

Susan
Nye

Around
the Table



Connect with Friends Over the Columbus Day Weekend

Fall 2007/volume 55

Cooking Parties & Classes

The New Fall-Holiday
Schedule is on the Web!

September

- 12 French Country Cooking
- 26 Italian Country Kitchen

October

- 10 French Country Cooking
- 24 Italian Country Kitchen

November

- 7 French Country Cooking

December

- 5 Tapas & Finger Food

*Join me in the Kitchen &
Around the Table for delicious
seasonal food & fun
Details & Menus on the Web
www.susannye.com*

Private classes always available

Girls' Night Out
Cooking Couples
Customer Appreciation
and lots more....
at your house or mine.

Private Chef & Catering Services

Romantic Dinners or
Celebrations for Family &
Friends. At my house or yours.

...too busy or too tired to cook
... let me do it for you!

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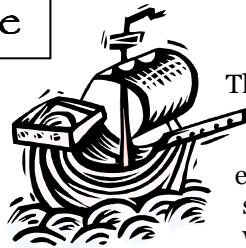
Contact Susan Nye at
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For more information

Visit the web at

www.susannye.com or

603/526 7319



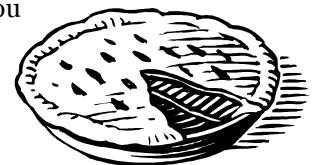
The Columbus Day weekend is coming up. As kids we learned all about Christopher Columbus, Queen Isabella and the perilous voyage of the Niña, the Pinta and Santa María. Throughout elementary school we made galleons out of construction paper and studied maps of Columbus' journey. And the best part, with six weeks into the new school year, Columbus Day was a terrific 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 and 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.

In the mid-eighties I moved to Switzerland for an eight week internship. The internship went well and I finished on time but some how or other, I forgot to come home. I stumbled into a job, stayed in Europe and had lots of interesting adventures. I finally packed up and returned to the US in 2000 and like Columbus discovered a foreign, new world. Lots had changed while I was away. Rubik's cubes were no longer found on every coffee table. Trivial Pursuit had lost a lot of its popularity. AT&T had multiplied into hundred's of telephone companies. JR Ewing had retired from the airwaves. And the holidays had changed. No one had messed around with Christmas or Independence Day but while I was out of the country Columbus Day and a few other holidays more or less fell from grace.

Sure the post office, some banks and schools were closed but I discovered that for most companies, including my employer, on Columbus Day it was business as usual. If I had been ten I might have felt a small measure of victory over my sister as she could no longer brag that her birthday was a national holiday. But I wasn't ten and mid-October is a wonderful time for a little break. Given the choice between sitting in a stuffy office or visiting a farm to find the perfect pumpkin, pumpkin hunting seems like a far superior choice for an autumn afternoon.

Living in New Hampshire Columbus Day is a reminder that cold weather is coming soon and I need to get my act together. Midway between Labor Day and Thanksgiving it is a good time to get out my Fall To Do list. Besides tracking down pumpkins, I start to think about putting my kayak away for the season. I don't necessarily put it away, I just think about it. I clean up the garden and plant spring bulbs. I have no clear deadline, just the looming threat of an early snowfall.

I don't need a To Do list to get me up and out the door for a walk in the brilliant red and gold foliage. Just a quick glance out my window is enough motivation. October is a wonderful time to connect and catch up with friends. Whether you are celebrating a birthday or the sheer pleasure of a beautiful autumn day, what could be better than getting together with friends for a hike in the hills? Well maybe relaxing around the fire after the hike. With cooler weather, cooking moves off the grill and back into the kitchen. Sit back and unwind while the house fills with the wonderful smells of a bubbling stew or soup and a fragrant apple pie. I hope that you are enjoying autumn, in the hills surrounded by red and gold and around the table surrounded by family and friends,



Bon appétit! - Susan

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Wednesday Night
Cooking Classes
Learn & Laugh

Private Chef & Catering
Services

Do you have too much to
do and too little time? Too
busy to cook?

Let me do it for you.

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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Braised Beef

Enjoy an Italian inspired dinner over the Columbus Day Weekend. Serve with polenta and sautéed baby spinach. Any extra sauce and beef can be served with pasta for an easy meal or two later in the week.

Serves 6-8

3 pounds chuck roast
2 cans (28 ounces) tomato puree
1/2 cup red wine
1 large onion, peeled and chopped
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 stalks of celery, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
Pinch of hot pepper flakes
1 tablespoon fresh chopped basil or 1 teaspoon dried
1 bay leaf
Olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
Garnish: fresh chopped parsley

1. Heat a little olive oil in a large oven proof casserole over medium heat; add onions, carrots and celery and cook, stirring until onions have softened. Add the garlic and pepper flakes and cook for 1-2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, basil, 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/4 teaspoon of pepper, bring to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes stirring occasionally.
2. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
3. While the sauce is simmering, pat the beef dry and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Heat a little olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat; add the beef and brown well on all sides, 8-12 minutes total. Transfer the beef to the casserole with the sauce. Add the red wine to the skillet and deglaze by bringing to a boil and scraping up the brown bits for about 1 minute. Add the wine and bay leaf to the casserole and simmer uncovered for 5 minutes.
4. Cover the casserole and transfer to the oven. Cook, turning 2 or 3 times until very tender, 1 1/2 - 2 hours. Remove the meat from the casserole and cut across the grain in thick slices. Garnish with parsley, serve with a little sauce and enjoy.

This dish can be made 2 or 3 days ahead. Bring to a simmer on top of the stove and then transfer to a 350 degree oven and heat until the meat is warmed through.