



Private Chef, Catering & Cooking Classes

I'd be delighted to help you with any and all of your celebrations.

Join Me Around the Table
for an Eat Well-Do Good Dinner!
Support the fight against
Alzheimer's Disease &
Enjoy delicious food & fun!

Treat Yourself to an Around the Table Chef's Apron

Cook like a chef or just look like one!

You can find lots more
information on the web at
www.susannye.com and
www.susannye.wordpress.com

For cooking tips, recipes and
more, connect with me on
FaceBook
www.facebook.com/swny
or follow me on Twitter
at twitter.com/susannye
Watch me cook on
www.youtube.com/susannye

Contact me at
susannye@tds.net
603/526 7319

Columbus Day Weekend is coming up. As kids, we learned all about Christopher Columbus, Queen Isabella and the perilous voyage of the Niña, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. Throughout elementary school, we made galleons out of construction paper, studied maps of Columbus' journey and memorized poetry. Fourteen hundred and ninety-two is forever burned in my brain. More important than maps and poems, Columbus Day was an excuse for a day off.

Parades and celebrations abounded. During election years politicians made the rounds at any and all gatherings; offering up sound bites, shaking hands and kissing babies. But as far as I was concerned, Columbus Day was a great day to visit a pumpkin patch, rake up and jump into giant piles of leaves and eat birthday cake.

My sister was born on Columbus Day. When we were little, she tried to convince me that the holiday commemorated her birthday. I admit to a touch of jealousy. A little of the wind was knocked out of her sails when the celebration was moved from the 12th to the second Monday of October.



Hanging with my sister Brenda

In the mid-eighties, I moved to Switzerland for an eight-week internship. The internship went well and ended on time but, somehow or other, I forgot to come home. I stumbled into a job and then another, fell in love with expatriate life and stayed in Europe for seventeen years.

When I finally packed up and returned to the US, I felt a little like Columbus discovering a new world. Lots had changed in my absence. I was a foreigner in my own country. Rubik's cubes no longer sat on every coffee table. Trivial Pursuit had lost its grip on the nation. AT&T had divided and multiplied into a passel of telephone companies. JR Ewing had retired from the airwaves. And that's just the start.

Perhaps most confusing, the holidays had changed. No one dared mess with Thanksgiving or Independence Day but while I was out of the country, Columbus Day and a few more fell from grace. Sure, the post office shut its doors but it was business as usual for most companies, including mine. At ten, it would have felt like a victory. Yes, a small win but still a win. Even if she wanted to, which she didn't, my sister could no longer claim that the entire nation celebrated her birthday.

But I wasn't ten and dim memories of fun and festive foliage weekends had me ready for an autumnal adventure. A long hike would have been welcome or a hunt for the perfect pumpkin. I'd have been happy to rake leaves; anything so long as it wasn't another day in a stuffy office. So I showed them, I took Monday off anyway, cashed in a bunch of frequent flyer miles and flew to New Hampshire for a long weekend.

A few years later, I left the corporate world for the fun, flexibility and fear of freelance writing. I don't think Columbus Day had much to do with it. Then again, who knows? For now, I have no particular plans for the weekend. A long and relaxing paddle in my kayak or a hike sounds good. Of course, there's also some yard work that needs to be done and a garage that needs organizing. Then again, Columbus was Italian so inviting friends and family over for a pasta feast would not be amiss.

Long or short, enjoy the weekend and bon appétit!

Lemon Pasta & Shrimp with Olives & Capers

Whether you are off on Monday or not, a delicious combination of pasta and shrimp are sure to please your friends and family this weekend. Enjoy!

Serves 6

Lemon Pasta

About 1/4 cup olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
Pinch or to taste red pepper flakes
1 tablespoon anchovy paste
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
12 ounces spaghetti
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

Put the olive oil, garlic and pepper flakes in a large skillet and heat on low until the garlic starts to change color. Stir in the anchovy paste and cook for 3 minutes. Whisk in the lemon juice.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in salted boiling water according to package directions. Drain the pasta, reserving a little pasta water.

Toss the pasta with the garlic-anchovy oil and lemon juice. If the pasta seems dry, add a little pasta water. Add the lemon zest, basil and parsley, season with pepper and toss again.

Shrimp with Olives & Capers

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
Pinch or to taste red pepper flakes
1/2 cup dry white wine
Juice of 1/2 lemon
About 2 pounds large shrimp, shelled and deveined
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
About 1/2 cup oil-cured black olives, pitted and quartered
2 tablespoons drained capers, rinsed
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat, add the garlic and pepper flakes and cook for 1-2 minutes. Add the wine, lemon juice, olives and capers and simmer until the liquid is reduced by half.

Season the shrimp with salt and pepper, add it to the skillet, toss to coat and sauté until pink, 2-3 minutes.

To serve: transfer the pasta to individual shallow bowls, top with shrimp and sauce and sprinkle with chopped basil and parsley. Serve immediately.

