew-prone classic white varieties by skillful adjustments of the wines' sugar level.

*Nancy Peach is vice president of education for the Symington Family whose holdings include seven Port Houses and The Madeira Wine Company. She has been a member of the Bon Appetit magazine Tasting Panel and a speaker at the National Convention of the Society of Wine Educators of which she is a member. She conducts educational seminars on Port and Madeira throughout the country.*

# UPCOMING PROGRAMS

## Monday, May 7

Fred Plotkin— A talk based on his newly released book *La Terra Fortunata: The Splendid Food and Wine of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia*

## September 24

Annual Members Cocktail Party — Elections and business meeting

## October (date TBA)

Pat Willard— “The Secret of Saffron”

## November

Date and program to be announced

## December (date TBA)

Maricel Presilla— “The Taste and Lore of Chocolate”

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## •CULINARY HISTORIANS OF NEW YORK•

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