

Phyllo pizza a great casual meal

Hi there and welcome to our cooking corner! This is the first instalment of our weekly column.

"We" are Gerry and Lori Kentner from Kentner's Catering. Kentner's was started by Dave and Gerry Kentner 25 years ago and Lori (their daughter) came into the business about 12 years ago.

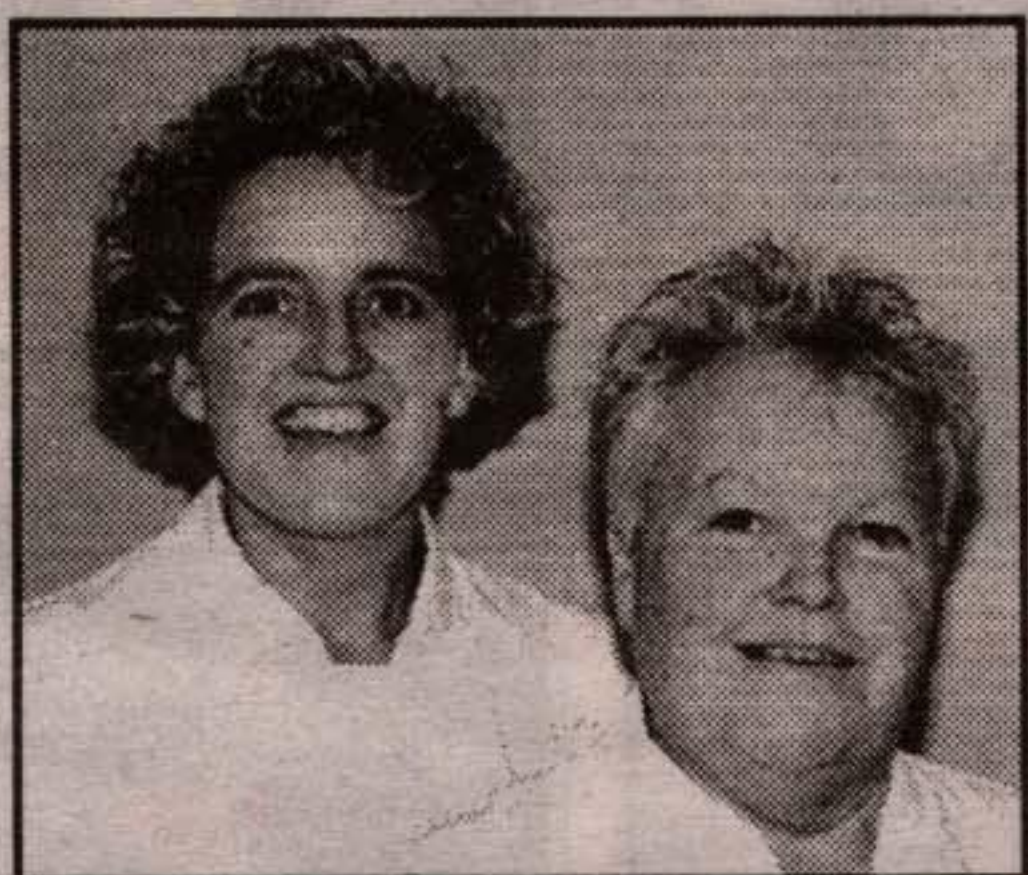
Gerry is the chef at Kentner's and her love of food is well-ingrained. It began with her grandmother who was the cook for the hotel in Acton. She used to stand at the stove with her little wooden spoon and now, many years later Gerry is doing the same thing. Lori, of course, gained her appreciation for the art of cooking from Gerry.

Both of us spend a lot of their spare time reading magazines, newspapers and cookbooks in the never-ending pursuit of good recipes and trivial information about food— which is what lead us to start this column, thinking there were probably others out there looking for the same thing.

If you have any suggestions for things you would like to see in the column, comments or food questions, please send them in to The Independent & Free Press and we will do our best to address them.

What's cookin'

By Lori and Gerry Kentner



HOMEMADE PIZZA

The week's recipe is for spinach phyllo pizza which can cut into hors d'oeuvre-sized pieces, or is even better as an entree with a fresh salad, a bottle of wine and a warm winter fireplace. It makes a wonderful casual dinner for family or friends.

Once you have your pizza dough, take a large metal bowl and swirl a couple of teaspoons of olive oil around the whole bowl. Roll your dough around in the oil so the whole thing is covered. Then cover the bowl with a dry kitchen towel and let sit.

If you are in a hurry, put the bowl in a warm place and it only needs to rise for a couple of hours. If you do this in the morning, leave the bowl on the counter (not anywhere particularly warm) and let sit all day.

Now, take any kind of vegetables that you like on your

pizza and chop them up. Place them in a fry pan with a dribble of olive oil. Saute until soft.

You can do all the veggies at the same time; you don't have to separate them. The reason for this is so they will have a better texture and flavor on the pizza; they won't be crunchy.

Take your pizza dough that has risen (it should have doubled in size) and spread it on a baking sheet. Then spread a layer of spaghetti sauce (homemade is great, but store-bought works fine, too).

Top the sauce with your favorite spices— basil, oregano, Italian seasoning, whichever you like. Then add the vegetables on top.

You can add meat like bacon, ground beef, sausage, salami (make sure the meat is pre-cooked— don't put it on pizza raw) or leave it vegetarian. Add grated cheese— mozzarella is wonderful, cheddar, goat, and

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lbs spinach (wash leaves and drain)
- 5 tbsp unsalted butter, melted and kept warm
- Seven 17"x12" phyllo sheets, thawed, stacked between 2 sheets of plastic wrap and covered with towel
- 6 tbsp grated parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp mint leaves, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup red onion thinly sliced
- 2/3 cup feta cheese, finely crumbled
- 1 1/2 tbsp olive oil

Method

1. Fill a pot with clean spinach leaves. Cover with cold water. Place over medium heat and cook until spinach is limp. Place in collander and rinse with cold water. Drain well.

2. Place thinly sliced red onions in a pan with a drizzle of olive oil and cook until onion is softened (onions can be cooked until caramelized for a different flavor).

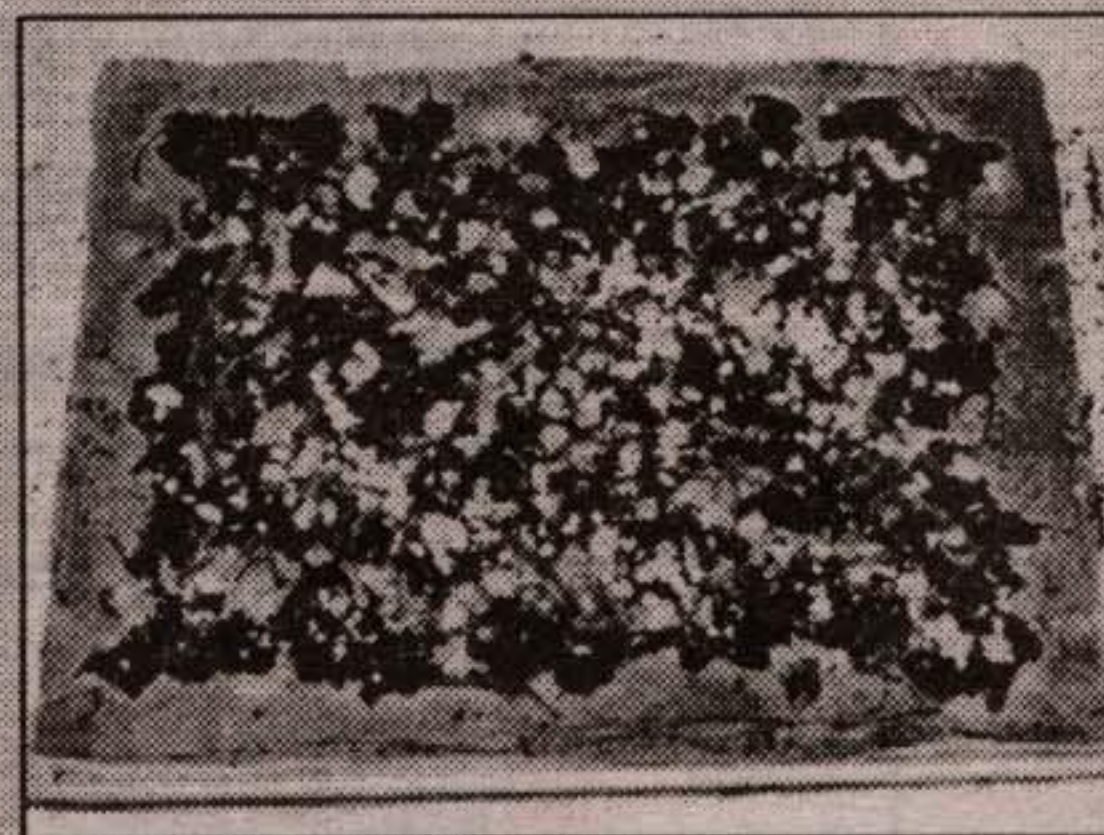
3. Preheat oven to 400 F

4. Put one phyllo sheet on baking sheet and brush lightly with butter. Sprinkle with 1 tbsp. parmesan cheese and top with another phyllo sheet, pressing firmly to adhere to bottom layer. Continue to layer remaining phyllo sheets with butter and parmesan in same manner, ending with phyllo sheet. Brush top with remaining butter and bake crust in middle of oven for 5 minutes.

5. Gently squeeze spinach dry and arrange evenly on crust, leaving a one inch border all around. Sprinkle mint over spinach and season with salt and pepper. Scatter onion and feta over spinach and drizzle with oil.

6. Bake pizza in middle of oven approx. 10-15 minutes until cheese is melted.

7. Cut pizza into hors d'oeuvre-sized squares. This can be served hot or at room temperature if you wish to make it in advance.



feta are all good, too.

Bake in a preheated oven at 400 degrees for approximately

20 minutes until the crust is golden brown on the bottom and the cheese is melted.



CELEBRITY COOKS

by Alex Trenton, D.D., F.C.D. (A)

Denturist

Georgetown Denture Clinic

"ALEX'S PEAR CRISP!"

- 8-10 pears peeled, sliced
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup halved marashino cherries
- 1/2 cup marashino cherry juice
- 1 baby food jar of pear juice
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups of granola cereal or oat bran
- 3 heaping tablespoons of brown sugar

Grease with butter oval small tin roaster. Place pears in tin, then cherries, drizzle cherry juice. Combine butter with cereal crumbs, then sprinkle over pears, drizzle pear juice and sprinkle brown sugar. Bake at 350° for about 40 minutes. Cover for first 20 minutes, then remove cover to brown top. Serve with vanilla ice cream.

MAKES: 6-8 SERVINGS ENJOY!!!!

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