

Food fan Gerry takes: Fascinating journey through the Ontario Food Terminal

Gerry is writing today

I crossed another wish off my life's list last week. You know, the ongoing list of places we are going to go, things we want to see and people we hope to visit. Some of these things are life-long wishes, some are more recent additions, but the list is ever-changing.

We spent a morning at the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto. Not at 6 a.m., when the action starts for buyers, but at a more reasonable 8 a.m. The terminal is open to card-holding accounts only and not the general public, but a former business associate (and friend) took us on a tour.

While running our catering business, the priority was never to spend a morning here, but now in retirement, some of these things can happen. And I was excited! All our years in the food business makes me curious as to how our produce is distributed.

We first drove in and parked (which was a task in itself, because it was so busy). We then proceeded to walk up and down the aisles of outdoor vendors, pretty well all local Ontario farmers selling their wares.

What a beehive of activity—trucks everywhere, tow motors moving skids and skids of produce to trucks. And I do mean skids—the quantities were enormous—hundreds of cases of product stacked 20, 30 or more feet high. There was everything you'd ever see on your dinner table: bushels and bushels of tomatoes of every kind, baking potatoes, baby potatoes, red potatoes, white potatoes, yellow flesh potatoes by the hundreds of cases. Peppers of every shape and colour, peaches which were very plentiful, onions, lettuces. There were huge containers of

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watermelons, cantelopes and cucumbers.

You name it—I was in awe. The smell of fresh basil permeated the air. All the plants (including basil) that we purchase at grocery stores and markets begin here too. Even fresh cut flower bouquets, fall mums and hanging baskets are all available.

Much of the produce in the stalls was already sold by the vendor long before 10 a.m. They were only there waiting for buyers to pickup. Not surprisingly, a good portion of the sales happen by phone and early risers, who only need to choose the quality they want and the quantity they need.

We then moved on to the indoor vendors, whose stores are each one huge walk-in cooler or several coolers, depending on the size of the company. I recognized many names as we walked through the stalls and again was amazed at the staggering volume of product. And this goes on five days a week!

Most of the product sold indoors is not local, but from all over the world. This is where year round, your produce is shipped from. The oranges were stacked to the ceiling along with cases of salad greens, apples, lemons, etc. I saw labels from Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, South America, Israel, France, Spain, China,

South Africa and more.

Nearly every U.S. state was represented and I found out that nearly all of our lemons come from Argentina—I didn't know that!

You had to be very careful where you walked, for there were trucks and carts and people loading everywhere. How exciting to be at the centre of this huge, bustling industry and watch it all take place firsthand.

I now realize the incredible amount of effort that goes into the food delivery system—it is a

huge chain, starting with farmers arriving with their goods at 5 a.m.!

My next outing will be to visit the Holland Marsh at Hwy 9 & 400 Highway where much of our local produce is grown. I'd like to visit the markets, tour around the farms, see the rich black earth and feel good about our land and what we produce.

Have fun and keep cooking!

(Lori and Gerry Kentner can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

Applesauce Spice Cake

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup applesauce
- 1 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup raisins

Method

Cream shortening and sugar. Add egg and mix well.

Mix all dry ingredients together in a separate bowl.

Add dry ingredients to shortening mixture, alternating with applesauce (starting with a dry addition and ending with a dry addition).



Pour into a greased 8-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees F. for one hour.

Cook's Note: you can use half shortening and half butter if you like in this recipe. You can also bake these into muffins instead of cake if you prefer—just ensure the muffin tins are well greased or sprayed with non-stick spray and then bake the mixture for approximately 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What is a permanent processed reline?

A: A processed reline is a way of re-basing your denture with the same type of long cure from which it was originally made. This will make the denture fit more snugly to your ridge.

Q: Will it change the appearance of my teeth?

A: No, it only re-fits the denture to your ridge, no change of tooth position takes place.

Q: What are soft, or cushion relines?

A: A permanent soft rubber lining is applied to the lower denture inside ridge. Soft, or cushion relines are an excellent alternative for those who have sensitive oral tissue and tend to get frequent sore spots. A properly applied soft lining can provide years of comfortable chewing and smiling!

Q: How long will it take?

A: Most relines commenced in the morning are completed and returned to the patient that afternoon.

Q: What if I'm a working person and can't give up my teeth for a day?

A: The alternative is to bring your dentures in after work. It can be relined and returned to you the next morning by 8:00 a.m., or come in after work one day, and pick them up after work the following day. Relining an existing denture is an economical way to prolong the life of your plate by restoring and maintaining a firm comfortable fit.

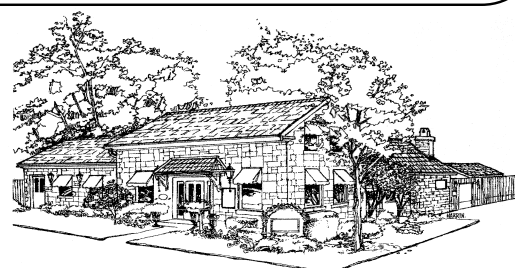
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