

The best compliment of all...

Gerry and I have been writing this column for four years now. We have been very fortunate over those years to have received many, many kind words and compliments from our readers. Sometimes you call, write or speak to us on the street with suggestions and questions or sometimes you just want to let us know that you are reading it. That is wonderful and we are so pleased that you enjoy it, because we enjoy writing it!

But today, I walked into the office and received the best compliment of all. There was a note on my desk from Dave Kentner (my Dad) telling me that one of the players in the dressing room at the hockey game on the weekend wanted to know a good recipe for smoked salmon, and could we please write one in an upcoming column.

Well, I guess it's a little sexist, but most of our readers seem to be female. Not all, but most. So to have a guy—and a sports loving guy at that—be interested enough to ask about a recipe! Yahoo! That is just fabulous! I'm so excited I can hardly concentrate! So, Mr. Hockey Player—whoever you are, thank you very much, you made my day—and this week's column is for you!

Before we carry on any further, let's just make sure we are talking about the same thing. There are two types of smoked salmon—hot-smoked and cold-smoked. The hot and cold does

What's cookin'

Lori and Gerry Kentner



not refer to the current temperature of the fish; it refers to how it was smoked in the first place.

Cold-smoked salmon is the type most commonly thought of. It is prepared using a method of smoking that does not cook the fish; it just cures it. Thus you are left with salmon that is anywhere from pink to bright red in colour (depending on the quality), it is most commonly sold pre-sliced in thin slices and it has a very fragile, soft texture. This is the more expensive of the two kinds.

Then there is hot-smoked salmon. This salmon is cooked during the smoking process. So the end result is a firm, pale-pink to dark-pink coloured fish that breaks off in chunks. (I often hear of people receiving this type of salmon as a gift from friends or relatives in British Columbia).

Both versions of the smoked salmon are very nice. And, in my opinion, both are best served just as they are. The cold-smoked salmon is very moist—so serve it with some thinly sliced pumpernickel bread or a baguette, some cream cheese, capers,

lemon and fresh parsley. Your guests can then make little canapés out of it. The hot-smoked salmon is a little drier, so serve it with a dill/mayonnaise sauce, some sliced breads and fresh lemon—and again, your guests will make little canapés (mini open-faced sandwiches) with it.

But, if you really want to make a recipe with your salmon—then here is a very nice one. It will work equally well for either hot-smoked or cold-smoked salmon.

Smoked Salmon Spread

Ingredients

- 250 grams cream cheese
- 4 tbsp sour cream
- 2 tbsp drained horseradish
- 5 tsp lemon juice
- 1/2 pound smoked salmon, shredded
- 2 tsp capers

Method

Beat cream cheese (with a fork or with beaters) until fluffy. Mix in sour cream, horseradish and lemon. Gently fold in salmon and capers. Transfer to serving dish and refrigerate if not serving immediately. If you have refrigerated this dish, then remove from the refrigerator one hour prior to serving, so that it can soften up.

Have fun and keep cooking!

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Ratatouille

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 large Spanish onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium eggplant, skin left on, chopped large
- 2 small or one medium zucchini, skin on, chopped large
- 2 large fresh tomatoes, chopped large
- 1/2 tsp each thyme, oregano, salt and pepper

Method

1. Sauté garlic and onion in olive oil until translucent
2. Add remaining vegetables and spices and simmer approximately one hour covered until vegetables soften, but still retain their shape.
3. Serve immediately.

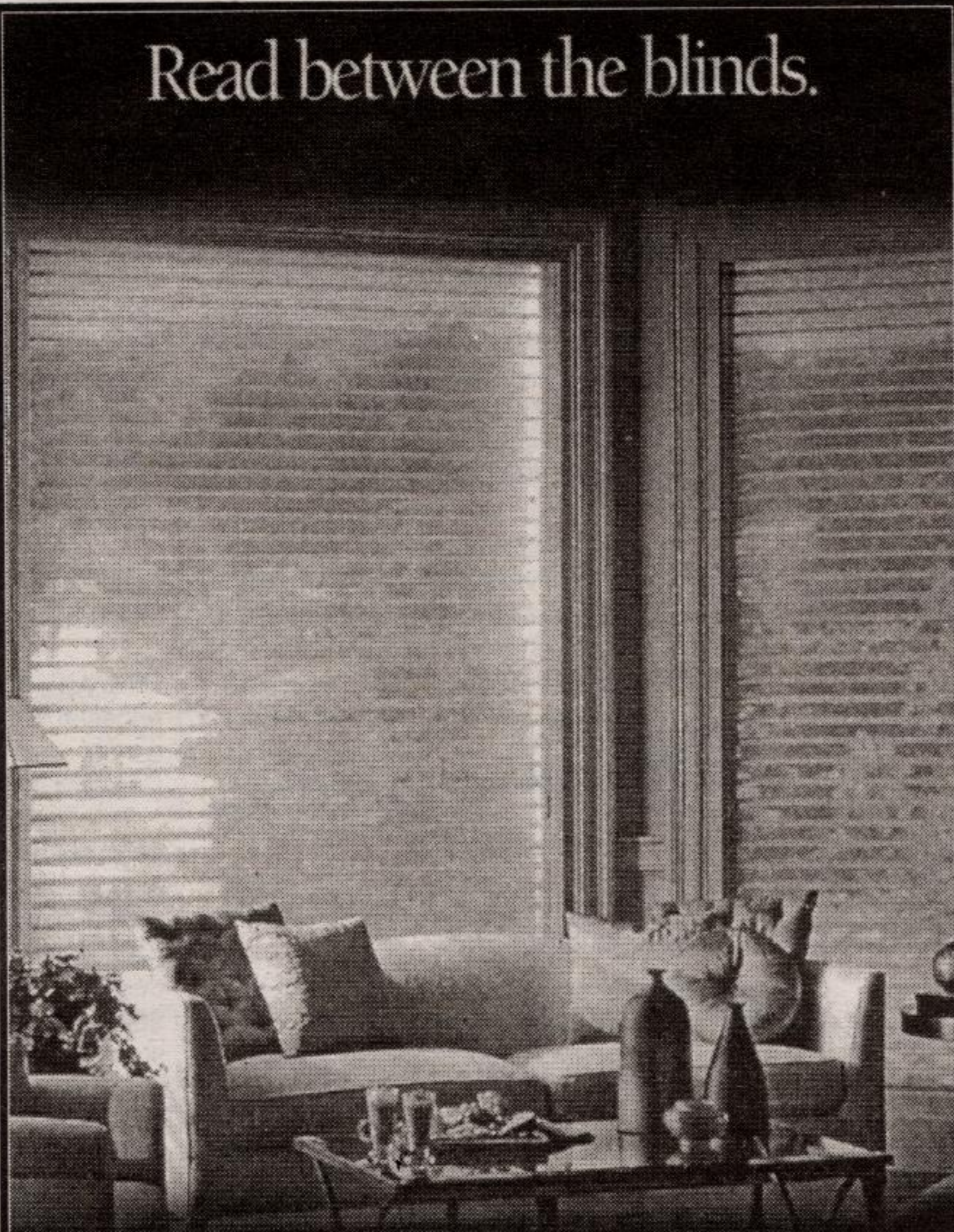


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