

Live! from Marilyn's Kitchen

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By Marilyn Harris



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Preface

Welcome to “Cooking with Marilyn!” and welcome to my kitchen!

In 1988, someone, and I really don’t remember who it was, told me that they needed a new “cooking lady” on the local talk-radio station and suggested that I go over and interview for the job. At that time the radio station was literally two blocks away from my office at a downtown-Cincinnati department store and, since a good part of my job at that time was public relations, my boss thought it sounded like a good idea. So I called to say that I would be interested in the vacancy and was invited to come around at 9 o’clock the next morning. When I reached the old WCKY building, they ushered me into a studio, put a headset on me, and stuck a microphone in my face. The “audition” was live. “Where are your books?” my co-host, Mike McMurray, asked me. Apparently, the others who had come in to audition had brought stacks of reference books. “What books?” I asked. “Do you really want me to look things up on live radio? If they ask me something I don’t know, I’ll just fake it.” Mike grinned and said, “Okay. It’s up to you.” And away we went. The hour flew by. We had lots of callers, all of them as nice as could be, and I was able to answer all their questions. The station manager came by and told me to come back on Thursday. And that’s how “Cooking with Marilyn!” was born. I went home and told my husband that I would be talking to people on the phone about cooking twice a week for an hour and he was astonished that someone would want to pay me to do that, since that’s pretty much what I always did anyway. Mike and I worked together for a year or so and to this day I don’t think he has ever figured out whether I was actually answering all those questions or just making stuff up. Well, maybe I have made up some stuff now and then, but for the most part I am lucky to have a good, solid culinary foundation and I keep learning as I go along. All my listeners have heard me say that I learn more than anyone on my show. But just so you know how I came to know those answers, I think it might be good to insert a little autobiography here.

After being nurtured on good Southern cooking and watching,

and sometimes helping, my mother turn out good, satisfying meals, I was trained in college—at Mississippi State College for Women, now Mississippi Women’s University—in home economics with a specialty in food and nutrition. In New Orleans, while my husband was in graduate school at Tulane University, I worked in the public-relations area of the gas and electric utilities in the days when they encouraged us to use more energy rather than less. For the most part my job was to teach people about their kitchen appliances. It also included a lot of cooking and recipe writing and my wonderful supervisor taught me a lot about New Orleans cooking. I’ve had the rare opportunity to travel a good deal and to spend extended periods of time in Europe. It was there that I did my real apprenticeship: taking advanced courses in London and Paris and cooking and observing in the restaurants of some of the best chefs in the world in Lyon. Back in Cincinnati, I taught cooking classes at a shop called Hurrah! and was, in my husband’s words, a “culinary circuit rider” teaching cooking in Dayton, Ohio, Lexington, Kentucky, and Bloomington, Indiana. I had a great time meeting all kinds of wonderful people and putting my love of cooking to the best possible use. A big challenge and great adventure for me was taking on the job of creating and directing “The Fourth Street Market Cooking School” in a downtown department store, Cincinnati’s beloved Pogue’s. I was there for eight years until it was plundered by merger-happy executives. After its demise I found the time to write my first cookbook and begin a regular column in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, continued teaching in some great area cooking schools, and consulted on some fascinating projects in the food industry. I’m still doing all of those things and more and enjoying it.

So you see, all those years of experience were incredibly valuable to me when it came time to answer all the questions that have been put to me on the air since the 1980s. After many changes of call letters and broadcast times, and after several co-hosts, including my good friend Jan Mickelson, now at WHO in Des Moines, I have settled into a three-hour slot on Saturday afternoons on WKRC 550 AM.



I don't actually broadcast from my kitchen, which is located on the second floor of my weird old house, originally built as an artist's studio, in Clifton, the gaslight section of Cincinnati. But for this book I am inviting you into my "kitchen on the air." You will find here many of the recipes I have shared with my wonderful, loyal listeners, as well as a number they have contributed from their own kitchens. I am always telling them they are the most important ingredient on my call-in talk show. It is a cooking class of sorts, as well as the great community recipe exchange for this area.

If you are out of our broadcasting range, you can still join us on the air via the Internet on Saturday afternoons between 1:00 and 4:00 P.M. EST. Just go to www.55krc.com and click on "listen." In any case, I hope you will have fun trying some of our recipes from this book in your own kitchen.

So, welcome to the "Cooking with Marilyn!" show and to my kitchen!

P.S. Some of these recipes appeared in *More Cooking with Marilyn*. That book is long since out of print and the recipes have been updated for this publication.

Acknowledgments

This book is dedicated to the memory of Russ Wiles (February 27, 1939-March 31, 2003).

I am blessed with a host of wonderful friends. I wish I could name them all here. They are special people in my life and I can count on them to encourage me, cook, eat, and drink wine with me, and just generally make life more pleasant, whether they are sitting in my kitchen or calling me from a distant place. I would like to extend special thanks to those who contributed their recipes to the book. Their names appear with their recipes. Others who should be mentioned are: Marj Valvano, Connie Wiles, Sandy Cohan, Alice Fixx, Dave Patania, Renate and Jerry Glenn, Lana Santavicca, Sara and Hardy Friedrichsmeyer, Tori Houlihan and Dave Henry, Barbara and Klaus Jeziorkowski, Nancy Pigg, Faye Volkman, Mary and Paul Fricke, Carol and Rex Stockwell, Chris Hassall, John Mocker, Sue and Bob Dyrenforth, Sylvia and Olin Gentry, all my pals at the radio stations, Nathalie Dupree, Julia della Croce, Joyce Hendley, Shirley O. Corriher, Lila Gault, Doralece Dullaghan, Denise Fredrick, Chuck Martin, Jane Miller, Penny Peoples, Betty and Dan Hise, Laura Dickhaut, my many cooking students, all the great ladies from my “foodie” travel groups (“Marilyn and the Gastronomists”), and the whole crowd of local chef and restaurant buddies I’m proud to call my friends.

A very special word of thanks goes to Diane Bowman, who designed the jacket of this book as well as that of *The Marilyn Harris Cooking School Cookbook*.

Finally, much loving gratitude to my wonderfully helpful and patient husband. He is my writing mentor and in-house computer guru. Without him none of my books would ever have been written.

ABBREVIATIONS

Standard

tsp. = teaspoon
tbsp. = tablespoon
oz. = ounce
qt. = quart
lb. = pound

Metric

ml. = milliliter
l. = liter
g. = gram
kg. = kilogram
mg. = milligram

STANDARD-METRIC APPROXIMATIONS

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon = .6 milliliter
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon = 1.2 milliliters
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon = 2.5 milliliters
1 teaspoon = 5 milliliters
1 tablespoon = 15 milliliters
4 tablespoons = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup = 60 milliliters
8 tablespoons = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup = 118 milliliters
16 tablespoons = 1 cup = 236 milliliters
2 cups = 473 milliliters
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups = 563 milliliters
4 cups = 946 milliliters
1 quart = 4 cups = .94 liter

SOLID MEASUREMENTS

$\frac{1}{2}$ ounce = 15 grams
1 ounce = 25 grams
4 ounces = 110 grams
16 ounces = 1 pound = 454 grams

Substitutions

Nothing is more aggravating than to start a recipe and then discover that your pantry lacks a key ingredient. I hope that this little list will be helpful to you.

Arrowroot: for 1½ tsp. substitute ½ tsp. flour

Baking powder: for 1 tsp. substitute ¼ tsp. baking soda and ⅝ tsp. cream of tartar

Buttermilk: substitute plain yogurt or 1 tbsp. lemon juice or white vinegar mixed with milk to equal 1 cup

Chocolate, semisweet: for 1 oz. substitute ½ oz. unsweetened chocolate plus 1 tbsp. sugar

Chocolate, unsweetened: for 1 oz. substitute 3 tbsp. cocoa powder plus 1 tbsp. butter

Cornstarch for thickening: for 1 tbsp. substitute 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour

Fresh herbs: for 1 tbsp. minced substitute 1 tsp. dried

Graham-cracker crumbs: for 1 cup substitute 15 graham crackers, ground in the food processor, or 1 cup vanilla-wafer crumbs

Half and half: for 1 cup substitute ⅞ cup whole milk plus 1½ tbsp. butter

Light brown sugar: for 1 cup substitute ½ cup dark brown sugar and ½ cup granulated sugar or 1 cup granulated sugar and 1 tbsp. molasses

Mustard, prepared: for 1 tsp. substitute 1 tsp. dry mustard mixed with 2 tsp. wine vinegar, white wine, or water

Self-rising flour: for 1 cup substitute 1 cup all-purpose flour plus 1 tsp. baking powder and ⅛ tsp. salt

Sifted cake flour: for 1 cup substitute ¾ cup plus 2 tbsp. sifted all-purpose flour

Superfine sugar: substitute granulated sugar mixed in the food processor until it is powdery

White wine: for cooking, substitute dry vermouth

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