

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

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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Cooking Couples

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and lots more....

at your house or mine.

Private Chef & Catering Services

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

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

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

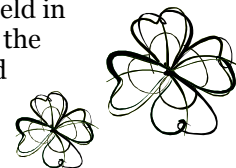
More information the web at
www.susannye.com

Everyone is Irish on Saint Patrick's Day

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On Saint Patrick's Day pubs around the world will be filled to capacity and then some. Ireland's patron Saint will be honored and toasted in sleepy little village pubs in counties Cork and Clare and in cozy saloons in Dublin and Belfast. Everyone is Irish on Saint Patrick's Day so celebrations and parades will be held in Chicago, Boston and New York as well as small towns across the country. Not to be outdone Irish pubs in Dubai, Hong Kong and Moscow will join in the party. Fiddlers will play, tenors will sing, jigs will be danced and Guinness will be quaffed.



Pubs have been a mainstay of Irish life for centuries. The tradition began in the Middle Ages when humble country cottages offered a pint, a meal and even a bed to weary travelers. Later, simple shops selling groceries and beer evolved to become homey spots to gather and share a pint after a hard day. Short for Public Houses, the pub got its name because unlike the private clubs used by the wealthy and hoity-toity, pubs were open to one and all. Hard working men and women were able to find a cozy home away from home in the village pub.

Throughout the ages, pubs have been filled with lively political debate. During Ireland's long struggle against British occupation and rule, these discussions often took a rebellious turn. Away from prying English eyes and ears, pubs were perfect meeting places for dissidents to criticize colonial rule and even plan a few acts of rebellion. The British went so far as to outlaw these strongholds of nationalism and resistance but the independent Irish ignored the edict and pubs continued to flourish.

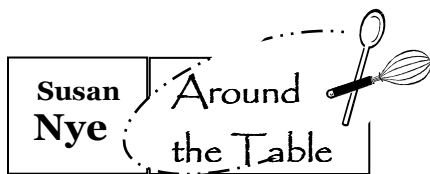
Politics aside, Irish pubs are steeped in romance and folklore. We envision cozy rooms with low, heavy beamed ceilings and enormous hearths with crackling fires. And we aren't too far from wrong. Irish pubs are warm, welcoming places where everyone knows your name. Or maybe that's some little bar in Boston. In any case we imagine Irish pubs filled with neighbors and good cheer. What could be better than whiling away the hours in a cozy tavern on a rainy afternoon or dull evening? You are sure to find easy, relaxed conversation as friends and strangers alike swap stories, share a joke or exchange a bit of harmless gossip. Simply put and borrowing from Gaelic, pubs are all about craic (pronounced crack) or having a good time in good company.

Irish pubs are wildly popular with tourists and no visit to the Emerald Isle is complete without stopping at a pub, or two or three. So it is no surprise that Irish pub culture has been exported all over the world. Cozy bars with names like Murphy's and O'Connell's can be found in cities and towns from Boston to Bombay. When I lived in Switzerland I frequented Flanagan's, an Irish pub in Geneva's old town, as well as Molly Malone's in Prague and Rosie O'Grady's in Moscow. I even once shared a pint with a customer in an Irish pub in Dubai.

Outside of Ireland the pubs are lively and friendly even if they don't quite fit with the traditional image of a snug little tavern. Especially on the weekends, these exports are likely to have loud music, too much smoke and mobs of locals and tourists. Still and all, there is Guinness and Kilkenny on tap, the bartenders have the good looks and charm of the Irish if not the birthright and in spite of the noise, the atmosphere encourages relaxed and easy banter. Hundreds or even thousands of miles from the Ireland's emerald shores, Irish pubs can't help but inspire craic. Spirited conversation, tall tales and cheerful wit will always be the most important ingredients in the pub experience. This Saint Paddy's Day, whether you recreate a pub atmosphere at home or head out for a pint, enjoy the celebration and,



Sláinte (to your health)! – Susan



Around the Table
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too little time?

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No time to prepare the perfect
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A fun evening to
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Irish Lamb Stew

Serves 6

2 pounds lamb shoulder roast, cut into 2-inch cubes
2 ounces slab or thick cut bacon, roughly chopped
1 large onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 teaspoon dried chili flakes, or to taste
5-6 stalks of celery cut into 1-inch pieces
4-6 carrots cut into 1-inch pieces
1 pound new potatoes
1 tablespoon fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 bay leaf
1 cup Guinness beer or any dark beer
3 cups homemade or low-sodium store-bought chicken stock
Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
Flour for dusting the lamb
Olive oil
Parsley for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Cook the bacon in a heavy casserole over medium-low heat until crisp and brown. Remove the bacon and reserve. Pour off all but 1-2 tablespoons of bacon fat and reserve.
3. Season the flour with salt and pepper. Lightly dust the lamb cubes with the seasoned flour. Brown the lamb over medium-high heat a few minutes per side. Add more bacon fat to the pan as required. Remove the lamb and add to the reserved bacon.
4. Reduce heat to medium. Add 1-2 tablespoons of bacon fat to the pot; add the onion, sprinkle with dried chili flakes and sauté until the onion is translucent. If you run out of bacon fat, substitute with a little olive oil. Add the garlic and sauté an additional 1-2 minutes.
5. Put the lamb and bacon back into the stew pot. Add the carrot, celery, thyme, bay leaf, beer and chicken stock; raise the heat and bring to a simmer. Cover the pot; transfer to oven. Cook at 350° for 45 minutes.
6. Add the potatoes; check for seasoning; salt and pepper to taste. Return the pot to the oven and continue cooking, covered, until vegetables and lamb are tender about 45 minutes to 1 hour. If the stew gets too dry, add more beer and/or stock. Garnish with parsley and serve.