

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!

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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

PO Box 1875 - New London New Hampshire 03257

Forget the Fourth of July fireworks, sand castles and the Hospital Day Parade. Nothing is more eagerly anticipated, more impatiently awaited than sweet corn. Want perfection? Minutes after it's picked, husk a ripe ear of corn and plunge it into a pot of boiling water. Cook it for exactly 4 minutes and enjoy bliss with a little butter and salt.

Like many women, thirteen was one of the worst times of my life. I was plagued with the usual angst of adolescence. I had my fair share of pimples. My unruly curls produced a never ending run of bad hair days, particularly in the summer. And, I had braces. My teeth were encased in torturous steel, wire and rubber bands. Not only painful, braces made it virtually impossible to eat corn on the cob. After the first bite, kernels were hideously and obstinately embedded in every steel nook and cranny. Taking pity on me, my mother tried cutting the kernels off the cob. It just didn't taste the same. In despair, I gave up fresh corn for the duration.

When I moved to Switzerland I was again deprived of sweet corn. For close to twenty years I lived near Geneva; where, until fairly recently, corn on the cob was only for cows. About the time I packed my bags to move back to the States, corn on the cob began to trickle ever so slowly onto supermarket shelves. Grown in southern Africa, by the time the ears arrived they were a poor and pitiful shadow of what sweet corn should be.

There is a lot of open farm land surrounding Geneva and the Swiss grow cow corn in abundance. After all it takes a lot of corn to feed the cows to get the milk to make all that cheese and chocolate. Bicycling through those fields was one of my favorite weekend activities. I always looked at those fields with longing (for sweet corn) and despair (because it wasn't). One particular Saturday, some friends and I went on a long bike ride past row after row of ripening corn.

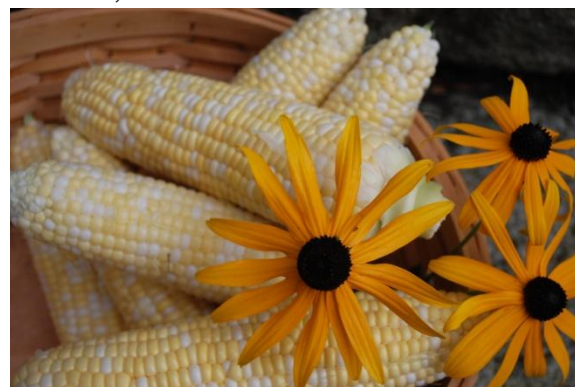
After the ride, we joined forces for an impromptu potluck cookout. Preparations were well underway when a few of us were hit by the nagging sense that something was missing. Corn on the cob of course! Fueled by optimism and hope, we decided that there must surely be a tiny window when cow corn was sweet and crisp. And of course we figured that the tiny window was open at just that very minute.

And so began the great Corn Caper. We donned baseball caps, hoodies and sunglasses, hopped back on our bikes and went off to pilfer the nearest field. Our band of merry thieves was not made up of foolish teenage hooligans but foolish thirty-something professionals uncontrollably driven by delicious memories of fresh sweet corn. At least for the moment we didn't care if our families were shamed by scandalous headlines (*Foreigners Arrested in Agricultural Heist - Deportation Imminent*). Nor did we worry that the farmer might skip 911 and fill our backsides with buck shot.

We completed our raid without apprehension or worse and returned to the party with backpacks stuffed with corn. Working against the clock, we husked the ears and threw them into boiling water. With great anticipation we all took the first, long-awaited bite. Edible, but tough and tasteless. We were denied that sweet taste of summer ... and home.

Of course there was an upside to the whole debacle. Since our caper could hardly be called successful, I was not tempted to quit my job and begin a life of crime. Enjoy summer's bounty and,

Bon appétit!

## Grilled Corn Salsa

*This salsa is great as an appetizer with tortilla chips and delicious as a side dish with chicken or seafood. Enjoy!*

Makes 5-6 cups

Juice of 1 lime  
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil plus more for the corn  
 2-3 cloves garlic, minced  
 1 tablespoon or to taste minced jalapeno  
 1 teaspoon cumin  
 Kosher salt to taste  
 2-3 ears corn, shucked (about 1 1/2 cups of kernels)  
 1 pound tomatoes, cored, seeded and chopped (about 1 1/2 cups chopped tomato)  
 2-3 scallions, thinly sliced or about 1/2 small red onion, finely chopped  
 1 1/2 cups (15-ounce can) cooked black beans, rinsed and drained  
 2-3 tablespoons roughly chopped cilantro leaves  
 1-2 avocados, chopped

Put the lime juice, olive oil, garlic, jalapeno and cumin in a small bowl, season with salt and whisk to combine. Let sit for at least 10 minutes to combine the flavors.



Preheat the grill to high. Brush the corn with a little olive oil. Lay the ears directly on the grill and cook for 3-5 minutes, turning to cook evenly. Remove from the grill and when they are cool enough to handle, use a sharp knife to remove the kernels from the cobs.

Put the corn, tomatoes, scallions and black beans in a large bowl and toss to combine. Pour the lime juice-olive oil mixture over the vegetables and toss to combine. Add the cilantro and toss again. Let sit for 15-20 minutes or up to a few hours in the refrigerator to mix and meld the flavors.

Add the avocado, toss to combine and serve immediately as a dip with your favorite tortilla chips or as a side dish with grilled chicken or seafood.

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