

CULINARY ARTS SOCIETY OF AJIJIC

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! January 2015

Volume 29 Issue 1

www.ajijiccasa.org

casalakeside@yahoo.com

NEXT CASA MEETING!

Monday, January 19, 2015

Min Wah Restaurant

4pm

**Presenters, please be set
up no later than 3:45pm**

2015 CASA Board of Directors

Congratulations!

**President
Margaret Ancira**

**Vice President
Beth Cathcart**

**Secretary
Rick Feldmann**

**Treasurer
Leslie Yanko**

CATEGORIES for January 2015
Category A— Soups, Stews & Chilis
Category B—Cupcakes

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The beginning of the new year of 2015 will bring with it many changes, some obvious, some more subtle. As the new incoming President I'd like to share my thoughts on some of those changes. However, I want you to know that I welcome changes and think change is good. It's good to shake things up a bit and I believe it helps to keep us a little bit sharper and more alert.

At the Board meetings we review Rick's report as Secretary the comings and goings of the members on our club roster. Some members of the Board lament the members who decide to discontinue their membership and move on to other hobbies. I personally don't do that as I think it allows for new folks in the area to join and try their hand in a club that appeals to them and that perhaps they have been wanting to try this "cooking thing" for some time. Additionally, we all get to meet and form new friendships with folks that we might not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet. However, I would like to thank those of you who have been members in the past and hope that you will join us again in the future.

As members with more tenure I'd like to encourage all of you/us to help mentor these new members and help them understand the guidelines of membership so there are less misunderstandings of the rules and regulations in order to reduce the learning curve of what's expected of a member. As new members, please familiarize yourselves with those rules, regs, and guidelines. Ask the person who brought you to your first meeting to help get access to those documents so there may be less confusion of expectations. We truly want everyone to feel relaxed and comfortable during the meetings and the competitions.

CASA is a cooking club and although some folks say it's the competition that makes them nervous or edgy -- that's what the club is about, friendly fun competition. I think it's important to realize what makes the club tick and what it is that YOU will be getting out of it. Speaking for myself, I can say that it has pushed me to delve deeper into cookbooks, the Internet recipe sites, and new and different spices and ethnic dishes. It's easy to always make your "fallback dish" ... and a little nerve-wracking to try something you've never made before, for 60 individuals, no less!

The new 2015 competition dishes are fun and exciting. Take a look at the list and plan ahead your four competition dishes. It used to be difficult to find certain ingredients in Mexico, but, no more! And if it's a truly tough find ask a friend who you know is a Stateside traveler to pick one up for you when they head north. I know I am a spice collector so I am a good person to ask if you are really in a pinch for a pinch of something unusual.

Soon will be the Awards Banquet for those who were winners in 2014. This is in the organizational stages and soon you will all know the who, what, where and whens of it all. Stay tuned. What fun!

We are very proud to say that CASA had a record year of bringing in muchos pesos for our charities and we have already dispensed \$10,000 to both Operation Feed in San Juan Cosala and the Soup Kitchen in San Antonio Tlayacapan. Isn't it gratifying to help people get a good nutritious meal? I love the "feel good" of that for everybody! In 2014 CASA also supported The Villa Infantil Orphanage by donating a dinner that was auctioned off. In 2015 we'll also be helping Ninos Incapacitados with their fundraising by participating in the annual March Gala as a live auction item as we have done in the past. Our venue will be the stunning home of Norma King, a designer, her home located in La Floresta. We'll be looking for your help with this event (date to be determined way into the future) when the time arises. More details to follow, so TBC on that!

Let's have some fun with CASA this year! Get your recipes out and let's get creative and have some really wonderful dishes to prepare, share and enjoy!

Margaret Ancira, CASA President



Casa Information Page

BOARD COMMITTEE CHAIR POSITIONS THAT WILL BE OPEN FOR 2015

* **Judge Recruiter (s)** - This position presently is broken down into a 3 person “committee”, which works very well. Responsibilities include locating appropriate judges for the different categories. Monica and Michael Molloy are willing to help act as consultants in finding judges as their Wine Import Business takes them to many of the finer restaurants, both locally and throughout Mexico. Other responsibilities would include providing the judges with instructions and making sure they fill out their questionnaire, getting their biographies, getting guest names and following up to make sure they don't forget the date. On site you will be responsible to look after the Judges once they finish their job by sitting with them at the reserved table; introducing them to the membership by reading their biographies. Carefully written detailed job description will be provided upon your request. Sharing these responsibilities with a couple of others makes it very enjoyable.

Both of these positions have proven to be fun and rewarding.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HELPING CASA CONTINUE TO GROW AND WOULD BE WILLING TO SERVE as a Committee Chair or help on a committee, please contact the 2015 President, Margaret Ancira –margaretancira@hotmail.com—766-0271

2014 CASA BOARD MEMBERS and COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President - Margaret Ancira 766-0271
Overall Organizational/Administrative
Responsibilities

Newsletter/Publicity - Pam Ladd 765-3683
Programs – Sandy Feldmann 766-2606
Web Page—Nancy Segall 766-3261

Vice President - Beth Cathcart 766-1842
Hospitality
Decorations
50/50 Drawings

Secretary - Rick Feldmann 766-2606
Reservations (casalakeside@yahoo.com)
Membership

Treasurer – Leslie Yanko 766-2304

Director at Large – Positions Open

Judge Coordinator(s)
Position(s) open
Judge Tabulator
Position(s) open

Special Advisor- Monica Molloy 766-2056
Special Events & Nominations

HOUSEKEEPING NOTES & REQUESTS

* **Presenters need to make enough food for 60 tasting size servings. This equates to 12 full size servings.**

If presenters don't make enough food, people at the end of the line can't sample the food and your chances lessen for getting a People's Choice Award.

* Please also remember this is a **Tasting** only of each presentation! Please notify your guests.

* Please remember to take all of your dishes, utensils, etc. home with you after you have presented. If we find anything personal, it will be put in the big plastic bins that CASA has at Min Wah's.

December 2014

Judges



Ginger Perkins

Ginger Perkins, Kenée Campo, Pam Ladd

Raised in St. Louis, Missouri by a mother who was a great

cook but a loner in the kitchen, when she expressed interest in cooking she was told, "You know how to read, here's a cookbook." At 15 her mother died & her first experience cooking for her father was chicken & dumplings but the darned dumplings kept floating to the top so she anchored them to the bottom of the pot by placing the chicken pieces on top of them. Her father remarried rather quickly.

Her next full cooking experience was Thanksgiving dinner for 14 people in her mid-twenties & it was actually edible so she was hooked ever since. Living in Saint Maarten was an eye-opener with wonderful French food all around. She was often called on to make lunches for the guests at the inn where she worked. Her only available recipes were an old New York Times Cookbook & elderly copies of Bon Appetit & Gourmet. That began her obsession with collecting cookbooks. Even a bad meal can be redeemed with a great dessert or wonderful bread. When she moved to this area she had to dispose of over 500 cookbooks but she's collecting again & is grateful that there is an organization like CASA where she can keep practicing her favorite obsession - cooking.

Ginger has received BINGS in 2011 and 2012. Ginger is the first person to receive her BING in the first three months of one calendar year; January, February and March of 2012—all FIRST PLACE Wins! Congratulations, Ginger!!

Kenée Campo

Kenée remembers her family's WWII belt-tightening meals—casseroles and more casseroles, lovingly created by her Canadian mom—filling, nourishing, but *VERY* boring. A journey to eight countries in Europe on her own in her 20's convinced Kenée there was a whole new world of exciting flavors, ingredients, presentations and ethnic liquors awaiting her palate.

And with husband Mike, she explored the world for over 20 years, enjoying the delights of special restaurants and local foods wherever they traveled. During her years Lakeside as a regular member of CASA, Kenée favored entering breads, pastries and sweets; her collection of pewter attests to her many successes.

Taking advantage of cooking classes whenever she can, she is already booked for a second class with a favorite chef in Tuscany, Italy this coming May.

Pam Ladd

Pam learned to love cooking at a very early age from both her mother and father and also her paternal grandmother. Her parents loved to give dinner parties and the "girls" were always asked to help prepare the food and to decorate the table. Her mother insisted on "colorful food". And if that wasn't totally possible, the table decorations made up for the lack of color. As Pam's parents both worked; when she came home from school, she learned to experiment on her own. Even when it was a disaster...and there were quite a few of those at an early age; her parents always praised her for trying.

Pam's main career was in Convention Tourism Sales; however that also included working in catering as Director of Catering Sales and then Director of Catering for both a chain of Wine and Cheese Gourmet Shops, for Sheraton Hotels and then for the cities of Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia in Convention Sales. Her specialty was arranging large off site catering events. The locations included boats of all sizes and types (including an aircraft carrier and a submarine), barges, parks, historic homes and restaurants in various cities around the US and Canada.

Pam and her husband, David, loved to entertain in their various homes over their 45 year marriage. They moved to Lakeside in May 2010.

WINNER'S PHOTO GALLERY

JUDGES CATEGORY A—Holiday Botanas

FIRST PLACE, PRESENTATION & PEOPLE'S CHOICE—Carole Wolff

Bacon Baklava

SECOND PLACE - Luzma Grande

Cheese Ball with Smoked Oysters

THIRD PLACE—Monique Grossman

Cream Puffs with Crevette & Cheese Filling



FIRST PLACE, PRESENTATION & PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Carole Wolf

Bacon Baklava

SECOND PLACE

Luzma Grande

**Cheese Ball with Smoked
Oysters**

THIRD PLACE,

Monique Grossman

**Cream Puffs with Crevette &
Cheese Filling**





JUDGES CATEGORY B —HOLIDAY DESSERTS

**FIRST PLACE, PRESENTATION & BING!!—Mary Ann Waite
Cranberry Orange Cheesecake with Crème Anglaise**

**SECOND PLACE & PEOPLE's CHOICE—Catherine Suter
Hazelnut Almond Dacquoise**

**THIRD PLACE—TIE—Collette Clavadetscher—Banoffee Pie
Anna Sanchez—Tres Leches Cake**



We apologize that Anna Sanchez's picture was not available for this publication.

FIRST PLACE, PRESENTATION & BING

**Mary Ann Waite
Cranberry Orange Cheese-
cake**

SECOND PLACE & PEOPLE's CHOICE

**Catherine Suter
Hazelnut Almond
Dacquoise**

THIRD PLACE—TIE

**Collete Clavadetscher
Banoffee Pie**

**Anna Sanchez
Tres Leches Cake**



***Other Pics from our Holiday Party.....for you to enjoy!
Congrats to all of our winners and presenters!***



**Category A—Presentation Winners
Carole Wolff and John Comando**



**John Comando's Winning Presentation Dish
Mini Chicken Toastada's
Tied for Best Presentation-Category A**



Bacon Baklava

Carole Wolff

Ingredients:

- 1 cup chopped Walnut pieces
- 1 lb. bacon chopped
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. red Chile flakes (Chile De Arbol Martajado)
- 1 cup unsalted butter, melted in microwave
- 1 pkg. frozen filo dough thawed in refrigerator (1 lb, sheet's about 13" by 17")
- 1 cup (12 oz) orange Marmalade
- 1/4 cup orange-flavored Liqueur, (I used Amaranto Triple Sec)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350, Roast Walnuts on a rimmed baking sheet until dark golden brown (8-10 minutes).
2. Microwave bacon (approx 5 minutes till crisp) on a dish covered with paper towels and towel on top. Transfer to another plate on paper towel and let cool. Break up in chips and save 1/4 cup for later.
3. Mix nuts, brown sugar, Chile flakes, and the larger amount of bacon in a medium bowl.
4. Use a pastry brush to lightly coat a 9 x 13 inch baking dish with melted butter. Arrange a sheet of filo in dish, crinkling so it fits. Brush with about tsp. of butter on each layer; Layer 2 more sheets the same way, pressing down light before brushing with butter. Sprinkle 2/3 cups bacon mixture over filo.
5. Repeat each (3) layers of filo brushing each layer with butter the same way fitting to the dish. Next filo layer butter and fit and spread 2/3 cups of bacon mixture over the filo. Do one more set of (3) layers buttering each layer, then spread the last of the mixture on the 3rd layer then cover with 4 more layers of butter and filo. Brush over the top with the last of the butter.
6. Using the tip of a paring knife cut baklava lengthwise into 1 inch wide rows. Cut off a corner. Working from there, cut baklava crosswise on the diagonal into 1 inch rows to make diamond shaped pieces. As you work, hold down the top layer of filo with your finger on either side of knife. (You may ask why cut it before you bake, you will not be able to cut it properly after it is baked.)
7. Bake baklava until deep golden brown and flaky about 45 minutes (but keep your eye on it for in high altitude it bakes faster). In the last few minutes, heat marmalade, liqueur and 1/4 cup water in a small saucepan, stirring, until mixture starts to boil. Pour hot mixture evenly over baklava and let cool completely.

Prep time: 45 minutes Cook Time: 45 minutes
(Keep a close eye for when it was done in 30 minutes).

Ready in 1 ½ hours. Number of servings: 85

Note: You can make ahead of time up to 1 day, chill in airtight container.

Feel comfortable with working with filo and don't worry that it doesn't look perfect. Be creative. The leftover filo I made spinach nutmeg pie and wasted nothing.

This was taken from Sunset Magazine and molded to my way of preparing.

Cranberry Orange Cheesecake

Mary Ann Waite

YIELD: 12 servings

Cheesecake:

Ingredients:

2 c. ginger cookie crumbs

1/4 cup sugar

4 Tbl. butter, melted

FILLING:

4 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened

1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk

1/4 cup lemon juice

4 eggs

1-1/2 cups chopped fresh *or* frozen cranberries

1 Tbl. grated orange peel

2 Tbl Grand Marnier

Sugared cranberries and orange peel strips, optional

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine cracker crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom of a greased 9-in. springform pan;. Bake at 350 for 10 min. Cool.
2. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and milk until fluffy. Beat in lemon juice until smooth. Add eggs one at a time, beat on low speed just until combined. Fold in cranberries and orange peel and GM. Pour filling over crust. Place on pan on a baking sheet.
3. Bake at 325° for 60-70 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes.
4. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen. Cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight. Garnish with sugared cranberries and orange peel if desired.

Crème Anglaise Sauce

Ingredients:

2 large egg yolks

1 cup heavy cream

1/3 cup white sugar

1 TBLS Grand Marnier

1/4 Tsp vanilla extract

1 TBLS grated orange peel

Directions:

Whisk egg yolks, cream, sugar, Grand Marnier, vanilla extract and orange peel in a small saucepan until smooth. Place saucepan over medium-low heat and cook, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula, scraping the bottom, until the mixture is hot and thickens slightly, and a thermometer reaches 180 F (82 degrees C) – 8 – 10 minutes. Remove from heat, strain to remove any over-cooked particles of egg; allow to cook. Note: I added another 1 TBLS of Grand Marnier after it cooled.

2015 CATEGORIES

(If you need information about the 2014 categories, please refer to the October Newsletter)

Month	Cat. A	Cat. B
January 19th	Soups, Stews & Chilis	Cupcakes
February 16th	Celebrity Chef Main Dish	Anything Chocolate
March 9th *	Indian Main Dish	Puddings/Mousse
April 20th	Fish or Seafood Main Dish	Filled Pastries
May 18th	Main Dish Salads	Cheesecakes
June 15th	Savory Brunch Main Dish	Cakes & Tortes
July 20th	Poultry Main Dish	Cookies & Bars
August 17th	Reserved for outing	Reserved for outing
September 14th *	Mexican Main Dish	Mexican Dessert
October 19th	Italian Main Dish	Italian Desserts
November 9th	Comfort Food Main Dish	Pies, Tarts & Cobblers
December 21st Members Only	Botanas	Holiday Desserts

- * 2nd Monday due to Mexican Holiday