

FOOD

Take It Out Favorite Foods To Go

If God had really thought a woman's place is in the stove—as comedian Mort Sahl suggested—would She have invented Take-Out?

Of course, *all* cooks—male or female—have days when they just can't face the stove. That's why we've asked a handful of people who make their livings from food where they go when a meeting runs over and there's no time to thaw, when they invite a guest home and there's nothing in the larder, or when they're simply too burned out to light a match or turn on the stove.

Casablanca, in the Fifth Street Public Market, was mentioned by three of the food experts, Nonie Fish, Poppi Cottam and David Proctor.

David, who's a chef at the Excelsior, relies on Casablanca's middle eastern offerings in a pinch. Favorite sandwiches are the Syrian cheese sandwich, a melange of goat cheese, mint, olive oil and herbs, with cucumbers and tomatoes in a pita bread; and the Chicken Tartour sandwich with a breast of chicken broiled with pomegranates and served with mint in pita bread. He gets some hommos to go with them—sort of the middle eastern equivalent of mayonnaise. "It's a complete meal," says David, "and that's what makes it so messy."

Poppi Cottam, the owner of Poppi's, also makes her way to Casablanca when she doesn't have to cook and asks for a combination plate of "everything that's vegetarian."

Tom's Tea House, 786 E 11th, is another favorite of the vegetarian Poppi, who asks Tom to just mix her up something with vegetables or relies on the menu standbys of moo sho shrimp, shrimp with mix-

ed vegetables or dry braised shrimp.

Sy's Pizza, at 1211 Alder, does a vegetarian pizza with lots of cheese that is another take out standard of Poppi's.

Nonie Fish, who specializes in Italian cooking at her Real Cooking classes, has several take-out sources she's partial to: "Toby's Tofu Salad at Sundance Natural Food Store (748 E 24th) is so good we can't stop eating it"; the burritos at Luminaries, 2710 Willamette "with everything on them and then add your own cilantro to their sauces." Nonie also makes a take-out meal from the appetizers at Poppi's Greek restaurant, 675 E 13th—Melitzaposalata, an eggplant dip; Tzatziki, a yoghurt, cucumber and garlic dip; Taramosalata, smoked roe; the Dolmadakia, stuffed grape leaves; along with olives and the distinctive sturdy Greek bread.

Deanna Koenig, who teaches cooking classes and whose specialty is Mexican cuisine, "never gets Mexican food to take out because I cook that a lot at home." For the change of pace that Deanna is looking for, she turns to Mazzi's. "They package really well to keep things warm," she says. Deanna's family's favorite is lasagne; it comes with salad and bread for a complete meal. For a potluck at school or something informal, she'll pick up Kentucky Fried Chicken and three or four salads from Of Grape and Grain, at 49 West 29th.

Deanna feels that she'd take out more if there were a greater selection in town. And she notes, as did others, that Eugene is really lacking in late-night choices for take out. Deanna organizes theatrical events and often finishes rehearsals at 11 pm when she just

wants to grab something and go home. She can't find anything open for take out at that hour.

She also laments the absence of places that will fix up a casserole or main dish for a family of six all ready to go. Deanna is familiar with such places from her travels to other cities but finds that here the emphasis seems to be on individual portions in most take-out places.

Deanna also notes that she'll stop at the E-Z Shop Market at 2489 Willamette and pick up pork chops that have already been stuffed with a special herb bread stuffing—then it's just an hour in the oven to an easy dinner.

Deanna also mentioned the Charcuterie, 901 Pearl, for assorted cold salads. She observes that since the menu changes frequently she gets whatever takes her fancy that day. The Charcuterie was also mentioned as a favorite by David Proctor—though not without some bias, perhaps, since it's partly owned by Stephanie Pearl, who owns the Excelsior where David is chef. The Hunan chicken salad is one of David's favorites.

David Lantz, who's chef at Cafe Central, says "to tell you the truth, I don't pick up a lot of food to go. What I try to do is organize things ahead of time that will make for a quick meal." A quick fix for David is a stop at Pasta Plus, 345 E 11th, for their freshly made fettucine or linguini. Three minutes in the pot at home and a quickly invented cream sauce and that's dinner.

And should you suspect that these food mavens are not Real People, Nonie Fish echoed several of the others when her first response to the take-out question was, "I go to McDonald's—that's the fastest."

by Barbara Mundall

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