

CANAL HOUSE COOKING VOL. N°4 FARM MARKETS & GARDENS

has just arrived, right on time for summer cooking. This is a collection of some of our favorite recipes, the ones we cook for ourselves, our friends, and our families. They'll make you want to run straight to the kitchen or out to the grill and start cooking.

We are home cooks writing about home cooking for other home cooks. Our recipes are easy to prepare and completely doable for the novice and experienced cook alike. In the summer, we forsake the convenience of the supermarket to live in the season by shopping at farmers' markets and roadside tables, and gathering the very freshest vegetables from our own gardens. The way we cook couldn't be simpler—slicing big, juicy tomatoes for lunch, preserving tomatoes for later; grilling vine-wrapped whole fish or a peppercorn-rubbed beef tenderloin for dinner; roasting chickens then slathering them with fresh herb butter; cooking corn into succotash; and turning ripe summer fruit into jams, jellies, and cobblers. Take a peek at the pages to the right and see what we're up to.

*Canal House Cooking Volume N° 4, Farm Markets & Gardens* is the fourth book of our award-winning series of seasonal recipes. We publish three volumes a year: Summer, Fall & Holiday, and Winter & Spring, each filled with delicious recipes for you from us.

Christopher & Melissa

CANAL HOUSE



COOKING

VOLUME N° 4

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# CANAL HOUSE COOKING

Volume N° 4

Hamilton & Hirsheimer

Welcome to Canal House—our studio, workshop, dining room, office, kitchen, and atelier devoted to good ideas and good work relating to the world of food. We write, photograph, design, and paint, but in our hearts we both think of ourselves as cooks first.

Our loft studio is in an old red brick warehouse. A beautiful lazy canal runs alongside the building. We have a simple galley kitchen. Two small apartment-size stoves sit snugly side by side against a white tiled wall. We have a dishwasher, but prefer to hand wash the dishes so we can look out of the tall window next to the sink and see the ducks swimming in the canal or watch the raindrops splashing into the water.

And every day we cook. Starting in the morning we tell each other what we made for dinner the night before. Midday, we stop our work, set the table simply with paper napkins, and have lunch. We cook seasonally because that's what makes sense. So it came naturally to write down what we cook. The recipes in our books are what we make for ourselves and our families all year long. If you cook your way through a few, you'll see that who we are comes right through in the pages: that we are crazy for tomatoes in summer, make braises and stews all fall, and turn oranges into marmalade in winter.

*Canal House Cooking* is home cooking by home cooks for home cooks. We use ingredients found in most markets. All the recipes are easy to prepare for the novice and experienced cook alike. We want to share them with you as fellow cooks along with our love of food and all its rituals. The everyday practice of simple cooking and the enjoyment of eating are two of the greatest pleasures in life.

**CHRISTOPHER HIRSHEIMER** served as food and design editor for *Metropolitan Home* magazine, and was one of the founders of *Saveur* magazine, where she was executive editor. She is a writer and a photographer.

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Christopher and Melissa in the Canal House kitchen



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## THE ARTURO

A friend and Canal House supporter sent us this recipe to help us meet our publishing deadline. And it did. We pass it on for you to share with your friends, too. Adjust the sweetness to suit your taste.

Pour **1 tablespoon real maple syrup** and **the juice of a hand-squeezed, fat, thin-skinned lime** into a glass. Add **2 ounces Mount Gay Eclipse rum** and stir to mix. Fill the glass with cracked ice then float Zaya Gran Reserva rum or Rhum Barbancourt (15 year) on top. — *makes 1*

## JUICY FRUIT COCKTAIL

We love the velvety taste of Trinidad's 10 Cane rum, made with fermented sugar cane juice, not molasses like most rums. Or for a clean summery flavor, try an artisanal Brazilian cachaça.

Fill a glass with ice, add **2 ounces white rum or cachaça**, then pour in **passion fruit or guava juice**. Depending on the size of your glass, you may have to tinker and taste a bit to get the ratio of rum to fruit juice right. Give **half a fat thin-skinned lime** a good squeeze over the glass, then toss it into the drink. — *makes 1*

## LEMON CORDIAL

makes 1 quart

Mix this intensely flavored cordial with flat or fizzy water. We like to muddle fresh mint or lemon verbena in the glass first.

**6 whole lemons, washed**

**2/3 cup granulated sugar**

Using a vegetable peeler, remove the rind from 3 of the lemons and put into a mixing bowl. Juice all the lemons and add to the bowl. Add the sugar to the bowl. Pour in 2½ cups boiling water. Stir until all of the sugar has dissolved. Set aside and allow to cool and steep for 12 hours in the refrigerator.





### LITTLE BLUE REDS

makes enough to fill 2 dozen tomato halves (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup mash)

This blue cheese and butter mash is delicious against the sweetness of little cherry tomatoes and we serve them together as an hors d'oeuvre. It also makes for a nice breakfast slathered on warm toast (add to that combo a juicy summer peach and you've got yourself a little taste of heaven).

Mash together  $\frac{1}{4}$  pound good blue cheese and 4 tablespoons softened salted butter in a small bowl. Season with coarsely ground black pepper. Spread on halved cherry tomatoes and garnish with chopped fresh parsley.

### HOT SAUSAGES & COLD OYSTERS

make as many as you like

This is really just a suggestion of an amazing combination of flavor, texture, and temperature. You choose the type of sausage, from highly seasoned little porkies to spicy chorizo and everything in between. The variety of oysters will depend on what is the very freshest. Make sure that the oysters are ice-cold—they are less resistant and easier to open. If you don't know how to shuck oysters, be sure to befriend and invite someone who can pop them open without spilling any of their briny juice.

To grill the sausages, prepare a medium-hot hardwood, charcoal, or gas grill. Grill the sausages over the hottest part of the grill, turning them as they brown. When browned all over, move them to a cooler spot on the grill to finish cooking, turning them occasionally until they have cooked through. The grilling time will vary depending on your grill and the heat.

Serve the hot sausages and cold shucked oysters together, eating this treat like this: take a bite of hot juicy sausage, then chase it by slurping down an ice-cold oyster.

## TOMATO TART

serves 4–6

We usually make this simple tart with large ripe tomatoes in season, tucking some halved supersweet cherry tomatoes in between the slabs. But we've found that using even those hothouse varieties—a little more acidic and certainly less juicy—can be quite delicious, too. Eat this tart warm or at room temperature, but definitely the same day you make it as the crisp, delicate crust becomes limp if left to sit too long.

1 sheet puff pastry, defrosted

2–3 tomatoes, cored and sliced

2–3 branches fresh thyme

Really good extra-virgin olive oil

Pepper

Salt, preferably Maldon or other  
crunchy sea salt

Preheat the oven to 375°. Lay the sheet of puff pastry out on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Using the tip of a paring knife, lightly score a border about ½ inch from the edge of the pastry. Prick the dough inside the border all over with the tines of a fork to prevent it from puffing up too much during baking.

Arrange the tomatoes on the pastry in a single layer (crowding or overlapping the tomatoes will make the puff pastry soggy). Strip the branches of thyme, scattering the leaves over the tomatoes. Drizzle the tart with some olive oil and season with pepper.

Bake the tart until the pastry is crisp and deeply browned on the bottom and around the edges, 30–40 minutes. Season with salt.



## HALIBUT AND LENTILS WITH FENNEL

serves 4

This is the quintessential surf-n-turf—the clean meaty taste of halibut balanced against the earthy flavor of lentils. Use small lentils like the little brown ones from Umbria or France’s green du Puy lentils.

### FOR THE LENTILS

Olive oil

1 yellow onion, minced

1 clove garlic

1 cup French or Italian lentils

1 big sprig thyme

1 tablespoon ground fennel seeds

2 cups chicken stock, fish stock,  
or water

Finely chopped preserved lemon rind  
(optional)

Salt and pepper

### FOR THE HALIBUT AND FENNEL

Salt

1½ pounds halibut filet, cut into  
4 thick pieces

1 fresh fennel bulb, finely chopped

Juice of 1 lemon

Really good extra-virgin olive oil

Pepper

For the lentils, heat the olive oil in a heavy pan over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the lentils, thyme, ground fennel, and chicken stock. Bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the lentils are tender, about 1 hour and 20 minutes. Add more stock or water if needed during cooking. Add the lemon rind to taste, if using. Season with salt and pepper.

For the halibut and fennel, fill a deep, medium pan with water and season with a big pinch of salt. Put the halibut into the water and bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Adjust the heat to keep the water barely bubbling. Poach the fish for 20 minutes. Remove the fish from the water with a fish spatula.

While the halibut poaches, put the fennel into a bowl and dress with lemon juice and a good drizzle of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Taste and adjust seasonings, if necessary.

Spoon the lentils onto a large platter or individual plates. Place the halibut on the lentils then scatter fennel over the fish. Drizzle everything with olive oil.





The Bird is the Word



The Grill

THE WHOLE BEEF TENDERLOIN, PEPPERED AND GRILLED  
serves 12

For those of us who enjoy a good piece of chewy, on-the-bone, grilled steak, a filet seems kind of wimpy—the meat is so lean and mild. But it's these very qualities that make the filet the perfect choice for grilling whole and serving either warm or cold.

FOR THE BEEF

1 whole beef tenderloin  
¼ cup coarsely ground black pepper  
Salt

FOR THE SALAD

Juice of 1 lemon  
6–8 anchovy filets, finely chopped  
4–6 tablespoons really good  
extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper

1 bunch arugula, torn  
1 small head Bibb lettuce, torn  
1 small bunch parsley, leaves  
coarsely chopped  
Big handful celery leaves, chopped  
Handful fresh tarragon leaves,  
chopped

For the beef, using a sharp knife, trim off any fat from the tenderloin. Slide the blade under the long sinewy silver skin, trimming it off. Fold about 6 inches of the thin end of the meat under itself. This folded over end should be about as thick as the rest of the filet so that it cooks evenly. Tie into a “neat package” with thin flexible steel wire. Rub with the pepper, pressing it into the meat, and season with salt.

Prepare a medium-hot hardwood charcoal or gas grill. Grill the filet over the hottest part of the grill, turning it as a good brown crust develops. When the meat is browned all over, move it to a cooler spot on the grill to finish cooking, turning occasionally, until the internal temperature reaches 120° for rare and 130° for medium-rare. The grilling time will vary depending on your grill and the heat. Start checking the internal temperature after 20 minutes. Take the meat off the grill and let it rest for 15 minutes. Serve warm or let it cool, then wrap and refrigerate it for up to 3 days before serving it cold and sliced.

For the salad, make the vinaigrette in the bottom of a salad bowl, stirring together the lemon juice, anchovies, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Pile greens and herbs into the bowl and toss. Serve with the grilled filet.





## STRONG COFFEE GRANITA

makes about 1 quart

During the hot summer months, we like to end our meals with this simple sweet—dessert and espresso in a single course. A dollop of whipped cream spooned over the “grainy” coffee ice crystals adds an unexpected lushness to its refreshing taste. The granita will stay fresh-tasting in a covered plastic container in the freezer for up to 1 week.

1 cup sugar

Sweetened whipped cream

2 cups very strong hot coffee

Stir the sugar into the coffee until it has dissolved, then set it aside to cool. Pour the cooled coffee into a flat baking pan (about 9 × 13 inches) or a wide container that will fit on a shelf in the freezer. Slide the pan into the freezer. The liquid will become slushy around the edges within an hour or so. Scrape the granita with the tines of a fork where it is beginning to freeze. Continue stirring, scraping, and breaking up any lumps every 30 minutes, until the granita has all frozen icy crystals throughout. Serve in chilled glasses with a big spoonful of whipped cream on top.

## PINK LEMON GRANITA

makes 3–4 cups

One day while making a batch of lemon granita, we noticed we had a lone blood orange on hand, so we decided to add its rosy juice to the mix—pink lemon juice! Since blood oranges are only available in the winter, we substitute pink grapefruit juice when blood oranges aren’t around. The granita will stay fresh-tasting in a covered plastic container in the freezer for up to 1 week.

