



Personal Chef Service

Presents

THE INSIDE SCOOP

BEEP! BEEP! Horn Tooting Below:

Your food & service was great, and made for a nice worry free evening. It was a comfort knowing that I had someone to take of all the food, serving, and clean up.

– **Mike H, Brampton**

Thank you for coming on such a stormy night to make dinner. It more than met my expectations. The dinner was really lovely and I really enjoyed myself. The experience was so much better than going out for dinner and the food was wonderful.

– **Anna, Caledon East**

“Local” is the new “Organic”

You probably started hearing people refer to food as “organic” about 10 years ago. The word is used to refer to food that was produced without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides/herbicides. That word “organic” is now used on many products as a way of implying it’s better for you than the regular version.

Have you heard much about “local” food? The idea behind promoting local food is to support our local economy while helping the environment by not shipping food away from where it is grown. As much as we all love the look of strawberries in February, we are almost always disappointed when we get them home.

Locally grown food tastes better than their imported counterparts because it is harvested at the peak of ripeness and spared a cross country trip in a truck.

I am a big fan of farmers markets, which are popping up all over, even

during the week in many locations. Buying directly from the farmers give you a chance to save money and meet the people who grow your food. As well as you help them make a better profit by cutting out the middle man.

Alternately, many grocery stores are labelling which items are locally grown to help you make informed decisions.

Something our society has moved away from is preserving food for the winter. You can save money and savour the freshest local produce all winter long by learning how to preserve food. You can pickle, can, and freeze many vegetables and fruit for later consumption. [Here](#) is a website that shows you what vegetables are ready and when so you can keep your eyes peeled for the freshest of local produce.

Ask for local products when shopping and support our local farmers whenever possible.

How to Eat Local Through the Winter...

It’s officially spring but it sure feels like winter. My cooking habits haven't changed to Spring mode yet so I will share what I’ve been doing to eat local in our house.

While there aren’t any farm markets to go to there are crops that are still available fresh from last fall. I’m talking about the super exciting, super tasty, mega fun... Root vegetables! OK, I know they aren’t exciting but they are healthy and there are some tasty and very satisfying ways to eat carrots, parsnips, beets, and rutabaga (you know that brown/yellow wax coated thing). Not to mention

cabbages, apples, and hothouse cucumbers.

Roasting any combination of root veg is a simple and tasty addition to a meal. Rutabaga can be a low-carb substitute for potatoes in latkes, or hash browns. Added to stews or boiled with carrots and mashed together with butter is good too.

I keep roasted beets in the fridge to add to salads with goat cheese and toasted pecans. Cabbage is a hearty addition to stir-fry while coleslaw is tasty, healthy, and easy to prepare.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like recipe ideas.

Root Vegetables

Roasted Beets

- Preheat oven to 400 deg
- Trim root and stem ends
- Scrub skin
- Pile on tin foil sheet
- Drizzle with olive oil
- Sprinkle with S & P
- Add a couple TBSP water
- Fold foil ends together and seal package
- Roast on sheet pan 1 hour or until tender.

Eat warm with a squeeze of orange or cool and add to salads.

Carrot & Rutabaga Mash

- Peel and chop equal amounts of carrots and rutabaga into 1 cm pieces
- Add to pot and cover with cold water
- Add 1 tsp salt
- Cover and bring to a boil
- Reduce heat and simmer 15-20 minutes
- Drain and mash with butter, S & P to taste

Serve as side dish with any roast beast or as base for any egg preparation.

Coleslaw

- 3 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 cup shredded carrot
- 3 scallions sliced thin
- 1/2 red pepper julienned
- 1/2 cup each yogurt and mayonnaise
- Zest & juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tsp celery seed & dried thyme

Combine dressing ingredients first then toss with shredded veg. Season with S & P.

Tasty & Simple Dinners are a Braise!

So you are trying to save a little money and you see some meat on sale but have no idea how to cook it. The answer most likely is: braise. Braising means to cook a food at a low temperature for a long time with enough liquid to almost cover the food item 80%.

If you use a slow cooker, then you have a braising machine; hooray for you! Feel free to skip to the recipe link.

Slow cookers develop a low heat and can keep it there for a long time. You might notice slow cooker recipes all have liquid too. The reason is because that cheap piece of meat probably has a lot of connective tissue that needs to cook for a long time to become soft. In fact, that tough connective tissue will eventually break down and melt into gelatine which will leave the meat tender and moist feeling.

The best part is that cheap cut of meat has much more flavour than

an expensive, tender cut because the tough meat was used more by the animal, thus imparting more flavour. So you get to save money and have tasty food at the same time.

To braise you need a large pot with a lid that can hold the meat you want to cook. You also need some liquid and here is a chance to add more flavour with wine, beer, stock/broth, juice, or even coffee or tea. Onions, carrots, and celery will add flavour to the sauce/gravy but you can use whatever you have on hand.

First you will want to brown the outside of the meat over medium high heat, then add vegetables and liquid. Bring to boil and cover with lid. Now you can either turn the heat down to low/medium-low on the stovetop or put the whole pot into a 325 degree oven for 2-3 hours until tender. Serve with your favourite side dishes and crusty bread.

[Here](#) is a great seasonal recipe for beef stew to try. Enjoy!



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- Seniors

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