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**Last week's story about my dad's complicity in his youngest and only male child's first job hunt raised a bit of commentary.** Not least of which was the story's co-star, my brother John. His take on the tale was, "Umm... lovely storytelling but factually incorrect. While I was fifteen, my first job was as a dishwasher at the Pleasant Lake Inn. Cricenti's came later." Proving once again, that our dad never lets the facts get in the way of a good story.

**So what about my first summer job?** When I hit Main Street to find employment, I was turned down time and time again. I finally hit pay dirt with an offer to become the evening attendant at the local laundromat. The job didn't begin to excite me but I was more than happy to be done with the search. Nothing breeds fear and humiliation like asking for a job when you have no particular skills and even less experience.

**Unfortunately, my mother didn't buy into the whole laundromat thing.** A 5:00 to 11:00 (that was p.m. not a.m.) workday was not what she had in mind. She made all sorts of worrying noises about working alone, late at night. I couldn't fathom what unsavory characters she thought might fluff and fold on my watch. I certainly wasn't worried. It was a small town and the few kids who might pass for delinquents hung out at the bowling alley a mile or so down the road. I figured the cleaners would be deserted most evenings. I imagined quiet, even dull, hours spent eating bonbons and reading mystery novels.

**Looking back,** I now realize Mom's key goal for my summer job was to get me up, out of bed and moving every morning. Working the night shift at the cleaners wouldn't come close to accomplishing that. No doubt, she had visions of me sleeping until noon every day. Oh, and since I was too young to drive, she'd be the one to pick me up most nights.

**Whether it was true or not,** I told her that there were no other jobs to be had in the entire town. It was the laundromat or tanning on the beach by day and watching snowy reruns on our television's one channel by night. She must have believed me because, within a day or two, my parents had put their heads together and hatched a plan.

**I would become an entrepreneur** and run my own little business as the lunch lady at the neighborhood beach. It was weekends only so it wasn't perfect but it kept me busy from Thursday afternoon through the weekend. Neither was it gourmet. The limited menu served up tuna, chicken or egg salad or a PB&J, on white or wheat, with a handful of chips. And of course there were brownies (from a box) for dessert as well as lemonade and ice tea. So desperate to keep me busy, Mom and Dad staked me the \$25 or so needed for the first bag of groceries.

**There was one wrinkle. There always is, isn't there?**

**I had to take on a partner** when another kid's parents came up with exact same idea just minutes before mine. Unfortunately for me, this girl would never be accused of excessive speed or energy. Obviously smarter than me, she cheerfully dodge most of the work and still collected half the profits. For her part, Mom was delighted. My new partner was a few years older, had a driver's license and could borrow her family's station wagon for the weekly grocery run.

And me? I have no idea if I made much money but I learned a thing or two about customers, co-workers and how to move – fast. I also learned that I never, ever wanted to own a restaurant.

Here's to all the lessons learned at summer jobs and bon appétit!



## Grilled Swordfish with Tequila-Lime Butter

*A lovely summer dish for family and friends. Enjoy!*

Serves 4

1/4 cup tequila  
 1/4 cup fresh orange juice  
 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
 2 tablespoons triple sec or Grand Marnier  
 1-2 tablespoon olive oil  
 1 tablespoon peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger  
 1 tablespoon finely chopped red onion  
 Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
 About 1 1/2 pounds swordfish  
 Lime wedges and fresh cilantro leaves for garnish



Put the tequila, citrus juices, triple sec and olive oil in a re-sealable plastic bag or shallow glass pan, add the ginger and onion, season with salt and pepper and whisk to combine. Add the swordfish and marinate for about 30 minutes.

Preheat a charcoal or gas grill to medium hot. Remove the swordfish from the marinade and place it on the grill. Depending on how thick it is, cook the fish for about 5 minutes per side or until cooked through and still moist.

Remove the swordfish from the grill and immediately top with a generous pat of citrus butter. Let the fish sit for about five minutes, cut into thick slices and serve garnished with cilantro leaves and lime wedges.

### Tequila-Lime Butter

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, at room temperature  
 1-2 teaspoons tequila  
 Grated zest of 1 lime  
 1/4 teaspoon or to taste cayenne pepper  
 Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Put the butter, tequila and lime zest in a bowl, season with cayenne, salt and pepper and stir to combine. Spoon the butter onto a piece of parchment paper or plastic wrap, shape into a log and then wrap and roll into a cylinder. Refrigerate until ready to use.

*The Tequila-Lime Butter can be made in advance. Store the extra in the refrigerator or freezer and try it with grilled corn, on a freshly grilled steak or toss with grilled shrimp.*