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....too busy or too tired to cook ... let me do it for you!

Cook like a chef or just look like one!

Treat Yourself to an Around the Table Chef's Apron

Contact Susan Nye at susannye@tds.net or 603/526 7319

More information the web at www.susannye.com

Throughout my childhood and teenage years my Mother was determined to keep me busy. I'm not sure what delinquent activities or criminal behaviors she was trying to save me from, but she succeeded. Throughout the school year, she was more or less satisfied that the demands of the public school system were enough to keep me out of trouble. She felt no overwhelming need to extend the day and send my klutzy self to ballet or my tone deaf self to piano lessons. Pre-Title IX, girls were excluded from the town soccer league, so I was not drafted onto a team.

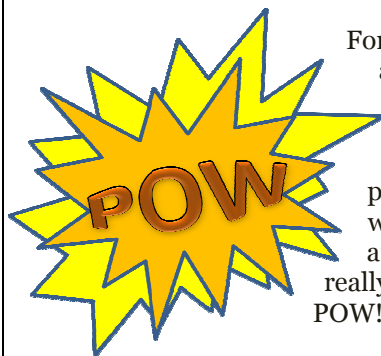
But the summer, that was a different story. I would have been perfectly content to while away the hours sitting on the beach. A perfect day would have included friends to chat with, a book to read and a few swims out to the raft. That agenda did not work for Mom.

She had me in swimming lessons forever. I didn't just learn to swim, I earned all my life saving certificates. She signed me up for a golf class and tennis lessons. Golf didn't last long but she enlisted me in any and every tennis tournament and round-robin she could find. Imagine the worst tennis player ever; I was worse than that.

My Dad taught us to sail. A longtime passion, he began sailing at the age of five. Neither my sister, brother nor I had a choice; we were all in and around boats from an early age. Pleasant Lake and its fickle winds provided a few fun and many challenging, even frustrating, afternoons.

Every Wednesday or Thursday, weather and wind permitting, there was a kids' Sunfish race. My Mother was delighted. Here was yet another activity to keep me busy and participation in the weekly event was not negotiable. My racing record was far from stellar. I never won a race; the closest I came to victory was fourth. In my defense, I'm one of those people who can't tell their right from their left or their left from their right. Change that to port and starboard, add a bunch of rules and right of ways and I was a nervous wreck.

One race in particular stands out in my mind.



For once, a steady wind was blowing and it was the perfect day for a sail. Hoping for an advantage, we began to circle our boats around the start line. It was all pretty chaotic with too many boats in too a small space. Just minutes before the horn was due to blast I sailed right into the Mann's boat. Maybe I got my ports and starboards mixed up or forgot who had right of way (it wasn't me). Then again, I might have confused the dance around the start line with a watery game of chicken. I can't really remember. Whatever it was ... POW! I made a direct hit at full speed.

Thanks to me, Roger had a ginormous hole in the side of his boat. Off he limped to shore. I followed. I figure the least I could do was offer him my boat for the race. He didn't seem particularly bothered, declined and went off to play tennis or something. Somewhat reminiscent of Scarlett O'Hara, I quietly vowed to never, ever sail again.

The damages were quickly repaired and within a day or two the Mann's Sunfish was back in the water winning races. As for me, I spent the rest of the summer thinking up excuses to stay off the boat. I'm not sure but it seems to me that Mom might have relaxed a little on all the lessons and tournaments. After all Labor Day was still a few weeks away, who knew what additional havoc I might have wrought?

Hoping your summer is packed with fun.

Bon appétit!



Cook like a chef...

or just look like one!

**Treat Yourself to an
Around the Table Chef's Apron**

*Do you have too much to do and
too little time? Too busy to cook?*

Let me do it for you

*Like to entertain? No time to
prepare the perfect cocktail or
dinner party? Let me do it for you.*

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**PO Box 1875 - New London
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Crostini with Goat Cheese, Roasted Tomatoes & Olives

These crostini are always a huge hit! Enjoy!

Makes about 25 pieces

2 pints grape tomatoes
1 large red onion, cut into wedges
1 red pepper, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon dried herbs de Provence
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 loaf ciabatta bread, sliced – ask the bakery to slice it for you
4 ounces (1 stick) butter
11 ounces soft goat cheese, at room temperature
2-3 tablespoons heavy cream
About 25 oil-cured black olives, pitted and chopped

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Put the tomatoes, onion and pepper in a heavy ovenproof skillet. Add the olive oil, vinegar and herbs, season with salt and pepper; toss to combine. Roast in the oven at 375 degrees for about 20 minutes. Add the garlic, toss to combine and continue roasting until the vegetables are soft and the edges start to brown, about 10 minutes more. Let cool slightly.

Transfer the vegetables to a food processor and pulse to roughly chop and combine.

Put the goat cheese and cream in a small bowl. Use a fork to mash the goat cheese and combine it with the cream. Stir until the goat cheese is smooth and spreadable, adding a little more cream if necessary.

Lightly butter one side of each slice of bread. Spread a thick layer of goat cheese onto the other side, top with a spoonful of the roasted and chopped tomatoes and a few pieces of olive.

Bake at 375 degrees until the buttered side of the bread is golden brown and the cheese is piping hot, 10-15 minutes.

