

Predictions for the New Year

Holiday 2007/Volume 67

Join Me in the New Year for a Cooking Class

January

18 French Country Cooking

February

1 Italian Country Kitchen
15 French Country Cooking
29 Italian Country Kitchen

March

7 Mediterranean Easter Feast
28 Tapas & Finger Food

April

4 French Country Cooking
18 Italian Country Kitchen

May

2 French Country Cooking
16 Italian Country Kitchen

June

6 Summer Salads

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susannye@tds.net
or 603/526 7319

More information the web at
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Are you ready for New Year's Eve? There is always tremendous build up and anticipation for the year end bash. The pressure is on to make it the biggest and best party of the year. Yikes! While people much younger than I may have no trouble celebrating far into the night; my energy starts to wane by 10:30. It's hard to celebrate the best night ever when you are half asleep. I was introduced to a great solution to this problem on the eve of Y2K.



I welcomed in the new century with my brother, his family and some of their friends and they introduced me to one of their favorite New Year's Eve traditions. While the children were wired with loads of energy and bouncing off the walls, the adults were a different story. By 9:30 we were all starting to droop a bit. To stay awake until the ball dropped in Time Square we went to work on a list of Predictions for the New Year. Sharing resolutions can become a bit heavy, but making predictions can be good fun. We sat around the table and the wine and the laughter flowed as we pondered and made predictions about the serious, the ridiculous and the absurd. We covered politics, the economy, sports and entertainment.

This New Year's Eve will be a great time for predictions. An election year, we can predict winners of the primaries and the election in the fall. What is your best guess for the nominees for the Republican and Democratic parties? Will there be a third party "spoiler"? And who will be the big winner in November? The economy is getting some hard hits with the price of oil and the tumbling housing market. What might be your best guess for gas prices; how high or low will they go in 2008? What will happen to mortgage rates? The stock market has been quite volatile over the past few months and is fertile ground for predictions.

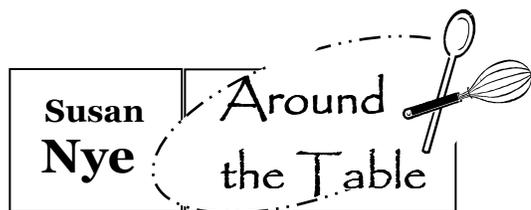
But don't limit yourself to serious topics; after all it's a party. We've had record snows in December, how high will the snow go? Will we still be skiing on Memorial Day? It's not too early to open the debate on a Patriots' victory at the Super Bowl. Will the Red Sox snag the pennant again in 2008? With all the scandalous news about steroids there must be a prediction or two to be made about the futures of a few sports super stars. The Olympics will be in Beijing in August making way for a debate on what medals will be won and lost.

The late night talk show hosts roast celebrities, so why not you? Celebrity comings and goings are always good for a laugh, a snicker or even a sneer. Scandal and gossip, the more outrageous the better make for a lively discussion. What are your predictions for Brittany, Lindsay or Paris? Create your best guess list of who will get married, divorced, arrested or pregnant; or appear on Dancing with the Stars. And don't hesitate to ask irreverent questions. Don't we all wonder if Donald Trump will finally find a decent barber in 2008? Some predictions may have an air of déjà vu. We can again ask, will OJ land in jail before the year is out? And is it possible that Donnie and Marie will be back on television?

As the evening progresses and champagne flows, the topics may very well get spicier and dicey-er, but that is what makes it fun. Of course, you won't know how well you scored for another 366 days but the evening will race by in a flash with vigorous debate and lots of laughs. Before you know it Dick Clark will be wishing you a Happy New Year. Have a great evening around the table with family and friends and,



Happy New Year & Bon appétit! - Susan



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

For more information
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Contact Susan Nye at
aroundthetable@tds.net or
603/526 7319

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Do you have too much to do and
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Greek Stuffed Mushrooms

A lighter alternative to mushrooms stuffed with sausage or bread crumbs, I predict that these hors d'oeuvres will be a big hit at your New Year's Eve (or any) party.

Enjoy!

Makes 3 dozen

36 whole mushrooms, cleaned and stems removed
1 pound frozen spinach
8 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
1 shallot, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon herbs de Provence
Dash of hot sauce
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
Olive oil

1. Put the spinach in a colander to thaw and drain excess liquid.
2. Heat 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the shallot, herbs, hot sauce and a little salt; sauté for 3-5 minutes or until the shallot is translucent. Add the garlic and sauté 1 minute more.
3. Add the spinach and cook for a few minutes to remove any additional excess liquid. Turn off the heat and add the feta and salt and pepper to taste; combine well.
4. Preheat oven to 400°.
5. Fill each mushroom cap generously with the spinach mixture and place in an oiled baking dish. Bake at 400° for 10 to 12 minutes.