



LET'S ENTERTAIN TOGETHER

Spring 2006

With the arrival of Spring it's time to shake off those winter blahs and turn our focus to the great outdoors. With the sun shining stronger each day, the memory of backyard BBQ's will be a reality before you can say . . . crudités!

Springtime is also a great time to start planning your summer celebrations - weddings, anniversaries, birthday parties, and family gatherings of all kinds. I am fantastic at keeping secrets so why not let me help plan that surprise party!

Perhaps you'd like to host an office party where staff can gather outside around a fantastic BBQ or perhaps a garden party? I have some terrific menu ideas full of scrumptious dishes we could serve to your guests. I can also arrange to rent all the necessary equipment and dishes—whatever you need!

Dial a Chef is for sale to the highest bidder! One lucky bidder will have the opportunity to purchase my services on March 23rd during the Annual Celebrity Chef's Auction at the Canada Aviation Museum. From 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM in support of the Canadian Arthritis Society.



Looking for an afternoon of entertainment? Why not plan to invite a few friends over, open a bottle of wine and sit back and allow me to share some of my trade secrets? I can come to your home and teach you how to prepare some of your favourite foods. It is a demonstration class that culminates with a taste for everyone - a fun way to enjoy a rainy Sunday afternoon!

creativa

Nestled in the Cultural Heart of the Rideau just three minutes from Merrickville, **CREATIVA** is a charming little retreat village, specializing in the inspiration and celebration of creativity through retreats, workshops and special events. **CREATIVA** is a friendly, non-denominational centre, which is also available to small groups (up to 14 people) who are looking for a quiet, private and intimate space to gather overnight. The centre is perfect for workshops, learning retreats, business meetings, small weddings (a licensed marriage officiant is available) and family gatherings.

CREATIVA is just a 45-minute drive from downtown Ottawa. To reserve, please contact Evelyn at (613) 269-2545 or reachus@creativavillage.ca.



Saffron

Coming from the dried stigmas of the saffron crocus, it takes 75,000 blossoms or 225,000 hand-picked stigmas to make a single pound which explains why it is the world's most expensive spice.

Paëlla

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| 1 T. olive oil | 5 bacon slices, chopped |
| 1 whole chicken (3-1/2 lbs)
(cut into 8 pieces) | 2 cups chopped onion |
| 2 cups long grain white rice | 4 cloves minced garlic |
| 1/2 t. crushed saffron threads | 1 7 oz. jar roasted sliced
pimentos with juice |
| 2 cups bottled clam juice | 1-1/2 cups chicken broth |
| 1 lb. large uncooked shrimp
peeled and deveined | 1 lb cleaned squid, bodies
cut into 1/2" rings |
| 1 dozen clams, scrubbed | 1 dozen mussels, scrubbed
and debearded |
| 1 cup frozen green peas, thawed | |
| Lemon wedges | |

Preheat oven to 450°F. Heat olive oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add chopped bacon and cook until fat is rendered, about 6 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels and drain. Set aside.

Sprinkle chicken pieces with salt and pepper. Add chicken to bacon drippings in pot and cook over medium heat until brown, about 7 minutes per side. Using tongs, remove chicken from pot.

Add chopped onions and garlic to pot and sauté until beginning to brown, scraping up any browned bits, about 10 minutes. Stir in rice, roasted pimentos with juices and saffron. Add clam juice and chicken stock to pot and bring mixture to simmer. Remove from heat.

Pour rice mixture into 15x10x2-inch glass baking dish. Arrange chicken, shrimp, squid, clams and mussels in rice mixture. Sprinkle with chopped bacon and peas. Cover with foil.

Bake paella until chicken is cooked through, clams and mussels open and rice is tender, about 45 minutes (discard any clams and mussels that do not open). Remove foil from baking dish. Let paella stand 10 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges. Makes 6 to 8 servings. Enjoy!

As always, I look forward to cooking for you!

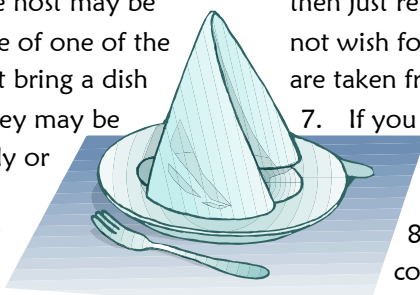
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10 Ways to Be a Good Guest!

As often as we are the host or hostess at a party, we are also in the role of being the guest. It's easy when you're the guest to feel like you have little responsibility for the success of the party. But if you'd like to be a guest who is always invited back for the next party, here are tips to make you the kind of good guest who is welcome at anybody's table!

1. Respond to your invitation as soon as you know (an no later than the stated RSVP date) whether or not you can attend the party. That way your host can make plans knowing the exact number of guests who will be attending.
2. Ask if you can contribute anything to the meal such as an appetizer, side dish or dessert. The host may be relieved to have someone take charge of one of the courses for her. However, do not just bring a dish without running it by your hosts. They may be making something very similar already or your dish may clash with a carefully planned menu. Similarly, if you bring a bottle of wine as a host gift, you shouldn't expect it to be served with the meal. The hostess may already have selected the wines to complement the meal.
3. Not a cook? Then offer to bring a table or buffet centerpiece. Once again, don't bring this if your host has declined the offer as there may already be a specific decorating scheme planned.
4. If you have the time, offer to come a little earlier than the other guests to help with pre-party setup. But if your offer is accepted, don't be late - your host will be counting on you.
5. Arrive at a dinner party on time. Some hostesses plan the timing of their meals very precisely, and you wouldn't want to hold up the meal and spoil the food for everyone else.
6. When the meal is over, ask your hostess if you can help clear the table. But if the answer is "no thanks", then just relax and leave things alone. The host may not wish for everyone to feel rushed as their plates are taken from them mid-bite.
7. If you see the host frantically cleaning in the kitchen after the meal is over, offer to help.
8. Do your part to be friendly and make conversation with other guests. You're part of the chemistry that will make the party a success.
9. Don't raise a conversation topic that you know will cause dissension among that particular group of guests.
10. Drink responsibly. Your host may be serving alcoholic beverages to complement the meal, but it doesn't mean everyone should become a sloppy drunk by the end of the party. Nor does the host want any of the guests to be hit with a DWI violation, or worse, on their way home.



Call (800) 718-5918 for information about April specials!



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EMERGENCY?
CALL
(800) 718-5918**

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Dial-A-Chef Gift Certificate!**