



Culinary Arts Society of Ajijic

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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www.ajijiccasa.org

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CASA MISSION STATEMENT

CASA Members, Associates and guests are provided a monthly forum to share foods; learn new preparation techniques; stimulate culinary ideas; and an avenue to meet new people who enjoy the wonderful world of food in a competitive atmosphere that encourages creativity and rewards excellence

2015 CASA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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NEXT CASA MEETING

Please let us know if you will be attending the CASA meeting next **Monday, October 19th**. Remember that it begins promptly at 4:00 pm, but will be at **"La Mision" restaurant** at Rio Bravo #7 (turn down toward the lake like going to the current Tabarka Restaurant. La Mision is the former Villa de Arte. Presenters, please be set up no later than 3:45 pm.

October 19th Categories

Category A - Italian Main Dish
Category B - Italian Dessert

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CASA President - Margaret Ancira

Hear comes fall, members! Does it feel like it yet or do we wait for the rainy season to end and then the temperature to drop 10 degrees? This year is flying by even faster than all the ones before.

We had made a decision to have a break in August due to the very busy travel schedules of our members. So we opted for a social night out with those who were available. For my own sake, I enjoyed having a month off and replacing it with a get-together where we had the opportunity

to get to know others in the club on a more personal level.

The Board is quite occupied at the monthly meetings doing all the functions that need to get done at a meeting...setting up the tables, organizing the presenter table, preparing the judge's area, handling the wine for judges and guests, reviewing the agenda, etc. As a result, we don't get the chance to really mingle the way we'd like to so the August evening out was a welcome event. There were at least 14 of us and we all really enjoyed the spontaneity of it. What I noticed too was there was a lot of networking going on and exchange of good information. And Just Chillin' did an excellent job of preparing the menu especially for us at a reasonable price. Thank you, Leslie, for being the liaison for this event! Great job to you and the restaurant. (I know you are traveling the world so I hope you see this...)

So, we are back in the swing of things and the next monthly meeting is October 19. The categories are Italian Main Dish and Italian desserts. Wow, this is a slam dunk! Sign up now for this easy peasy category.

Another big GRACIAS goes to Carole Wolff for running the meeting. You will be seeing her again in October as I will be on a cruise in Canada seeing the turning of the fall leaves.

Margaret Ancira
CASA President



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Meet our September 2015 Judges

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Rasa Knudson

Rasa became interested in cooking and food at an early age. When she was small she started helping her Aunt Dorothy in the kitchen and she would let Rasa have a free hand much of the time only stepping in when she was going to do something dangerous. She learned a great deal from her and never lost interest in food. Her Father was a gourmand and collected recipes from "Gourmet Magazine". She gained her interest in fine foods in this manner. At home her parents entertained in the traditions of the old country, Latvia, and this was how she was raised. Rasa's Husband, ED, on the other hand, did not grow up in this environment and needed to be civilized.

They entertained a great deal and both enjoyed being thought of as "Celebrity Cooks" and hosts. At one time they got deeply involved in planning a small, restaurant but then decided they would no longer be able to have the dinner parties they were used to and dropped the idea. "The Porcelain Pig" was still-born. So, Rasa says: "enjoy yourself and your guests and have fun".

Don't forget the wine!

Rasa Knudson
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Linda Harley

Linda's major culinary efforts during the past 25 years have focused on the Culinary Culture of Mexican Cuisine though-out Mesoamerica. In 2009, through her cooking studio in New York City, The Urban Kitchen, She was involved with the presentations made to the UNESCO to designate Mexico's Culinary Culture – an important achievement for Mexico finally granted in 2010.

In 2010 Linda went to Puerto Vallarta and opened a cooking school with moderate success, but after two years realized that Ajijic was a much more promising environment, and presented to LCS a comprehensive program that potentially will serve as a national model for a culinary destination.

Originally from Venezuela's rainforest where native foods are limited, she came to Mexico some 40 years ago and was simply astounded by the culinary culture. In working with the Secretariat of Tourism, her idea was that Mexico needed to be a culinary destination, but at the time, sun and white-sand beaches seemed much more popular.

After having two restaurants in the developing Yucatan, she then decided to go to New York to get some formal culinary training. She went to the New York University Restaurant School where these formalities served to further spur studies with indigenous women. Over time, Linda has had the immense opportunity to travel, learn and cook with elder woman in 24 countries.

Mexico has given the world more ingredients than any other country with 500 national dishes from 32 states. Unfortunately processed foods and imported habits are ruining Mexico's culinary culture with a devastating impact on health and the family nucleus. Linda's objective is to share a disappearing authentic Mexican culture – one delicious meal at a time.

Linda R. Harley
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Christina Levy

Christina's first cooking lessons at age 9 took place in her family's home in Guadalajara. Being the 6th of six sisters, the kitchen was busy place. Skills and recipes were passed down the line from sister to sister as each prepared to marry and cook in their own kitchen. Being the last Christina had seen it all!! They all learned the basics of Traditional cooking.

She was once married to a Lebanese man and learned to cook many different dishes from her mother-in-law.

Years later she took a Greek Cooking course from a Mexican/Greek Lady in Guad in her restaurant.

Christina can never follow a recipe, so her dishes are enriched by her taste becoming a 'new' version.

Her favourite to cook at the moment is Appetizers also known as Botanas, Tapas or Finger Foods. At this time in her life the cuisine favourites are Thai, Indian and Mediterranean.

Christina and two of her sisters put together their recipes creating the Cookbook "A la Mesa". A portion of the proceeds has been donated to VOZ pro Salud Mental A.C. to help families cope with an ill member of their family.

They have sold 9,000 copies of their Cookbook in four editions adding new recipes in each one.

In all her cooking experiences she enjoys every aspect from chopping, tasting, prep work and the final Presentation.

Christina enjoys watching Cooking Shows and recreating the recipes. One rule she lives by, Good Advice; "Never make a new dish when you are having guests"

Christina Levy
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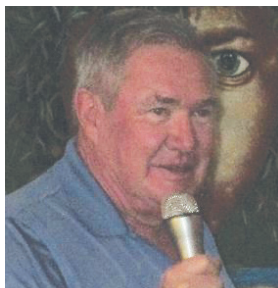
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Meet our September 2015 Winners

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Category A

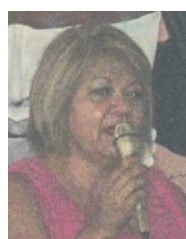
Mexican Main Dish



Category A First Place Winner
Rick Feldmann

Category B

Mexican Desserts



Category B First Place Winner's
Arlene Foster & Marina Benz

And the winners are...



First Place Winners
Arlene Foster, Marina Benz, Rick Feldmann



Honorable mentions

Second Place Winners



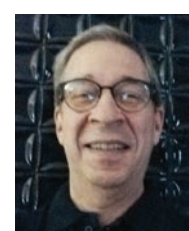
First Place, Best Presentation and
People's Choice, Rick Feldmann
Camarones de Rabano Picante



First Place, Best Presentation and
People's Choice, Marina Benz
Mango Madness



Category A
George Lindahl
Guerrero coctel
de Camarones



Category B
Second Place Winner
Keith Sofka
Flan Feliz



Second Place, People's Choice
George Lindahl
Guerrero Coctel de Camarones



First Place
Arlene Foster
Mexican Flan

Third Place Winners

Category A
Carole Wolff
Asado de Bodas

Category B
Roberta Hilleman
Rompope Flan



Second Place, Best Presentation and
People's Choice, Keith Sofka
Flan Feliz



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September 2015 Winning Recipes

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FIRST PLACE

CAMARONES DE RABANO PICANTE (HORSERADISH SHRIMP)

Rick Feldmann

Prep Time: 2 hours

Total Time: 2 hours, 5 minutes

Ingredients

80 large shrimp, peeled and deveined
3/4 cup tomato puree
1/4 cup prepared horseradish (not super hot)
2 Tbs EVO
2 Tbs Honey
1 Tbs Sriracha Chili Sauce
1 tsp salt
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 cup cilantro, finely chopped
8 lemons, cut into sections for juicing over the shrimp

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients together, stirring well, then refrigerate for 1-2 hours.
2. Line a large cookie sheet with aluminum foil and spray with Pam.
3. Preheat oven to 350 F.
4. Layer the shrimp on the cookie sheet (with sauce) so they do not overlap.
5. Place the cookie sheet in the oven and cook until the shrimp are just done. Check on them often so they don't overcook and become rubbery.
6. Place the cooked shrimp (and sauce) on a platter and add the lemons along the edge.



FIRST PLACE

MANGO MADNESS CHEESECAKE

Marina Benz

Ingredients for the cheesecake

1 c flour
1/4 c packed brown sugar
1/3 c butter, softened
2/3 c coconut
3 pkg (8-oz each) cream cheese, softened
3 Tbsp corn starch
3/4 c sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
zest of 2 limes
1/2 c lime juice, which is 5 limes (if using Key limes, use half the amount)

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray the inside of your cheesecake pan with nonstick spray and line the bottom with parchment paper. Blend the softened butter and the brown sugar together until creamy. Then mix in the flour. Stir in the coconut. Press into bottom of spring form pan and bake for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare your cheesecake batter. In a bowl cream together the cream cheese, corn starch, and sugar until it is all smooth and creamy. Blend in the vanilla and the eggs, one at a time. After the eggs are all mixed in, then add the zest of two limes. Squeeze the juice out of the 5 limes which should be about 1/2 cup. Add the juice to the batter and mix well. Pour onto prepared coconut crust. Bake in oven for 45-50 minutes, or until the center is slightly wiggly. (It may take up to an hour depending on your oven). Remove and cool completely before putting in the refrigerator.

Ingredients for Mango Mousse

2 c mango pulp (about 2-3 ripe mangos, pitted and peeled)
2 tsp lemon juice (or orange juice)
1 small pkg sugar free orange jello (or 2 tsp plain gelatin)
2 c heavy whipping cream
2 Tbsp powdered sugar

Peel and pit your mangos. Purée them in a blender. OR if you happen to have an immersion blender, then just place them in a small pan. Once they are puréed, add the lemon (or orange) juice and then heat in a small pan. When they are hot, sprinkle on the gelatin, and stir in so all the gelatin is well blended and dissolved. OR you can heat up 1/4 cup hot water and dissolve the jello in the water and then mix it all into the mangos. Once jello is dissolved, remove from heat and let cool. Meanwhile, whip your cream. Sprinkle on a couple tablespoons of powdered sugar. Whip until light peaks appear. Over beating will curdle. Once you have your cream whipped, fold it into the cooled mango mixture. It may appear to not be very thick, but the jello will help that. Pour onto the cooled cheesecake and refrigerate until mousse is firm. Now onto the glaze.

Ingredients for the Mango Glaze

1 mango, peeled and pitted
1 tsp lemon juice (or orange juice)
2 Tbsp cold water
2 Tbsp corn starch

Once again, puree your mangos either in the blender or with an immersion blender. Once again place them in a small pan on the stove. Add the juice to the purée and heat the mixture to a low simmer. Make a slurry of corn starch and cold water (just mix the two together until the corn starch is dissolved). Pour the corn starch mixture into the hot mixture and stir it in well. It will gradually thicken. When it does get thick, remove from heat and let cool a little. Pour glaze onto the mousse and smooth it all over the top. Place back in the refrigerator until ready to serve. Before serving, you may want to heat up a flat knife (then dry it so the blade is warm). Run it around the edges just to make sure that everything will come clear easily from the side of the spring form pan.



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CASA'S BING AWARD

The BING Award is given to each CASA Presenter with 3 First Places throughout the year. The BING Award was instituted in 1987 by Charlotte MacNaara, CASA's First President, who is the founder of Vogue Magazine. Her best friend was Bing Horn of the BING Ice Cream Company in Guadalajara. Bing wanted to do something special for Charlotte and CASA, so he paid for the trophies. The 2 friends then decided that "in honor of CASA and BING Ice Cream" they would award a trophy to anyone who won 3 first places during that calendar year and named this the "BING Award. To date, many have achieved this- a few more than once.

This year we have had
three BING winners

Catherine Suter
Monica Molloy
and
Leslie Yanko

Congratulations!!

2015 Categories



October 19th

Category A - Italian Main Dish
Category B - Italian Dessert

November 9th

Category A - Comfort Food Main Dish
Category B - Pies, Tarts & Cobblers

December 14th - Members Only

Category A - Botanas
Category B - Holiday Desserts

Date Change from Dec. 21st to Dec. 14th

Holiday party at Manix Restaurant

Members & Guests 200 pesos

Ham glazed in mustard with roasted
pineapple and a horseradish sauce
Roast chicken
Ratatouille of roasted peppers, zucchini,
chayote & other vegetables with herbs
Corn souffle

Due to inflation, the costs have risen for this year's Holiday Party. We must charge \$200 pesos per person attending - except that people presenting and the judges will attend "at no charge".

You must make reservations for the Holiday Party if you are not presenting or judging. Reservations will be taken only at the October 19 and November 9 CASA meetings. All reservations must be prepaid at one of these meetings. We will need to know if you wish to eat ham or roast chicken so Manix can properly plan the meal. Guests are welcome. Please see Rick Feldmann to make your reservations and payment.

This will compliment CASA's presenters of Holiday Botanas and Holiday desserts.
No Speaker in December - yeah more visit time!



CASA CULINARY CORNER

September's
Culinary Tip

America's Test Kitchen
Knife testing results

Rating Chef's knives - 20 years in a row Victorinox Knives places First as best knife and best value.

Our own Super Lake now carries these knives and the prices are quite reasonable. They also carry the Victorinox knife sharpener. As Victorinox's blade is cut on a different angle we suggest, a wise investment may be one of these as well.

