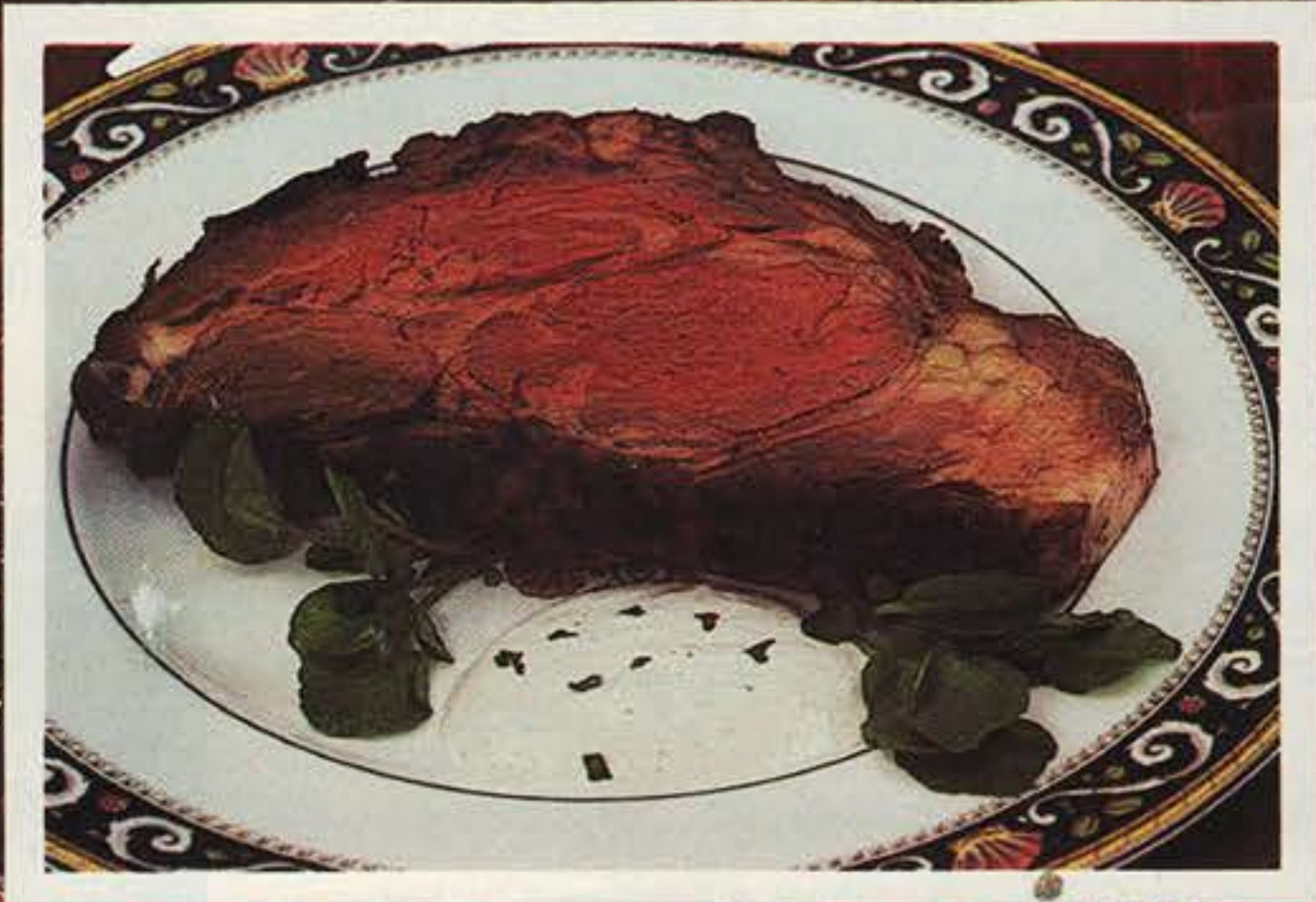
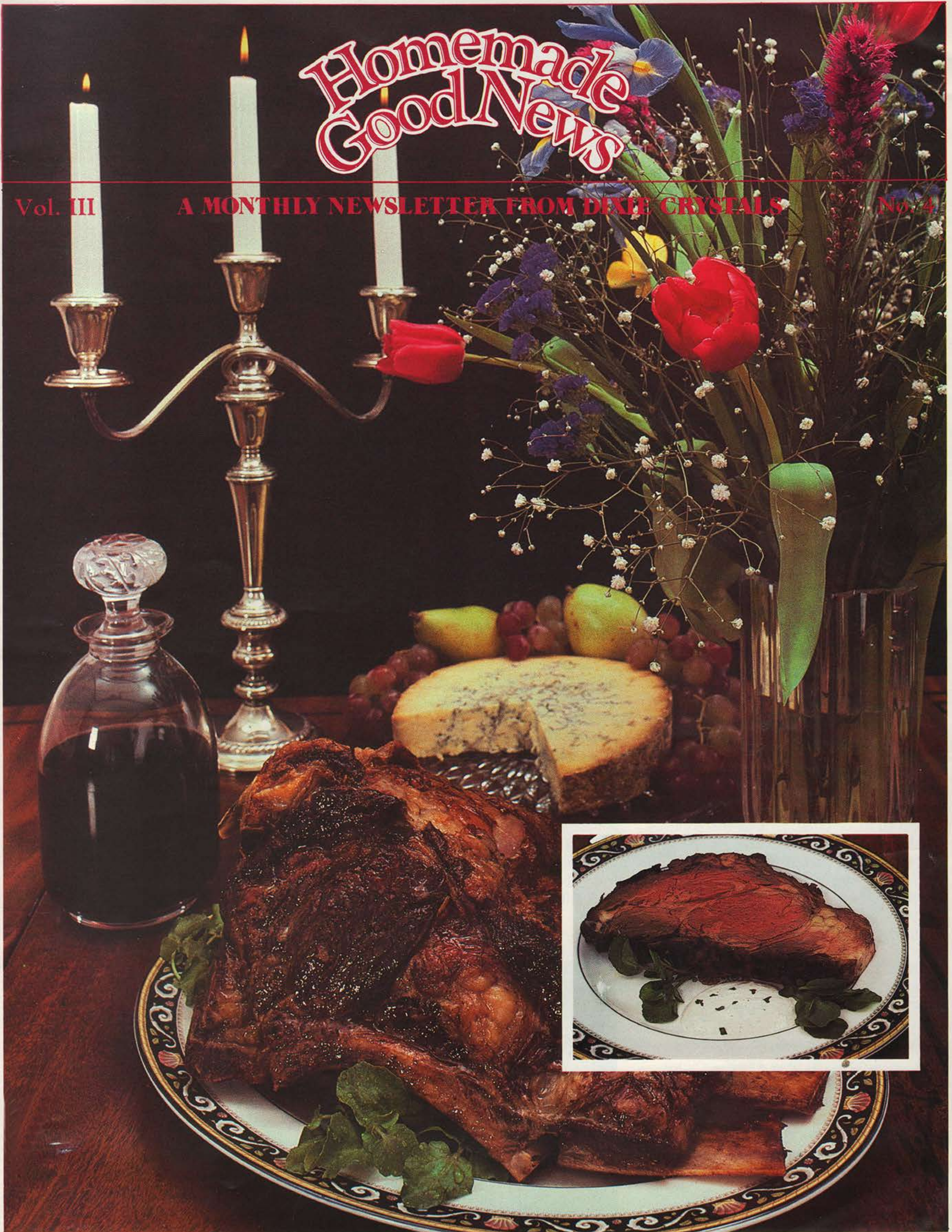


# Homemade Good News

Vol. III

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM DIXIE CRYSTALS

No. 4



## MENU OF THE MONTH

Even if Her Majesty can't be present, Roast Ribs of Beef are perfectly royal fare. The spectacle of this fine cut of beef surrounded by all the traditional accompaniments — Yorkshire Pudding, Creamy Horseradish Sauce, oven-browned potatoes, mushrooms and onions, and brilliant green string beans — is enough to turn you into a hopeless Anglophile! And afterwards, a fine port and some of that marvelous English Stilton (the King of Cheeses, to be sure!) will convince you that it is you, not Prince Charles, who is next in line for the throne. An aristocratic Trifle adds the crowning touch to this smashing meal. Jolly good, what?!!



### Roast Ribs of Beef

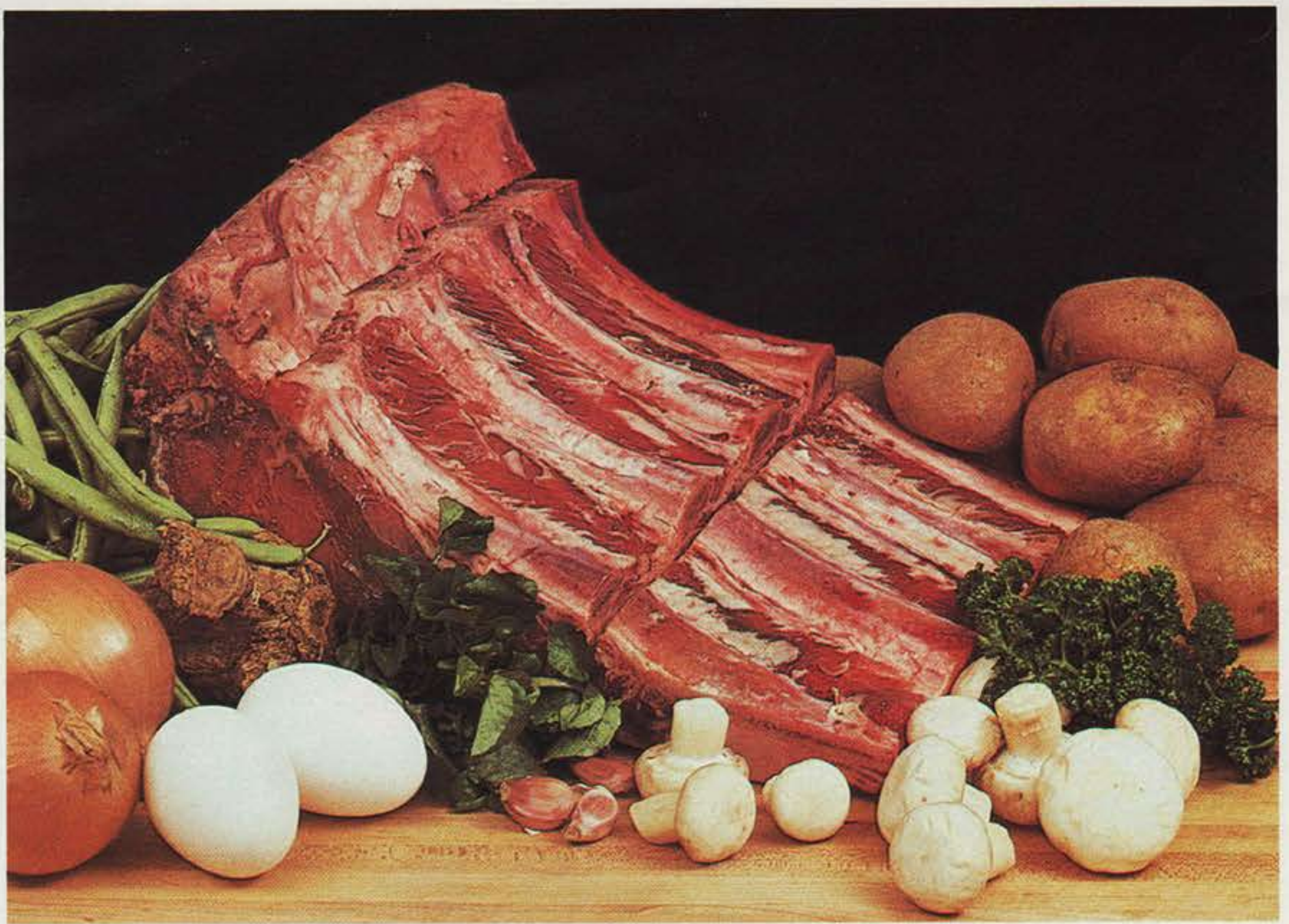
- 1 3 rib roast (about 7 lbs.), with chine bone removed
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 clove garlic, split in half lengthwise
- 12 potatoes, peeled and halved
- 12 onions, peeled and halved
- 1 lb. fresh mushrooms

Preheat oven to 450°. Wipe the roast with a damp cloth and sprinkle all over with pepper. Rub the meat with the cut side of the garlic. Place the roast bone side down in a large roasting pan, making sure that there is enough room around the meat for all of the potatoes, onions, and mushrooms. Roast for 30 minutes at 450°, then reduce heat to 350° and roast another hour and fifteen minutes for rare, an hour and thirty minutes for medium. (If you use a meat thermometer, insert it in the thickest part of the roast, with the tip pushed to the very center of that thickness. Roast to desired temperature.) An hour before the roast is supposed to be done, arrange the potatoes in the pan and let them cook in the beef drippings. The onions should go in 30 minutes before the roast is done, the mushrooms only 20. When the roast is done to your taste, let it stand at room temperature at least 10 minutes before you carve it. Serve with the roasted vegetables, creamy Horseradish Sauce, a Yorkshire Pudding made with drippings from the meat, and some fresh String Beans.

### Creamy Horseradish Sauce

- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/3 cup prepared horseradish (preferably the hot, creamy kind)
- 1 tsp. red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. dijon mustard

Whisk sour cream until smooth. Press any excess liquid out of the horseradish, then add it to the sour cream. Stir in the vinegar and mustard, blend well, and refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve.



### Yorkshire Pudding

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup milk
- salt, pepper
- 1 clove garlic, cut in half lengthwise
- 1/4 cup plus 2 TBSP hot beef drippings (pan juices from the Rib Roast)

Preheat oven to 450°. Beat the eggs until very light and fluffy, then gradually beat in the flour and milk. Season with a pinch of salt, freshly ground black pepper, and 2 TBSP of beef drippings. Rub the pan (either a flat baking dish, or muffin tins) with the cut side of the garlic. Heat the pan in the oven, then add the remaining 1/4 cup drippings and pour in the batter. (If using muffin tins: heat tins in oven, then put a spoonful of drippings in each slot and fill each about 1/3 full with batter.) Bake at 450° for 10 minutes, then reduce heat to 350° and bake 10-15 minutes more, or until pudding is puffy and golden brown. Do not open the oven during the first 20 minutes of baking or the

*China and crystal service courtesy of Levy Jewelers, Savannah, Ga.*



pudding will fall. If you make one large pudding, cut in squares to serve.

### Trifle

- 2 TBSP cornstarch
- 1 quart milk
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup sherry
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 lb. pound cake
- 1/2 lb. soft coconut macaroons
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds
- 1 pint raspberries (if you can't find fresh, use frozen, completely thawed)
- 1 pint heavy cream
- maraschino cherries

**First, make a custard:** mix the cornstarch with a little bit of the milk and make a smooth paste. Beat the eggs with the sugar and add to the balance of the milk, then stir in the cornstarch mixture. Cook in the top of a double boiler until the custard thickens and coats the back of a spoon — about 20 minutes. Allow to cool, then add 1/2 cup of the sherry and the vanilla.

**To assemble the trifle:** Cut the pound cake in slices and arrange in a single layer in your serving dish or bowl. Crumble the macaroons over the cake. You can alternate layers of cake and macaroons, if you wish, or just do a single layer of each. Soak the cake and macaroons with the rest of the sherry, and let it soak in while you toast the almonds on a baking sheet in a 350° oven until light brown (this will only take a few minutes). Sprinkle half of the almonds over the macaroon layer, then distribute the raspberries over them. Pour the cooled custard on top. Whip the cream, sweeten to taste and spoon over the custard. Decorate with the remaining toasted almonds and maraschino cherries. Refrigerate 1 hour before serving.

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## READERS' QUESTIONS

**Dear Nancy,**

Could you please put some recipes in the letter for use in a wok? Please make them simple. Thanks.

Mrs. Helen Scott  
Conyers, GA

See this issue's article entitled "Wok's Cooking?"

**Dear Nancy,**

Recently, I heard about a snack called fruit leather. Can you tell me how it is made?

Mary Dotson  
Savannah, GA

Fruit leather is a chewy fruit product made by pureeing fresh, canned or frozen fruit to a smooth, thick liquid which is poured onto a flat surface. As the puree slowly dries, it takes on a leather-like appearance and texture. When dry, fruit leather can be pulled off the drying surface and will still hold its shape.

A delicious snack, and perfect for lunch boxes during the winter when fresh fruit is expensive or unavailable. It can be cut into small pieces or chips and added to cereals, puddings and desserts for a fresh fruit flavor.

No one knows where the idea for fruit leather originated. It has been made for several hundred years by the people of Hunza, a small state in the Himalayan mountains in northwest Pakistan. Apricots are one of the most important foods to the long-living Hunzakats, who use primitive methods to make them into fruit leather. They first pound the apricot pulp until it is smooth and then spread it on smooth, flat surfaces to dry in the sun. So much for the history lesson. Fruit leather is made commercially and usually sold in the supermarket candy or produce section as fruit rolls.

You'll probably find them expensive and decide it's more economical to make it at home. It is fun to make, and if made from fresh fruit, has the advantage of being free of preservatives.

To make, line a rectangular baking sheet, preferably one with sides, with clear plastic wrap. The heavier the better. Regular kitchen plastic may need to be taped on all four sides with masking tape to prevent the wrap from blowing over the leather as it dries. Do not use wax paper or aluminum foil. They tend to stick and you might have to eat them with the leather!

Strawberry Leather is a popular one to begin with and since they are in season now, you might try it first. Wash, remove stems; slice and puree in food processor or blender until very smooth. You may have to add a small amount of water or fruit juice to some blenders to start the blending pro-

cess. Add as little liquid as possible. If puree is too tart for your taste, you may add 2 tsp. sugar per quart of fruit.

Pour the puree onto the lined pan. Slightly tilt the tray to help the puree spread evenly. Leave at least 1-inch border to allow for spreading during drying.

You may, also, make 4 to 6-inch pancake size by pouring smaller amounts. The time it takes to dry will depend on the method used. In an oven or dehydrator, it may be dry in 4 to 5 hours. If an oven is used, set it on the lowest possible setting, not over 140-160°, and prop the door open 1-2 inches to allow air to circulate.

It is dry when it feels sticky to the touch but can be easily peeled from the plastic wrap.

Roll the dried leather and plastic wrap in one piece in a loose roll while it is still

warm. Cooled fruit leather does not roll well.

Leather can be stored for weeks at room temp, several months in the refrigerator and years in the freezer.

If the leather is dried too long, it can still be used by chipping off the brittle pieces for snacking, or toppings on cereals and puddings. Leather chips can be reconstituted by soaking in hot water for 10-15 minutes. Use ½ cup hot water for each cup of chips. Stir the reconstituted chips in a blender for a smooth consistency. It's delicious used as flavoring for yogurt, ice cream, milk shakes and baby cereal.

Try not only strawberry leather, but endless others: apples, bananas, blueberries, peaches, to name a few. Spices and flavorings may be added as desired.

Happy Leathering!

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Did You Know . . .** that you can give a cake a nice orange flavor by turning it out while still warm on a cake plate lined with pieces of orange peel with the orange side next to the cake? The flavor will be drawn up into the cake.

**Did You Know . . .** that if you sprinkle a little salt in your skillet before frying fish, the fish will not stick?

**Did You Know . . .** that you can substitute plain flour for self-rising flour by using 1½ teaspoons baking powder and ¼ teaspoon salt for each cup of flour called for in the recipe?

Nella Walters  
Knoxville, Tenn.

**Did You Know . . .** that you can make your crockpot do double-duty — when it's not in use, store cookies in it.

**Did You Know . . .** it's easy to clean a tea-stained glass teapot. Just fill your teapot with hot water and dissolve 2 tablespoons of automatic dishwasher detergent in the water. Let it stand for one hour and swish the water with a long-handled brush to remove the loosened residue. Then rinse and air-dry.

**Did You Know . . .** when making iced tea, add a tiny pinch of baking soda to the tea bags before pouring in boiling water. This will keep the tea from becoming cloudy in the refrigerator and will not affect the taste.

Louise E. Ellis  
Talbott, TN

**Did You Know . . .** that salt is an excellent cleanser and purifier, and because it has no detergents, it's an ecologically safe one, too. Scour your sink or basin drain with a ½ cup or so backed up by some boiling water — it will clean, clear, and disinfect all at once! Salt is also good for cleaning cast

iron frying pans that have become blackened and encrusted with use. Scrape the pan first, then fill it with cold water and add a generous amount of salt (½ cup for a small pan). Let the pan sit overnight, then slowly bring to a boil. Boil five minutes, then remove from heat and allow water to cool. When the water is completely cold, drain it, then clean and scour the pan with a pad or brush, as you normally would.

**Did You Know . . .** that hot salt water really helps soothe sore throats. Add a teaspoon or 2 to a glass of hot water (don't make it too hot, or you'll burn yourself!). Stir until the salt dissolves, then take by the mouthful and gargle. Use the whole glassful. This is an age old remedy, and doctors still recommend it. Salt water is also good for small cuts and sores; the salt cleans and disinfects wounds and helps them heal faster.

**Did You Know . . .** that a cushion filled with fresh cedar shavings makes a comfortable and odor-resistant bed for your dog or cat. The pleasant cedar smell both deodorizes and helps repel fleas and ticks. Such cedar beds are available commercially (primarily by mail order), but you can make one at home without much ado. Make a liner for the shavings, then insert it in the right size cushion for your pet. Remember to replace the cedar shavings when they lose their fragrance; that is how they let you know they're working.

**Did You Know . . .** that cut flowers will last longer if you pour a little clear, carbonated soft drink (sprite, for example) in their water. The sugar in the drink gives the flowers extra nourishment, and the clear liquid won't be visible. This won't work with diet drinks, of course!

# WOK'S COOKING?

## PART I

Stir-frying is the constant lifting and turning of small pieces of food in a very hot pan in order to cook them quickly. It may be done in a wok or a skillet. The advantages of using a wok are that the rounded, bowl-like shape makes it possible to cook more food with less oil as well as making it easier to stir and toss the ingredients; and when cooking foods in stages you can push whatever you've fried first upward and aside while you fry a second something in the bottom.

In all Chinese dishes there are two basic parts: the principal and the complement. The principal is the meat, poultry, or fish, and the complement is almost always a vegetable. In Chinese cooking you usually cook the complement first and the principal second. The seasonings and/or sauces are added toward the end, when the principal is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  done, to prevent the food from becoming soft and soggy.

### How to Stir Fry

Preheat the wok or skillet to a very high temperature, put the oil in the wok, and then add the complement. If you heat the oil in the wok before adding the food, the food will stick to the wok. Remember the Chinese principle: "hot wok, cold oil". When the vegetables are about  $\frac{3}{4}$  done, remove them, set them aside, and keep them warm. Clean the wok or skillet with a paper towel. Reheat it to a very high temperature. Add the oil, and then the principal. When the principal is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  done, add the complement and the seasonings and/or sauces. Continue to lift, toss and turn the food until the seasonings have been well and evenly distributed and the sauces have thickened and thoroughly coated the other ingredients. Serve immediately with steamed or boiled rice.

### Preparation before cooking

The appearance and presentation of food is a very important aspect of Chinese cooking. Normally the ingredients for any one dish are all

cut in the same shape and roughly the same size. If the principal is cut into strips, so is the complement. If the principal is cut into cubes, the complement is also cut into square-ish pieces. The realization that Chinese stir-frying consists of about 90% preparation time and about 10% actual cooking time comes as a bit of a shock to most Americans. You can expect to spend 30 minutes or so slicing, dicing, mincing, chopping, seeding, trimming, and cutting ingredients that you will take all of 3 minutes to stir fry. Remember the Chinese (!) principle: "be prepared". This means pre-mixing your cornstarch and water or chicken stock, and pre-measuring even the tiniest quantities of sugar, salt, wine, and other seasonings. You cannot stop in the middle of stir-frying, no matter what.

### Ingredients

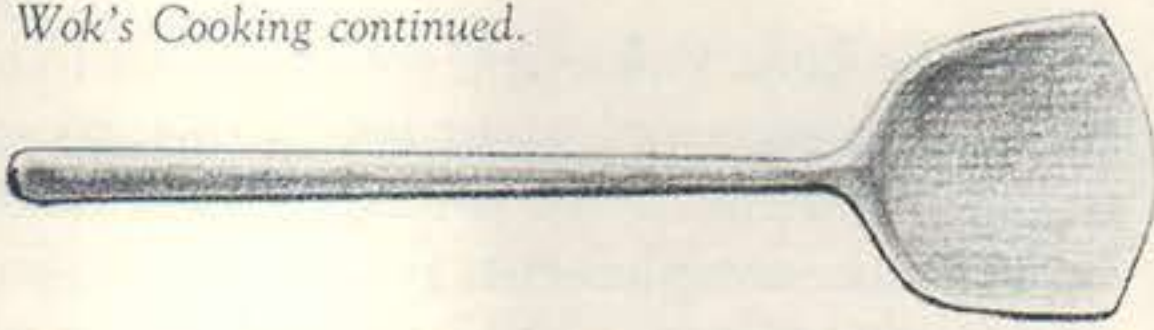
**Sesame seed oil** is used as a "perfume", that is, to impart an appetizing aroma to meat dishes. It is seldom used on vegetable dishes. If you are going to sprinkle some sesame oil on a stir-fried dish, do so just before serving it. Sesame oil loses its smell during cooking, so to add it during the cooking process is a waste of time.

Most supermarkets now carry **fresh ginger root** in the produce section, so you probably won't find it necessary to use powdered ginger, although it is an acceptable substitute. Fresh ginger has a most beautiful fragrance. It is absolutely essential to most stir-fried fish dishes, and it adds interest to a number of meat dishes as well.

I confess to having a weakness for **nuts**. I think that a handful of almonds, cashews, or peanuts, thrown in at the last minute, enhances the appeal of many stir-fried dishes. This sort of addition is not authentic from an ethnic standpoint, but a matter of personal preference.

**Cornstarch** is used to thicken sauces for stir-fried dishes. Mix it with water or





chicken broth. Use 1 part cornstarch to 3 parts water for a thinner sauce. Use 1 part cornstarch to 2 parts water for a thicker sauce. In true Chinese cooking, there should be just enough sauce to go with the food. If there is sauce left over after the food has been eaten, the dish was poorly prepared by Chinese standards.

**Monosodium glutamate (MSG)** has become rather controversial recently, so these recipes do not call for any. MSG does not work all by itself, but works proportionally with the amount of salt used. If you do want to use MSG to bring out the flavor in stir-fried foods, use about 2 to 3% of the amount of salt used, normally just a tiny dash.

Chinese cooks always use **oil**, never butter or margarine. Peanut oil is best, but if you can't get peanut oil, use a vegetable oil that does not contain any cottonseed oil and that has as little smell or aroma to it as possible. I have not indicated how much oil to use in these recipes because the amount will depend upon whether you are using a wok or a skillet. If you are using a wok, a tablespoon or two is usually enough to cook the vegetables, and two or three tablespoons of oil should be sufficient to cook the meat. If you are using a skillet you will have to increase the amount of oil slightly.

There are three kinds of **soy sauce** commonly available in our country: dark, light, and imitation. The brands with the double names that you can find in any supermarket are, unfortunately, caramel colored frauds. Read the label before you buy to make sure that you are getting the genuine article, or compare prices. If your supermarket does stock a true soy sauce, it will be more expensive than the imitation stuff, and well worth it. The most popular brand of the real thing is a light soy sauce which will do nicely unless you are going to get into serious Chinese cooking, in which case you will need to shop at an Oriental food supply store for a light soy sauce to use with seafood and chicken and a dark soy sauce to use with pork and beef. If you are using a dark soy sauce, omit the salt or you will be up all night drinking water!

**Wine** is used in many Chinese recipes, but only in very small amounts. Like vinegar, it is used to take away strong smells (especially in seafood dishes) and to harmonize or "marry" the flavors. Whenever a recipe calls for Chinese rice wine, any dry white wine will do nicely.

Except where I have indicated otherwise, the recipes that follow are for American adult size portions. Each one should fill a 12" dinner plate, with the food piled up about 2" high over the entire surface.

### All Purpose Marinade for 8 oz. of Dark Meat (Beef, Pork, etc.)

- 1 to 1½ TBSP dark soy sauce (available at Oriental food supply stores)
- 1 TBSP white wine (Chinese rice wine or pale dry sherry)
- 1 TBSP cornstarch
- 1 tsp. sugar

If meat is tough, a pinch of baking soda may be added to the marinade for purpose of tenderizing.

### All Purpose Marinade for 8 oz. of White meat (Chicken Breast, Shrimp, Fish, etc.)

- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 TBSP white wine (Chinese rice wine or pale dry sherry)
- 1 TBSP cornstarch
- 1 egg white, unbeaten

Marinate meats for at least 15 minutes at room temperature before stir-frying.

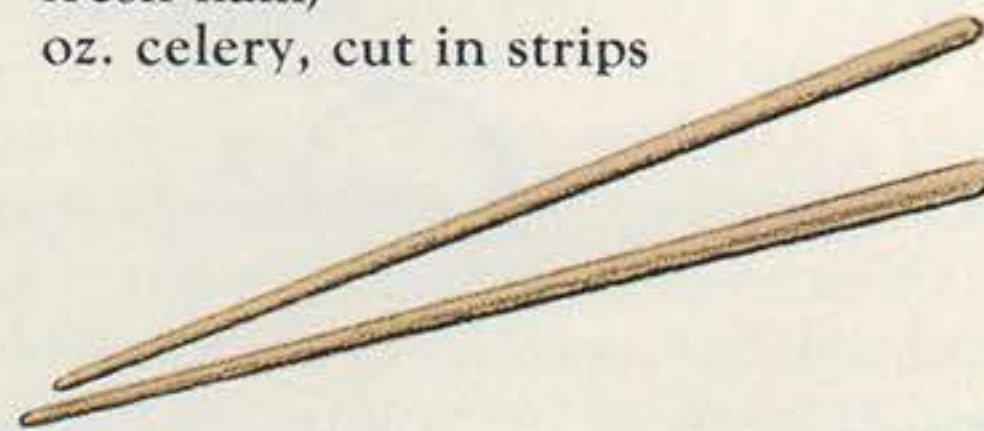
### Stir-fried Beef and Vegetables

- 8 oz. beef (you can use almost any cut — rump steak or flank steak is good) marinated
- several TBSP peanut oil
- 4 oz. onions
- 4 oz. green pepper or 4 oz. broccoli or 4 oz. mung bean sprouts
- 1 tsp. garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. ginger, minced (optional)
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. wine (Chinese rice wine or pale dry sherry)
- 1 tsp. cornstarch mixed with 1 TBSP cold water or chicken stock
- sesame oil

Marinate beef in standard (all-purpose) marinade for at least 15 minutes. Heat wok. Add just enough peanut oil to stir fry the vegetables. Drop in the vegetables. (I add the green vegetable first and stir fry it for 10-20 seconds before adding the onion, because I like my onion crispy and crunchy, and it takes less time to cook than bell pepper or broccoli or bean sprouts.) Stir fry until ¾ done. Remove vegetables, set aside, keep warm. Wipe out the wok. Reheat it until very hot. Add about 1-2 TBSP of peanut oil. Add garlic (and ginger if desired). Stir fry for about 10 seconds. Add meat and stir fry for about 60 seconds. Put the vegetables back in, add the soy sauce and wine. Stir the cornstarch mixture up to recombine it, and add. Continue to lift, toss, stir, etc. until the sauce is thickened and translucent. Just before serving, add a few splashes of sesame oil. Serve with plain rice.

### Stir-fried Pork with Vegetables

- 8 oz. pork strips or slices, marinated (use pork shoulder, pork butt, or fresh ham)
- 5 oz. celery, cut in strips



- 5 oz. cucumber, seeded and cut in strips
- 2 oz. fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 TBSP soy sauce
- 1 tsp. white wine (Chinese rice wine or pale dry sherry)
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cornstarch mixed with 1 TBSP water or chicken broth
- peanut oil
- sesame oil if desired
- a handful of cashews if desired

Marinate pork in regular, all-purpose marinade. Heat wok over very high heat until it is very hot. Pour in the peanut oil. Drop in the celery. Stir fry for 10-15 seconds. Add cucumber and mushrooms. Stir fry the vegetables until they are ¾ done. Remove vegetables from wok, set aside, keep warm. Wipe out wok. Reheat and add new peanut oil. Add marinated pork. Stir fry until ¾ done. Add the vegetables and all the seasonings. Stir, lift, and toss to blend. Stir up the cornstarch mixture to recombine it and add to ingredients in wok. Continue to stir fry until sauce is thickened and translucent. Transfer to serving dish. Throw in a handful of cashews if desired. Sprinkle with sesame oil if desired. Serve immediately with plain rice.

### Stir-fried Shrimp with Pepper Sauce

- ½ to 1 lb. fresh shrimp (medium size — about 25-30 to the pound)
- 1 TBSP finely chopped fresh ginger root
- 1 tsp. finely chopped garlic
- 4 scallions (both white and green parts) cut into very small pieces (¼" or so)
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes (the kind that come in a jar in the spice section of the supermarket)
- 2 TBSP oil, approximately (preferably peanut oil)
- 1 TBSP Chinese rice wine or pale dry sherry
- 2 TBSP soy sauce (use real soy sauce, not a caramel colored imitation)
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 TBSP ketchup
- 1 TBSP cornstarch dissolved in 3 TBSP cold water or chicken stock

Shell, devein, and wash the shrimp under cold running water. Drain them well and pat them dry. (Remember: have everything pre-measured and ready to add, because once you start stir-frying, you cannot stop.) Preheat your wok or skillet over very high heat. Pour in the oil, swirl it around, and immediately add the chopped ginger, garlic, scallions, and red pepper flakes. Stir fry for about 20 seconds. Drop in the shrimp. Continue to stir fry until the shrimp turns pink and begins to firm up. Add the wine, soy sauce, ketchup, sugar, and salt. Lift, toss, and stir to mix well. If the cornstarch mixture has separated, which it undoubtedly has, stir it up to recombine it, and add it to the ingredients in the wok. Lift, toss, and stir constantly until the sauce has thickened and coated the shrimp with a translucent red glaze. Serve at once with plain rice.

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## \* MENU OF THE MONTH \*

*Roast Rib of Beef with Horseradish Sauce*

*Fresh Green Beans • Oven-browned Potatoes, Mushrooms & Onion*

*Yorkshire Pudding • Trifle*

