

Coming soon:
The Winter-Spring
Thursday Night Cooking
Party Schedule

Learn & Laugh

Paris Bistro
French Country Cooking
Tuscan Feast
Moroccan Holiday
... And More ...
Special programs always
available on request

Private Chef Services

Romantic Dinners or
Celebrations for Family &
Friends
At my house or yours.

Cooking with Kids
Birthday Parties

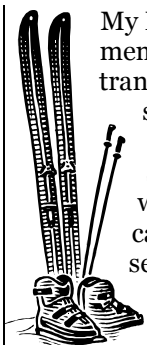
For more information

Visit the web at

www.susannye.com

Contact Susan Nye at
aroundthetable@tds.net or

603/526 7319



My Dad began skiing as a young boy and claims to have been the youngest member of the Brockton Ski Club. But when he got married and made the transition from student to husband and salesman he did not have a lot of time for skiing. After my sister and I were born, he had no time for the slopes, although he was caught on film in a few home movies swooping down the sledding hills at the local golf course. He obviously missed the sport because when I was 7 and my sister was 9 we found skis under the Christmas tree. It caught me unaware; obviously I was not paying attention when my Dad was selling my sister on skiing. He could spend time with his daughters, give my Mom a break and 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 in Mother Nature for our weekend fun. My sister was much better at it than I. My feet were usually 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 as I recall ancient Ford pick-ups ran the rope tows. We grabbed on for dear life at the bottom of the hill. Those tows ran fast enough to give whip-lash to little girls or at least jerk our arms out of their sockets. Gas was cheap in those days and a daily lift ticket cost a dollar. Within a year or two we were season pass holders at the grand cost of \$25 for the three of us; my Dad, Brenda and me.

As we got older and a bit more adept, my Dad treated us to trips up north to New Hampshire. We skied on real mountains with real lifts and without apple trees or ancient Fords. Our neighbors the Pierces introduced us to New London and 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.

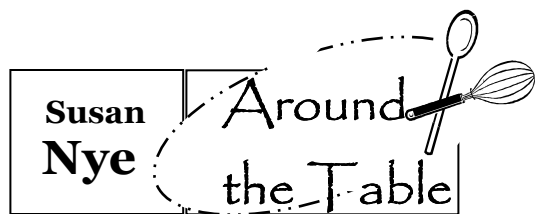
By the time we were introduced to King Ridge, my brother was 4. He and my mother joined us on skis. The trails at King Ridge were quite a bit longer than Priest's; you couldn't see the bottom from the top! And there were T-bars, a definite step up from rope tows. All these upgrades did not come cheap; a season pass for our family of 5 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.

A long day of skiing always meant an evening of après-ski. We kids went sledding and ice skating while our parents relaxed with cocktails by the fire. These activities were followed by hearty dinners of pasta or stews or an occasional fondue. After a day in the freezing cold we had earned it!

I still love to ski and make a point of getting on the mountain a few times every week. And while I no longer find hot chocolate the best part of skiing; I still enjoy an après-ski evening of friends, fun and food around the fire and around the table.

Bon appétit! - Susan

Like many ski hills throughout New England, Priest's and King Ridge were victims of poor snow years. The land was sold and houses now sit on our old winter playgrounds. You can read more about both areas and many more on the New England Lost Ski Area Project web site <http://www.nelsap.org/>.



Learning to Ski

Winter 2007/volume 17

Thursday Night Cooking Parties

Learn & Laugh

Paris Bistro

French Country Cooking

Tuscan Feast

Moroccan Holiday

... And More ...

Special programs always
available on request

Private Chef Services

Romantic Dinners or
Celebrations for Family &
Friends

At my house or yours.

Cooking with Kids
Birthday Parties

For more information

Visit the web at

www.susannye.com

Contact Susan Nye at
aroundthetable@tds.net or

603/526 7319

Beef Stew

Serves 8

Make this stew a day ahead and refrigerate overnight to allow its flavors to mellow and mingle.

3 pounds beef chuck roast, cut into 2-inch cubes
4 ounces slab or thick cut bacon, roughly chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
½ teaspoon chili peppers, or to taste
4-5 stalks of celery cut into 1-inch pieces
3-4 carrots cut into 1-inch pieces
1 pound of shallots, peeled and trimmed and left whole
2 teaspoons herbs de Provence
1 bay leaf
3-4 cups red wine
3-4 cups homemade or low-sodium store-bought beef stock
1 pound mushroom, roughly chopped
Coarse kosher salt
Freshly ground pepper
Flour for dusting the beef
Olive oil
Parsley for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Cook the bacon in a heavy casserole over medium-low heat until crisp and brown. Remove the bacon and reserve. Pour off all but 1-2 tablespoons of bacon fat and reserve.
3. Season the flour with salt and pepper. Lightly dust the beef cubes with the seasoned flour. Brown the beef over medium-high heat a few minutes per side. Add more bacon fat to the pan as required. Remove the beef and add to the reserved bacon.
4. Reduce heat to medium. Add 1-2 tablespoons of bacon fat to the pot; add the onion, sprinkle with chili pepper and sauté until the onion is translucent. If you run out of bacon fat, substitute with a little olive oil. Add the garlic and sauté an additional 1-2 minutes.
5. Put the beef and bacon back into the stew pot. Add the carrot, celery, shallots, herbs de Provence, bay leaf and 3 cups each of wine and beef stock. Cover the pot; transfer to oven. Cook at 350° for 1½ hours.
6. Sauté the mushrooms in a little olive oil over medium heat until lightly browned. Add the mushrooms to the stew pot and stir gently to combine. Check for seasoning; salt and pepper to taste. Return the pot to the oven and continue cooking, covered, until beef is very tender about 1 hour. If the stew gets too dry, add more wine and/or stock.
7. Garnish with parsley and serve.