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Is it graduation or commencement? Take your pick. According to my on-line dictionary **graduation is the completion of a course of academic studies** while **commencement is the beginning of something**. I don't know about you, but commencement sounds a lot more interesting. I love the idea of starting something, of new beginnings. Leaping into the unknown can be scary but it is never dull.

A week or two ago I was delighted to be invited to a graduation party. Two cousins, both seniors in high school were about to don cap and gown. And then what? Well, take on the world of course; or at least the halls of higher learning. That very same morning I came across a familiar quote from Lewis Carroll's *Alice and Wonderland*. I thought it fitting for such a fine occasion:

*Alice came to a fork in the road. "Which road do I take?" she asked.
"Where do you want to go?" responded the Cheshire cat.
"I don't know," Alice answered.
"Then," said the cat, "it doesn't matter."*

Or at least I thought it was fitting. I remember my own high school graduation and how ready I was to be done. Done with that big hunk of bricks and suburbia. I was happy and excited and looking forward to starting something new. I had no idea where I wanted to end up but I was soooooo looking forward to the journey.

At seventeen or eighteen our brand new high school graduates are (hopefully) full of energy and a sense of adventure. The world is so full of interesting places and people. There is so much to see, do, learn and love beyond our own backyards. There are many wonderful journeys to take. Each is filled with amazing twists and turns, clear straight-aways, potholes, steep climbs and smooth, easy descents. There are victories to win as well as mistakes and failures to learn from.

There have been times when my path was absolutely clear and times when I've fumbled along without a compass or a map. But still my journey has been and continues to be wonderful. I have met interesting, funny, amazing, good, bad, indifferent, inspiring, talented and brilliant people. I've laughed so hard my stomach has ached, cried, danced, sung karaoke and talked far into the night. I've moved at least ten times, lived in five different states and one foreign country. I've been around the world, visiting at least thirty-five countries, not once but many times. I've hiked almost to the top of Mont Blanc (we made it to the Dôme du Goûter at 14,000 feet), skied glaciers and climbed deep into a crevasse. I've been on safari (with a camera), biked through wine country and bungee jumped. I've worked in teams where a dozen different languages were spoken. I've embrace challenges, reveled in the good parts and learned (at least a thing or two) from some of the not-so-good parts.

So my unabashedly biased words of wisdom for the class of 2010: **The trip is much more than the destination; enjoy the adventure.** And to all those parents who are out there shouting, "Keep quiet! Stay away from my kid! I don't want him/her gallivanting all over the globe." I add, "... and always remember, you can go home again. I'm living proof."

Happy Commencement! Have a wonderful summer,
an interesting life and bon appétit!

Susan



Cook like a chef...

or just look like one!

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Spicy Hoisin Chicken Wings

Chicken wings are everyone's favorite appetizer. Make yours special with some Asian spice.

Enjoy!

Serves 8

3 pounds chicken wings
Spicy Hoisin Marinade (recipe follows)

Using a large, sharp knife or cleaver, carefully remove the wing tips and separate the chicken wings into 2 pieces at the joint.

Put the chicken and the marinade in the zip lock bag and marinade for at least 4 hours, up to overnight.

Preheat the grill to high.

Arrange on the chicken on the grill and cook, turning once, for 4 to 5 minutes per side or until cooked through. Or bake in a 375 degree oven turning once until cooked through, about 40 minutes.

Spicy Hoisin Marinade

1/3 cup hoisin sauce
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1 tablespoon chili-garlic paste
1 tablespoon finely chopped ginger
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon honey
1/2 cup dry white wine
Juice of 1 lime

Put all the marinade ingredients in a bowl and whisk to combine

