

Meeting with renowned Toronto chef prompts idea of preserves exchange

I had the opportunity to meet and talk with Jaime Kennedy last week. I'm not sure if you will all recognize his name—surely the foodies in the crowd will.

Jaime Kennedy is a great chef. He started cooking quite young, but his career really took off when he worked in the kitchen of a wonderful restaurant called Scaramouche in Toronto. Since then Jaime has gone on to open a restaurant at the Royal Ontario Museum, another restaurant and wine bar close to the St. Lawrence Market downtown and another at the new Gardener Museum, just having opened this one this summer.

It's not all that often that I get such big name chefs at my cooking school—this was a real treat. Jaime was there helping to promote a calendar that has been put together by some of Ontario's greatest chefs in support of the Bloorview Kids Rehab Centre.

This beautiful, full colour glossy calendar is a keeper—full of fascinating recipes from David Lee of Splendido, Lino Collevocchio of Via Allegro, Keith Frogget of Scaramouche, Lynn Crawford of The Four Seasons, Jaime Kennedy of Jaime Kennedy Restaurant, Chris McDonald of Cava, Mark McEwan of North 44 and Bymark, Didier Leroy of Didier, Claudio Aprile of

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



Senses, Pat Riley of Perigee, Manuel Vilela of Chiado, Anthony Walsh of Canoe and Susur Lee of Susur/Lee. The calendar will be on sale soon in stores—a great Christmas gift for a great cause.

The evening was an opportunity to sit and listen to Jaime talk about his passion for food, his philosophies on organic farming, his belief in a strong connection between the grower and the end user, his lifestyle, his business, his restaurants, his future plans and much more.

I was very surprised to find out that Jaime is mild-mannered, soft spoken and perhaps even shy. Not what I was expecting at all. I suppose since most of the chefs that I work with are also teachers, their personalities are very different and I assume that all chefs are boisterous and verbose.

As a special treat, Jaime brought along a wide variety of preserves—

both fruit and vegetables for us to sample. With such a strong devotion to using only the freshest and only local produce; preserving has become an integral part of his business. We sampled sour cherries preserved in rum (yummy), pickled garlic scapes (fabulous), pickled wild leeks (never had them before—very cool), dill pickles (almost as good as my mom's), preserved pears (can't wait to do them myself) and more.

So now Jaime has inspired us. While at the evening, my good friend Ken Marchant suggested that since none of us has time to make that many preserves, how about we all tackle one kind and then we have a preserves exchange—just like a cookie exchange. Fabulous idea!

So, Gerry, Ken and myself are going to get working on some preserving and one day down the line, we will print the successful recipes for you to enjoy. It may not be until a year from now, because, of course, we have to get these fruits and veggies when they are in season and preserve them and sample them. But we'll get on it a.s.a.p.!

Have fun and keep cooking!

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

Old Fashioned Soft Pumpkin Cookies

(Makes three dozen)

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup purée pumpkin
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



For Glaze

- 2 cups sifted, powdered sugar
- 3 tbsp milk
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Method

Combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt in a medium bowl. Set aside.

Beat sugar and butter in large mixer bowl until well blended.

Add pumpkin, egg and vanilla to butter mixture and beat until smooth.

Gradually beat in flour mixture.

Drop by rounded tablespoons onto greased baking sheets.

Bake in preheated 350 degree F oven for 15-18 minutes or until edges are firm.

Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

To prepare glaze, combine powdered sugar, milk, melted butter and vanilla in a small bowl until smooth. Drizzle glaze over cookies.

Mark's Work Warehouse

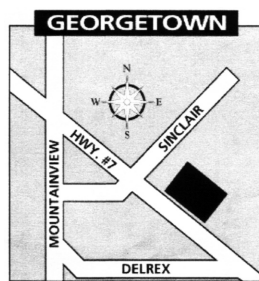
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