



Private Chef, Catering & Cooking Classes

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Join Me Around the Table for an Eat Well-Do Good Dinner!

Support the fight against Alzheimer's Disease & Enjoy delicious food & fun!

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Cook like a chef or just look like one!

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Contact me at [susannye@tds.net](mailto:susannye@tds.net) 603/526 7319



This Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, is a root-tootin' holiday in Australia. It celebrates the arrival of the first fleet of British convict ships in Sydney Harbor in 1788, the first of many. Farms flourished, gold was discovered and Australia became a land of milk, honey and lots of opportunity.

To help you celebrate Australia Day, here are some fun facts from down under:

Before the colonists ousted mad King George, North America was Britain's favorite dumping ground for convicts. Australia was forced to take over after the Yanks won their independence

Today almost twenty-five percent of Australia's residents were born overseas (compared to ten percent in the US). You must be a permanent resident for at least two years before applying for citizenship (in the US, it's five).

Kangaroos, those hippity-hoppity marsupials are unique to Australia. There are almost twice as many roos as people. But that's nothing. There are even more sheep, eighty-five million compared to a mere twenty-two million people.

The Tasmanian Devil is not just another arch nemesis for Bugs Bunny. This carnivorous marsupial haunted early European settlers with its nocturnal screeches and demonic growls. They are now a protected species.

Growing up to twenty feet in length, the world's largest crocodile calls Australia's tropical north home. In case you've forgotten, never smile at a crocodile. Each year, one or two people end up as dinner.

The world's largest oyster lives in Queensland's Great Barrier Reef. There is no known record of Casanova ever visiting Australia.

Australia is the only country which is also a continent. Slightly smaller than the US mainland, Australia is the world's sixth largest country, smallest continent and largest island. It has the world's third lowest population density, with about seven and a half people per square mile.

A land of sea and sand, most Australians, about eighty-five percent, live within thirty miles of the nearest beach. With more than 35,000 miles of coastline, there are lots of beaches.

Central Queensland and South Australia has the world's longest continuous fence. More than 3,000 miles long, the dingo fence was built to separate the wild dogs from the sheep.

And I bet you didn't know that the following notable inventions come from down under: notepads (1902), the pacemaker (1926), the Speedo (1928), the Hills Hoist clothesline (1946), bag-in-a-box wine (1965), Pop Top Cans (1973), the bionic ear (1978), the dual-flush toilet (1980) and long-wearing contact lenses (1999).

And finally, for anyone who's already tired of winter, it's now summer in Australia.

Have a Happy Australia Day, fire up the barbie and



bon appétit!

### Piri Piri Prawns on the Barbie

*We call them shrimp, the Australians call them prawns. Also great on chicken, Piri piri is delicious but not for the faint of heart. It will warm you up on a chilly evening! Enjoy!*

Serves 4

#### Wooden skewers

About 1 1/2 pounds extra large shrimp, peeled and deveined

Kosher salt

Piri Piri (recipe follows)

Bibb or romaine lettuce leaves

Bell pepper, cut in julienne

English cucumber, peeled, seeded and cut in julienne

Bean sprouts

1 lime, quartered

Soak the wooden skewers in water for at least 30 minutes

Put the shrimp in a large bowl and add enough piri piri to lightly coat, about 1/2 cup. Toss to combine. Refrigerate for at least 15 minutes and up to about 45 minutes.

Heat a gas grill to medium-high. Thread the shrimp onto the soaked skewers. (If the shrimp are large enough, you can cook them directly on the grill.)

Grill the shrimp, turning once, until just opaque, about 3-4 minutes. (If you don't want to venture out into the cold, you can arrange the shrimp on a lightly oiled sheet pan and roast at 400 degrees for 5-6 minutes or until cooked through.)

To eat: arrange some bean sprouts, pepper and cucumber on a lettuce leaf, top with a shrimp, drizzle with a little piri piri and add a squeeze of lime. Fold the lettuce leaf around the shrimp and enjoy.

#### Piri piri

Makes 1 cup

8 red bird's-eye\* chilies, seeds and ribs removed, chopped

1/4 cup fresh lime juice

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

1 cup loosely packed cilantro leaves

1 cup loosely packed flat leaf parsley

5-6 garlic cloves

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Combine the chilies, lime juice, vinegar, cilantro, parsley and garlic in a small food processor or blender and puree until smooth. With the motor running, slowly add the olive oil and blend until well combined.

*\* If you can't find birds-eye chilies, substitute with serrano or jalapeno peppers.*



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