

OLLI @Berkeley

Course Syllabus: Spring Term 2023

COURSE TITLE: The Hows and Whys of Good Cooking

INSTRUCTOR: Linda Carucci (CookingSchoolSecrets.com)

DATES: Four Wednesdays, April 5, 12, 19, and 26, 2023, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am PT

DELIVERY METHOD: Livestreamed and recorded

OVERVIEW: In this new course, we'll explore both time-honored cooking techniques and methods, as well as modern chefs' nifty tips, tricks, and shortcuts, all geared to enhancing a home cook's success, enjoyment, and sense of satisfaction in the kitchen.

In each class, two or three recipes will be demonstrated, each illustrating the practical "how and whys" of cooking science and craft. Discussions will include the principles of seasoning to taste as well as the sourcing and selection of ingredients, products, cooking tools, and equipment. Occasionally, related "bonus recipes" will be provided; these recipes will not be demonstrated in class.

These four demonstration cooking classes are appropriate for advanced beginner and experienced cooks alike.

CLASS FORMAT: Recipes and related handouts for each class will be provided several days in advance. To prepare for class, please print out and look over the recipes beforehand. Many students find it helpful to take notes during class.

On Wednesday mornings, you'll log in and Zoom into my home kitchen in Oakland where both head-on and overhead cameras provide views of the stove, food prep area, and yours truly, all in a split-screen format. During each class, time will be allotted for Q&A via the Zoom chat box which will be managed by my assistant.

Please note: This is a demonstration (not "hands-on" or participation) cooking class. Since these classes will be recorded, if you're unable to attend a class in real time, you'll be able to watch the recording at your convenience.

RECIPES AND TECHNIQUES PRESENTED DURING THIS COURSE:

WEEK 1: April 5

RECIPES: Chicken Salad Véronique with Whole Roasted Almonds (and White Grapes, as indicated by the term Véronique); Tomato-Cheddar Soup

BONUS RECIPE: Shortcut Chicken Broth with a Dividend

TECHNIQUES/PRODUCTS/EQUIPMENT: How to cook proteins to tender, succulent perfection; poaching; using an instant-read thermometer; prepping veggies and herbs; blanching and toasting whole almonds; shortcut to cutting grapes in half; a new way to chop onions; salted and unsalted butter; passata; how to prevent curdling when cooking milk with tomatoes; shredding cheese, not knuckles; why, when, and how to use a stand blender to puree soups; garnishing a soup with crème fraîche so it doesn't sink; cross-utilization of ingredients

WEEK 2: April 12

RECIPES: Baked Macaroni and Cheese with Buttered Bread Crumbs; Grilled Veggie Platter

TECHNIQUES/PRODUCTS/EQUIPMENT: Foolproof Béchamel sauce: how to make it, when to use it, and its most popular derivative, Mornay sauce; how to make homemade fresh bread crumbs; choosing the appropriate pasta shape; how to cook pasta; using a flat whisk and a saucier pan; how to judge the doneness of a sauce; baking; grilling; selecting, prepping, and grilling veggies for a toothsome, perfectly grilled vegetable platter

WEEK 3: April 19

RECIPES: Turkey (or Chicken) Piccata; Microwave Mashed Potatoes; Silky Braised Collard Greens

TECHNIQUES/PRODUCTS/EQUIPMENT: Cutting, pounding, and dredging paillards of turkey breast; secrets to successful sautéing; shingle-stacking; making an à la minute pan sauce; caper varieties and how to prep capers; how to make mashed potatoes from scratch without turning on the stove; all about EVOO (extra-virgin olive oil); prepping collard greens; braising

WEEK 4: April 26

RECIPES: Thai-Style Minced Chicken with Basil; Steamed Jasmine Rice; Zabaglione with Fresh Berries

TECHNIQUES/PRODUCTS/EQUIPMENT: Mincing chicken thighs; cutting onions into Lyonaise; stir-frying; working with Thai, jalapeño, and serrano chiles; why and how to remove the germ from garlic cloves; using Asian fish sauce, black soy sauce, and Thai basil; how to make steamed rice in the microwave; creating a double-boiler; copper versus stainless steel bowls for whipping eggs; prepping berries; how to create a strong zabaglione foam; using a balloon whisk

COURSE MATERIALS: Most of the recipes used in this course are from “Cooking School Secrets for Real World Cooks,” copyright Linda Carucci, 2016. It is not necessary for students to purchase this book. A few days prior to each class, two or three recipes per class, plus occa-

sional handouts and bonus recipes, will be posted as Course Materials on the OLLI Member Dashboard. Please print these recipes before logging on for each class.

MORE THAN YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR: In a blurb he wrote for the cover of my cookbook, the French Laundry's Thomas Keller referred to me as "the consummate teacher, cook, and coach all rolled into one." I swear I didn't pay him to say that. I grew up in New England, the granddaughter of a Southern Italian cheesemaker. In fact, all of my grandparents and many of their siblings immigrated to the U.S. from southern Italy. Some were outstanding cooks whose craft significantly shaped my palate and interests.

In 1983 I moved to San Francisco to attend culinary school, and for the past forty years I've been happily ensconced in the field of hospitality and culinary arts education.

Those of you who've been in the Berkeley area for a while may remember when Sur La Table opened on Fourth Street. Their manager hired me to conduct free cooking demonstrations to entice customers into the new store. Then she asked me to develop and teach a four-week Basics of Cooking course, the lessons and recipes from which begat a cookbook, "Cooking School Secrets for Real World Cooks" (Chronicle Books, 2005; second edition published by AuthorHouse, 2016), a finalist for both James Beard and International Association of Culinary Professionals' Julia Child First Book Awards (2006) and selected as a "Washington Post" Best Cookbook (2016).

Over the years I have worked as a live-in private chef for a prominent San Francisco family and have cooked at and managed restaurants and culinary operations in several San Francisco Bay Area kitchens including Greens restaurant, UCSF Medical Center's Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, and Paula LeDuc Fine Catering, to name a few.

Beyond the kitchen, I returned to my alma mater to serve as dean of the California Culinary Academy. I've also served as inaugural Julia Child Curator of Food Arts at COPIA in Napa. After these positions, in 2007 I was recruited by San Francisco's Art Institute of California, where I launched and directed their International Culinary School's academic programs as well as a student-staffed restaurant. In my six years there, the school grew from two floors of empty Civic Center office space to the largest academic program on campus, with two professional teaching kitchens, a faculty of 13 chef instructors, and nearly 300 students.

What I love most about teaching culinary arts is passing on the kind of professional cooking techniques, secrets, and tips that enhance a home cook's enjoyment of food preparation. Of all the work I've done in the hospitality field, teaching cooking is what I love most.

Prior to my culinary career, I earned a Bachelor's degree in psychology at Stonehill College in my home state of Massachusetts, and then a Master's degree in education at Colorado State University.

I was serving as Associate Dean of Students at Occidental College in Los Angeles when the urge to work in the hospitality industry led me to move to San Francisco to enroll in the professional chef training program at the California Culinary Academy.

I'm honored to be invited back by OLLI to teach this new course and I'm excited to share my craft with you.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: These are some of the references I'll be using in this course:

Carucci, Linda. *Cooking School Secrets for Real World Cooks, 2nd edition*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2016.

Crosby, Guy, with the Editors at America's Test Kitchen. *Cook's Science: How to Unlock Flavor in 50 of Our Favorite Ingredients*. Brookline: America's Test Kitchen, 2016.

Davidson, Alan. *The Oxford Companion to Food, second edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Del Conte, Anna. *Gastronomy of Italy*. New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1987.

Herbst, Sharon Tyler. *The New Food Lover's Companion, 3rd edition*. New York: Barron's, 2001.

Joachim, David. *The Food Substitutions Bible, 2nd edition*. Toronto: Robert Rose, 2010.

Page, Karen. *The Vegetarian Flavor Bible*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2014.

Schneider, Elizabeth. *Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini*. New York: William Morrow, 2001.
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