

La Petite Chef: TESSEYMAN, Brenda.

Simple approaches to everyday cooking

By Sarah MacWhirter

The Intelligencer

When she talks about cooking, Brenda Tesseyman's voice simmers with excitement.

Better known as "La Petite Chef," Tesseyman hosts a cooking show (of the same name) which is aired on Cablevue 4 in Quinte, and is shown in Trenton, Gananoque and Kingston as well.

Her face is well known: while grocery shopping, customers stop to inspect the items in her grocery cart.

Her voice is familiar as well: she has a radio program called "The Culinary Corner" which is heard Wednesday nights at 11:45 a.m. on 800 CJBQ.

Now, Tesseyman is moving in to the world of print with the publication of her first cookbook, *Cooking With Brenda, La Petite Chef*.

Almost 100 recipes, most of which were shown on her program, are in the book which will sell for under \$15.

Tesseyman provides readers with a wide range of recipes, most of which follow her approach to day-to-day cooking: fast, nutritious, and, "I still like to make it look good."

She shows readers how to cook with ingredients they may find unusual — ingredients like couscous, polenta, goat's cheese, balsamic vinegar, philo pastry, and more.

"People don't know how to use them and what wonderful flavor they'll get out of them," she says with enthusiasm.

Knowing how and when to use particular ingredients can make a huge difference in a quickly-assembled meal.

"I want people to realize they can go home, open a can, add two or three ingredients and cook a good meal. It should be fun," Tesseyman says.

For Tesseyman, her husband and son, mealtime is family time. Though she will spend hours preparing gourmet meals for company, she believes cooking during the week shouldn't be a chore.

She wants people to use her recipes as a guide, not a set-in-stone rulebook.

"If I do it and you don't like it, if you don't like hot peppers for example, don't put them in. Improvise. It's fun to improvise," she says. "When you're baking, you do have to follow the rules. But, with anything else, you can follow individual tastes."

To this end, hints and tips are included with recipes to give readers more ideas.

And, Tesseyman transforms tricky, time-consuming recipes into snappy, new favorites. Take her chocolate mousse recipe, for example. What used to take hours now requires chocolate chips and a mere five minutes. "I'd say it is as good as any chocolate mousse I've ever had," Tesseyman says.

Different cooking styles and techniques are explained, and international flavors, from Mexican to Mediterranean, are explored.

"There's no such thing as a new recipe. Everything is old with a new twist," she says.

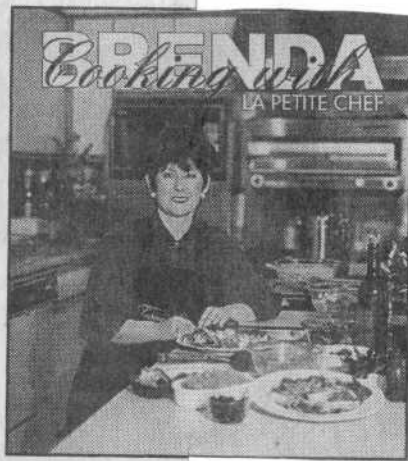
If you think the recipes and techniques sound too exotic, fear not.

"Everything I try to do, 99 per cent of it (ingredients) you can buy in the area. I also try to use pans and equipment most people would use," she says.

For someone who hadn't a clue about cooking when she married, Tesseyman's culinary knowledge is extensive. After graduating from the three-year Hotel and Restaurant program at Loyalist College and the two-year professional food administration and chef training program at George Brown College, Tesseyman attended the Cordon Bleu Cookery School in London, England. She has her Certification of Qualification — Cook — Red Seal.

After working in the food industry, Tesseyman now works out of her home. The television show is filmed in her kitchen — the burnt fan tassels attest to that!, and she conducts cooking classes as well.

Her book will be available around mid-October at Semple's Your Independent Grocer, W.&R. Greenley Booksellers, Mr. Grocer's in Trenton, Trent Valley Distributors, other stores in the area and through Tesseyman herself, by calling 969-1839.



CONT'D →

Intell. p13
Oct 2/96