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Chef's Apron**

Contact Susan Nye at
susannye@tds.net
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More information the web at
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My Dad began skiing as a young boy and claims to have been the youngest member of the Brockton Ski Club. He continued to ski throughout high school and college. His trips to the mountains became fewer and farther between after he got married and made the transition from student to husband and salesman. After my sister and I were born, he had no time for the slopes. His skis were left in the corner of the garage except for the occasional run or two down the sledding hill at the local golf course.

He obviously missed the sport because when I was seven and my sister, Brenda, was nine we found skis under the Christmas tree. He had a grand scheme. He would teach us to ski. Everyone would win. We would spend time with Daddy and learn to ski, my Mom would have a break at home and he could enjoy one of his favorite pastimes. Brenda was very excited when she discovered her skis on Christmas morning. And being the older sister, she convinced me that I was excited too.

We learned to ski at Priest's Ski Area. The hill had ten slopes and a handful of rope tows. I seem to remember that it was an apple orchard in the off-season. There was no snow making and we trusted Mother Nature for our weekend fun. My sister was much better at it than I. My feet were always cold and I thought that the best thing about skiing was the hot cocoa. None of the trails were very long; the wait in line and ride up took a lot longer than the ski down.

It may be my imagination, but I seem to remember that ancient Ford pick-ups ran the rope tows. The tows ran fast enough to give whip-lash to little girls or at least jerk our arms out of their sockets. At the bottom of the hill we'd take a deep breath, marshal our courage and grab on for dear life. Gas was cheap in those days and a daily lift ticket cost a dollar. Within a year or two we were proud season pass holders, regulars at the hill. The cost for the three of us? A grand total of \$25.

As we got older and a bit more adept, my Dad treated us to trips to New Hampshire. We skied on real mountains with real lifts, without apple trees or ancient Fords. Our neighbors the Pierces introduced us to King Ridge, the upside down mountain. Unlike most resorts, the parking lot and lodge were on the top of the hill. It was world's coldest parking lot; an icy north wind was always blowing but the view of the surrounding hills from the lodge deck was spectacular.

By the time we were introduced to King Ridge, my brother was four. He and my mother joined us on skis. The trails at King Ridge were quite a bit longer than Priest's; you couldn't see the bottom from the top! And there were T-bars, a definite step up from rope tows. All these upgrades did not come cheap. As long as we bought before Labor Day, a season pass for our family of five was just over \$100. King Ridge was a great family resort and we spent a lot of wonderful, winter weekends and vacations on those trails.

After a long day of skiing we headed home for an evening of après-ski. All the kids went sledding or ice skating. When there was enough snow we jumped off the deck. My nieces now carry on this tradition and are not just terrific skiers but great deck jumpers as well. Cold and wet, we finally headed indoors to warm up, dry off and enjoy a hearty dinner of pasta, beef stew or the occasional fondue. After a day in the cold we had earned it!

I still make a point of getting on the mountain a few times a week although I no longer find hot chocolate the best part of skiing. And while I've given up deck jumping, I continue to enjoy an après-ski evening with good friends and good food around the fire. Enjoy!

Bon appétit! – Susan

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Raviolis in Broth with Turkey Meatballs & Greens

This is a warm and wonderful dish for après-ski. Enjoy!

Serves 4

2 carrots, finely chopped
2 stalks celery, finely chopped
1 onion, finely chopped
3 cloves of garlic, minced
1 teaspoon dried herbs de Provence
Pinch of red pepper flakes or to taste
1/2 cup dry white wine
1 1/2 quarts chicken stock
1 bay leaf
Turkey Meatballs (recipe follows)
16 ounces fresh or frozen cheese raviolis
1 small head escarole, cut in thin strips or a pound of baby spinach
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Olive oil
Grated Parmesan cheese

1. Heat a heavy soup pot over medium heat. Put a little olive oil in the pot; add the onions, carrot, celery, herbs, pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Sauté until the onion is translucent. Add the garlic and sauté 1 or 2 minutes more.
2. Add the white wine, chicken stock and the bay leaf. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes.
3. Raise the heat to high, bring the soup to a boil and add the raviolis. Return to a boil and then reduce to a simmer. Cook according to package directions, less a minute or two.
4. Add the meatballs and escarole. Gently stir to combine. Continue to simmer until the raviolis are al dente, the escarole is wilted and the meatballs are warmed through. Check for seasoning and serve with a sprinkle of Grated Parmesan cheese.

Turkey Meatballs

1/2 small onion, finely chopped
1/2 red bell pepper, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, grated
1 clove garlic, minced
1 pound lean ground turkey
2 tablespoons oatmeal
1 teaspoon dried herbs de Provence
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
Olive oil

1. In a small skillet sauté the onion, pepper and carrot over medium heat until the onion is translucent. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more. Set aside to cool.
2. In a large bowl, toss the remaining ingredients together to combine; add the vegetables and combine.
3. Roll the turkey mixture into 16 little meatballs; dust the meatballs in flour. Heat a little olive oil in a sauté pan. When the oil is hot, add the meatballs. Cook until browned on all sides and cooked through. If you need to, cook in batches but don't crowd the pan.