

Eat it

Judie Davis

1968

As a belated Mother's Day present—a tribute to my mother (who said I was no lady for using the word “bullshit” in my last column).

Like other little girls, I learned to cook by getting in my mother's way. You know how mothers are, giving menial tasks like watching the egg whites become meringue when what I really wanted to do was make a wedding cake.

My mother was always big on desserts with expensive ingredients, never skimping, always throwing in more nuts than was necessary. Christmas time meant boxes of intricate little goodies for my favorite teachers; fruit breads, mouth melting butter ball cookies rolled in powder sugar, date bars thick with black sweetness between oatmeal layers, fruit cakes moist and dark with nuts and brandy. Mom still makes all these things at Christmas; ask someone about my Christmas parties.

I came up with a healthy enjoyable attitude about food. Cooking and eating were not just necessities, but fun.

Sunday breakfast was always Dad's thing. Now my father is something else again. He grows a special strain of garlic which he firmly believes cures colds, increases longevity as well as the virtues of strength and patience, and any other ills of man.

Dad is always sneaking garlic into whatever Mom cooks. Sometimes she would put on a roast or some chili and we'd come back from shopping to find the whole house smelling like garlic. The conflict between enough and too much still continues.

Dad's Sunday breakfast is usually bacon, eggs, and potatoes fried with onions, and you guessed it, garlic. Lots of coffee, some of Mom's coffee cake, and newspapers spread all over made Sunday special. It's a nice tradition that I still enjoy keeping.

Second to garlic, my father believes in rhubarb. Every year he tries to make rhubarb wine, and every year it turns moldy and competes with the garlic smell. Mom saves the day with a rhubarb custard pie;

1-1/2 cups sugar

1/4 cup flour

1 teas. nutmeg

3 slightly beaten eggs

2 Tablesp. butter

4 cups rhubarb, cut into 1 inch slices

pastry for 9 inch lattice topped pie.

Combine sugar, flour, nutmeg; beat into eggs. Stir in rhubarb. Line 9 inch pie plate with pastry; fill. Dot with butter, top with lattice crust, flute edge. Bake in hot oven, 400 degrees for 50–60 minutes. Cool.

This next recipe is a tasty and easy to make apple cake which Mom calls apple pan dowdy and which Paul Goodman once ate (a real highlight of my career).

Beat together in one bowl:

1-3/4 cups sugar and 2 eggs.

And 1 cup vegetable oil.

In another bowl combine 2 cups flour,
1 teasp. baking soda,
1 teasp. cinnamon,
dash salt.

Add this to the other bowl of wet ingredients. Fold in 4 medium apples chopped fine, 1 teasp. vanilla, 1/2 cup or more chopped nuts and some raisins, if you like.

Bake in a 350 degree oven 30 to 50 minutes.

NOTE: A public thank you to Stroh brewery for a great May Day fest of food and beer gotten together by the Metro staff.

I remember making a vow to someone to drink only Stroh beer for the rest of my life because I thought it was so nice of them to give us something free. It was not a rash statement. People remember nice things like that. Is there any other brewery who wishes to woo me?



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