



DORY’S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

Looking back on a decade of Dory’s Diary

In 2009 the 22nd day of May was on a Friday. This year it comes on Wednesday. Regardless of the day of the week on which the 22nd falls, this year is a special one for me.

It was 10 years ago that I began writing Dory’s Diary for The Observer and then later for the Baker City Herald.

As far as longevity is concerned, this makes no record except that I was already an old woman at that time and here I am still writing the column, whether or not I should.

Since it is now part of my memories, I look back on that first column with some nostalgia for which I ask your forbearance.

At the time, in 2009, I was an active member of DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution), Lone Pine Tree Chapter, which is part of the combined group with Baker City’s original formation. In order to become a member, I had to follow back my lineage to prove relationship to someone who had served in the American Revolutionary War in some way. It took time and effort to finally make the link to my relative Jacobus James Swart, who served in the New York Militia.

As such I was especially aware of democracy and the way it was earned in the very early years and paid attention to the special days on the calendar and what we should do to retain our freedom. With this in mind, I decided to approach the newspaper editor and ask that the special patriotic observance be mentioned especially in our local newspaper.

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BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Enchanting fragrance of the fungi

The fragrance of mushrooms is enchanting. It is the aroma of damp earth rich with humus. Sometimes when digging in compost or humus, the aroma is so delicious that I want to bury my face in it and inhale, or just take bites.

The eating of mushrooms is simply the permissible eating of of earth. The very best parts of earth...well, then, mushrooms are a fungus and fungus takes nutrients from the earth it lives in. They cannot make their own food from sunlight as green things do. So I suppose they absorb the flavor of the nutrients they are recycling and reusing. This is the recycler’s dream food, as it uses the nutrients that the other decaying plants are no longer using.

When you know a mushroom expert that you trust, you learn which mushrooms are edible and which ones to avoid. If you are adventurous, you try them on your own. There are a few guidelines to keep in mind when you try a mushroom variety you have never eaten before:

1. Never try more than one new variety at a time.
2. Try a very limited amount. If it is good and agrees with you, you can eat a larger quantity tomorrow.
3. If you are uncertain about what kind it is or if it is safe: DO NOT EAT IT!

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Recipes Using Rotisserie Chicken As A Starting Point



Hillary Levin/St. Louis Post-Dispatch-TNS

Szechuan noodles with rotisserie chicken

CHICKEN CHOICES

By **Daniel Neman**
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

If there is a single food that speaks to how we Americans eat in the early 21st century, it is rotisserie chicken.

It’s convenient. It’s delicious. It’s surprisingly inexpensive. It’s absolutely packed full of sodium. And it is an excellent way of putting a hot meal on the table without having to do any additional cooking.

But what if you want to do the additional cooking? Or to put it another way, what if you’re tired of eating rotisserie chicken straight out of the container and you want to jazz it up a little?

I set out this week to use rotisserie chickens as a base for other dishes. Basically, I used them as I would use leftovers, only I didn’t have to do the initial cooking. It’s like first-generation leftovers.

In the spirit of buying an already-cooked dish, I decided to start with a recipe that makes use of prepared foods. It’s what I think of as the Sandra Lee approach.

I made Amy’s Chicken Pot Pie, which was suggested by a colleague for whom rotisserie chicken is a standard ingredient. Not only is the chicken premade, but you also use a refrigerated pie crust. And frozen mixed vegetables.

With so much work done before you start, it barely feels like cooking. But it tastes almost as good as if you had done all the prep work yourself.

Still, it is not entirely work-free. For the filling, I sauteed the frozen mixed vegetables with some chopped onion and then added a combination of chicken broth, milk and a dash of sherry, thickened with flour.

Cream instead of milk would have made it richer, and more sherry would have made it more elegant. But when you start with a rotisserie chicken, you shouldn’t have too many pretensions.

My next dish was even easier, though it used fewer premade items. Quesadillas are the great catch-all for cleaning out your refrigerator, so I made one with a rotisserie chicken.

You don’t want too many competing flavors in your quesadilla; this is a food that is best when it is kept simple. All I did was saute together some onions, green peppers and mushrooms. I added the



Hillary Levin/St. Louis Post-Dispatch-TNS

Rotisserie chicken quesadillas



Hillary Levin/St. Louis Post-Dispatch-TNS

Chicken tortilla soup made with a rotisserie chicken.

chicken just before assembling the quesadillas themselves.

There is a trick to making a great quesadilla, but it literally only takes one extra minute and adds less than 40 calories: Heat a teaspoon of oil in the skillet and place a tortilla in the hot oil for one minute. Remove that tortilla before replacing it with the other tortilla, to which you then add the filling and the cheese (store-bought shredded cheese makes it easier).

Then you place the first tortilla oil-side up on top and mash it down with your spatula. When the bottom tortilla is nicely mottled with golden-brown spots, flip the whole thing and cook until the cheese is melted.

It is wonderfully satisfying. And it is even more satisfying when you serve it with salsa.

My other two dishes were a bit more complicated, though not much. One was a chicken tortilla soup, which packs a lot of flavor into a hearty bowl.

This soup is full of all the things that make Hispanic cooking so irresistible. It has onions, garlic, jalapenos, tomatoes, black beans, limes and cilantro in it as well as the chicken, and it is garnished with strips of a tortilla and wedges of an avocado.

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