

Join Me for a Cooking Class!

Winter-Spring 2008 Schedule

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 Italian Country Kitchen
18 French Country Cooking
30 Tapas & Finger Food

May

2 Italian Country Kitchen
16 French Country Cooking

June

6 Summer Salads

Join me in the Kitchen & Around the Table for delicious seasonal food & fun

Details & Menus on the Web www.susannye.com

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

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www.susannye.com

It gets pretty quiet in my neighborhood during most of the winter. Throughout the summer a steady stream of runners, walkers and cyclists make their way around Pleasant Lake. Come Labor Day that stream shrinks to a mere trickle. That will all change on Memorial Day Weekend. With longer, warmer days the pedestrian traffic will start to pick up. Plus many of my part time neighbors, the "summer people" will come north for the long weekend. Summer is just around the corner.



work with shovels, rakes and brooms to get ready for summer. On beaches up and down Pleasant Lake pine needles and leaves will be cleaned up to make way for beach toys, sand chairs and barbeque grills. Docks and rafts will be hauled out of storage and put back into the water. The boat launch at the end of the lake will be busy. Sail boats, motor boats and even a party barge or two will be launched. I will pull my kayak off the garage ceiling and drag it down to the shore for the first paddle of the season. Pleasant Lake is still icy cold, but with any luck the sun will shine warm and bright.

Memorial Day Weekend is not a lazing around in the sun kind of weekend, it is a working weekend. For three days we go to

The end of May generally (but not always) means the end of frost danger and the nurseries will be busy. No matter how many trips I have made to the garden shop and nursery, I'm sure I will find the need for at least one more. Unfortunately for me, there is no such thing as a quick trip to the nursery. I'll dither and dally and try to decide which annuals to plant. And whether it's impatiens or marigolds, I can never remember; do I need two flats or three? I'll drag a wagon up and down the aisles in search of geraniums, basil and those funny little orange flowers that look a little like a petunia. Maybe it is a petunia. I'll rummage through the seed packets looking for parsley (flat leaf not curly), cilantro, morning glories and nasturtiums. I'll check out the tomato plants and herbs and maybe bring home a Beefsteak or a Big Boy; tomato that is. In the end it all comes down to how much room I have in the garden (I'm rapidly running out of it) and how many hours I have in the day (I think there is still a twenty-four limit).

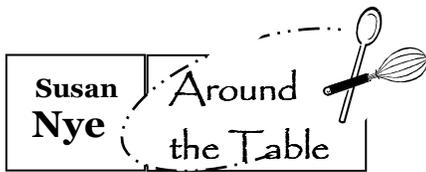
The holiday weekend should be more than back-breaking raking, digging and hauling. Let's hope that there will be at least a little time to relax after everything is ship-shape. Memorial Day is a wonderful time to celebrate the start of summer with a cook-out. After a hard day yielding brooms and shovels, there is no need to get all elegant or fancy. Welcome summer by spending a relaxing evening in jeans and sneakers, sprawled in a beach chair or around a picnic table with family and friends. Throw a few hamburgers and hotdogs on the grill and round out the meal with a salad or two. And don't forget the brownies.



The long weekend will be over in a flash. By Tuesday morning Pleasant Lake will be quiet again. The summer people will have put their rakes and toys away and returned to the city. They will arrive home with a few sore muscles, a few black fly bites but still eager for their next and hopefully longer trip to the lake. After a winter of record snowfall can we dare hope for a splendid summer? You know what I mean; a summer when it only rains at night and every day is filled with endless sunshine and crowned by a glorious sunset.

Bon appétit! -

Susan



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Couscous & Grilled Vegetable Salad

Make this salad countless times throughout the summer. Even kids love it! Enjoy!

Serves 6

2 small zucchini, cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch slices
1 red pepper, cut into 1/2-inch slices
1 small red onion, cut into 1/2-inch rounds
1 pint grape tomatoes
1 cup couscous
1 1/2 cups chicken stock
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon roughly chopped parsley
2 tablespoons roughly chopped mint
Grated zest of 1/2 lemon
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1/4 cup toasted pine nuts
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Extra virgin olive oil

1. Preheat grill to medium high.
2. Toss the vegetables a little olive oil and season with salt and pepper to taste. Place the zucchini on the grill and cook until tender, 3-5 minutes, turning once. Cook the tomatoes, onions and peppers in a grill basket until tender, 3-5 minutes, stirring once or twice. Remove from the grill. When the vegetables are cool enough to handle, chop into small pieces and reserve.
3. Bring the chicken stock to a boil in a medium saucepan. Remove from the heat; add the couscous and stir to combine; cover and leave for 5 to 10 minutes or until the stock is absorbed. Fluff the couscous with a fork; stir in the garlic, herbs, 2 tablespoons olive oil, lemon juice and grated lemon zest. Let cool for 15 to 20 minutes. Toss with vegetables and pine nuts. Serve at room temperature.