

A family of foodies

Food Glorious Food!

Family Christmas



In our family occasions of celebration see family gatherings of three generations round a large table enjoying the feast. On Christmas Day the 'pressie ceremony' does not change; it is preceded by a breakfast of scrambled egg



with smoked salmon after which the champagne and orange juice is opened and, thus armed with 'straight' or buck's fizz, we congregate around the tree and the ceremony begins. For lunch, around three o'clock, we are more likely to have roast beef or poached salmon than turkey. Raspberries and meringues will follow and the Christmas Pud waits for Boxing Day when it is enjoyed with gusto and appetite.

Memories from the corners of my mind.....



I have early memories of flying fish and their beautiful colours, leaping at the bows of the ship returning us to England after living and going to school for a year and a half in Barbados. These were somewhat marred by the disbelief of my fellow pupils on arrival back at school. I made up for it on a trip where my big sister and I feasted on the Badian speciality of Flying Fish with Banana almost daily. I have good memories of swordfish in Gib; tapas before the bullfight in Spain; freshwater crayfish at Fouquets and steak tartare in Paris; Pizza on board ship in the early sixties and the barman from Marseille who gave me the recipe; scrawny african chicken in mushroom sauce and yams with chilli corned beef (on the cook's night off..). Then there were Springbok in Swaziland (no, we didn't eat them; just enjoyed seeing them and the children chanted "oh no, not another impala!!"); the Scabbard in Madeira is one of the most ugly fish in the world with its black skin and elongated head but out-of-this world to eat and the Hong Kong Pot an enjoyable feast when many are gathered together.

The not-so-good memories include avocado pear in Sierra Leone; pork chops in Accra City G.C.; Palm Oil Stew in Nigeria did not mix with the over-generous dry martinis offered by our american hosts, which resulted in me bringing my boots up and oysters in Helston made me unbelievably ill. Having

previously always enjoyed the lovely molluscs I can never touch them again!

There'll Always be an England...

In Cornwall you have to go 'over to Newlyn' where the crab are cooked straight from the trawler before quickly being exported with most of the lobster catch across the channel and the best pasties are found 'up' Paul Hill. In the late sixties it seemed that the Cornish did not trust the crab, saying it is 'piesenous'. They stick to pilchards (in or out of tomato sauce)! Fishing at sea for mackerel off Mousehole my brother-in-law lost his first catch to a swooping seagull!

Picnics have always been important events from the corkwoods in Spain, to the african bush. the Minack Theatre at the tip of Cornwall and the Chichester Festival Theatre in Hampshire. My daughter Stephanie and I once prepared a veritable feast to share with the friends who had catered for us on the previous visit. I cannot remember the play we saw but we left the picnic basket outside the garden gate, each thinking the other had put it in the car - phoned our next door neighbours who enjoyed a bonus evening meal!

We live in Hampshire now and Steph is growing fast. We go blackberry picking and make scrumptious thick blackberry jelly. She starts to make her own tea. I come home from work and she has baked a cake - "How did you do that?" I ask "I looked at the book" she replies. My mother gave me the same answer when I asked her how she learned to crochet. I never did learn to crochet but I developed my culinary skills and enjoyment of food and seem to have passed the interest on to my daughter.

Like Mother like Daughter - It's nice to go travelling, but....

Steph moved to Canada ten years ago where, like me, she has experienced good and bad culinary moments. Son Jacob, who thrives on peanut butter sandwiches, was described by his mother as a vegetarian who doesn't eat vegetables. He enjoys steak, will eat a whole trout and a good portion of Alaskan Salmon but is reluctant to try any green stuff. His mother would advise you to avoid 'Kraft' parties and marshmallow salad. (Jacob will eat the 'Kraft' but not the salad).

Steph's recent introduction to "Deep Fried Turkey" was declared far better than it sounds. When 'Deer Season' is declared there's a chance of a tasty venison steak. Some of the good moments are included in her 'Friends and Family Cookbook'. If enough interest is shown she can get copies printed!!

[The Pressie Ceremony](#) [1]

[Recipes GOOD](#) [2]

[The Not-so-Good](#) [3]

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Links

[1] <http://www.theingots.org/community/node/5400/>

[2] <http://www.theingots.org/community/node/5453/>

[3] <http://www.theingots.org/community/node/5482/>