

Will Write For Food, Vol. 1 No. 3 Quarterly Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE:

- The Writing Life
- Join Me in France
- Alumni News
- What's New in Food Writing
- Such a Deal!
- Upcoming Classes and Appearances
- Other Classes

=====

THE WRITING LIFE: I DIDN'T MEAN TO WRITE A PIZZA COOKBOOK

When you don't have a life plan, things happen in an organic way, and sometimes you end up surprised. Just over a year ago, a private chef in Chicago emailed me through my website, <http://www.diannej.com> . He had completed a book proposal for a grilled pizza cookbook and wanted me to review it. So I did, and it needed work. We plunged in over the next year, with Craig reworking it based on my coaching and edits.

A year later, he had a killer proposal from a content and recipe standpoint, but the writing wasn't there yet. I told him he probably wouldn't succeed unless he had a collaborator who was a professional writer.

And then I thought: Wait! I love working with Craig. He's a gentleman, a hard worker, he actually listens to me, and he's passionate about pizza. Working on a pizza cookbook would be fun and I'll learn a lot. So I tested the 12 recipes in his proposal and got hooked on the smoky thin crust and the pizzas, some of which have won international and national awards.

Then our agent sent out the proposal and had serious interest from four publishers. And now here I am, the collaborator of a cookbook on grilled pizza. It will be published by Dorling-Kindersley in Spring 2008 in hardcover and full color – a dream for many writers. I'm having a blast. My husband is in a state of bliss, eating spectacular pizzas. And now I have a few things to say about writing cookbooks...[continued below]

=====

JOIN ME IN FRANCE

Next summer: If you like the idea of developing your writing by wandering around French farmers' markets, writing about the senses, reading aloud to a group and drinking good wine, come with me to a one-week food writing workshop in Southwest France! It's a bargain compared to other writing classes in Europe. For more see <http://www.diannej.com/FoodWriting.html#France>

=====

ALUMNI NEWS

Akasha Richmond is the proud author of *Hollywood Dish: More than 150 Delicious, Healthy Recipes from Hollywood's Chef to the Stars*. I don't usually read a book from

cover-to-cover, but I got hooked by her stories on Hollywood stars, past and present, and how she cooked for some of them. I coached Akasha on her first book proposal, which eventually morphed into this book.

http://www.amazon.com/Hollywood-Dish-Delicious-Healthy-Hollywoods/dp/B000H2M5W2/sr=1-1/qid=1160507432/ref=pd_bbs_1/104-1007657-2301549?ie=UTF8&s=books

Pat Sinclair announces the publication of *Baking Basics and Beyond*, a technique-based book that starts each chapter with a classic recipe and follows with simple recipes that build your skills, like Pecan Pie Bars, Autumn Apple Crisp and Caramel Sticky Buns. Pat, a professional recipe developer, found me through The International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP).

http://www.amazon.com/Baking-Basics-Beyond-Simple-Techniques/dp/157284082X/sr=1-2/qid=1160507125/ref=sr_1_2/104-1007657-2301549?ie=UTF8&s=books

Former student **Erin Laverty** is signing up for an online Master's Degree program in Gastronomy, a joint program between Le Cordon Bleu and the University of Adelaide, Australia. If accepted, she will take two online courses each year, and complete the coursework in two to four years. If she wishes, she can attend a Residential Week in Adelaide each year. If this sounds intriguing to you, see:

<http://www.gastronomy.adelaide.edu.au/>

Susan Beach, a former student, has created a glossy 2007 calendar based on California soups and salads such as Roasted Eggplant Salad and Thai Style Carrot Soup. It will be a pleasure to see such gorgeous photography on my office wall next year, and I can't wait to try the recipes. <http://www.isimmer.com/>

Laura Hornbake, a graduate student of history at Columbia University, lives in Bologna. She's eating her way through the Emilia Romagna region for her dissertation. She bought my book, *Will Write for Food*, and emailed me about how helpful the exercises were at the end of each chapter. What she really wants, she says, is not to be writing about food on her own. She'd like to start an online writing group with people who feel the same way. Email her at ljh2002@columbia.edu

Speaking of *Will Write for Food*, it is in its third printing and now has 23 reviews on Amazon.

http://www.amazon.com/Will-Write-Food-Cookbooks-Restaurant/dp/1569243778/ref=pd_sxp_f_pt/104-1007657-2301549?ie=UTF8

Buy it there or better yet, order it from your neighborhood independent bookstore to help it stay in business.

If you are a student or writer with news to share, please send an email to dj@diannej.com and I will post it in my next newsletter.

=====
WHAT'S NEW IN FOOD WRITING

If you are a published author and interested in writing a lactose-intolerant cookbook, please email me at dj@diannej.com. Recently an agent contacted me, looking for a writer with this expertise.

Thinking about self-publishing your book, but don't know if you can afford it? Now you can figure out what it might cost. Once you sign up at www.lulu.com, you can calculate the potential cost based on size, color and how many books. Another company, [blurb.com](http://www.blurb.com), has a beta version of free software to download to design your own book. The theory is that once you see how beautiful it looks on the screen, you'll pay [blurb.com](http://www.blurb.com) to have it printed. See

<http://www.blurb.com/create/book/cookbook>

For more ideas on self-publishing see this recent post on 101 Cookbooks:

<http://www.101cookbooks.com/archives/001422.html>

By the way, last year Lulu created the Lulu Blooker Prize. A blook is the new name for a blog-to-book. Julie Powell, author of *Julie and Julia: My Year of Cooking Dangerously*, was a no-brainer to win last year's nonfiction award.

Haven't started your food blog yet? If you'd like to get going, see

<http://www.benjaminchristie.com/article/265/food-blog-secrets-and-how-to-make-yours-successful>

Former student **Faith Kramer** sent me this link and thought it had some good info to pass on. She started her blog last year:

<http://www.clickblogappetit.blogspot.com/>

If you're in the beginning stages of writing a food-based book, consider applying for a grant. What do you have to lose?

http://www.theculinarytrust.com/html/grants_for_food_writers.html

News flash: William Morrow has just closed its cookbook division. Harriett Bell, head of the division, is leaving after years of editing cookbooks, many of which have won national awards. Going forward, Morrow will continue to publish some cookbooks, with a focus on single subjects.

SUCH A DEAL!

Snappymags.com has some incredible bargains for one-year subscriptions to national food magazines. I can vouch for the company because I ordered three magazine subscriptions last year. All arrived and they keep coming. Here are the best deals:

Saveur for \$3.99 U.S.

<http://www.snappymags.com/Saveur-Magazine.304.html>

Vegetarian Times for \$3.99 U.S.

<http://www.snappymags.com/Vegetarian-Times-Magazine.354.html>

Cooking Light for \$6.99 U.S.

<http://www.snappymags.com/Cooking-Light-Magazine.766.html>

=====
THE REST OF THE COOKBOOK STORY

...First off, organization is harder than it looks. I once thought there were only so many kinds of cookbook structures after soup-to-nuts: menu based, technique based, and ingredient based, for example.

But our first chapters are about tools and equipment, making the dough and toppings, and how to grill. Then come the recipes. And this is where the questions start: Should the dough recipe be part of the ingredients list? Should the herbed oil that Craig brushes on the grilled crust be part of the dough recipe or part of the pizza recipe? Should the grilled chicken recipe be in every chicken pizza recipe, or in the toppings section?

I spoke with a few kind colleagues and figured out the answers. Craig already knew them, by the way. I guess I had to deal with the issues by myself to feel more involved and confident. (If you're curious, the answers are: the dough recipe is not part of the ingredients list; the herbed oil appears in the ingredients list of each pizza recipe where it is required; the grilled chicken recipe should appear in the Toppings chapter.)

The second challenge came in writing the method section of recipes. I played with lots of verbs, such as "**Dust** the pizza with grated Parmesan cheese," "**Sprinkle** the crust with mozzarella," "**Top** the pizza with thinly-sliced red onions." Once I decided which to use, I wrote a style sheet to remember my choices. Next I'll standardize the language in all our recipes to make it consistent.

And now the challenge is managing my time. Life goes on while writing a book. I've taught classes, driven around Scotland, hung out on a houseboat in Lake Powell, and flown to Vancouver Island to coach a client.

I have a false sense of security that time is stretching out before me. I don't have to rush. (Deadlines are April 2007 for publication in Spring 2008.) I dealt with this fantasy when I was a magazine editor. I'd talk with the features writers two weeks before deadline and ask how it was going. The hard part was deciphering what "fine" meant. Often it meant they hadn't started. At least I'm way past that point.

=====
UPCOMING CLASSES AND APPEARANCES

Culinary Legacies: A Conversation with Chuck Williams and Friends

October 26, 2006, 6:00 – 8:15 p.m.
San Francisco Professional Food Society
\$45 members/\$55 guests
Campton Place Hotel
Mezzanine Level
340 Stockton St.
San Francisco, CA

Once upon a time, none of us used Kitchen-Aids to knead dough, Cuisinarts to purée soups or Emile Henri ceramics to turn gratins to gold. That was before Charles E. Williams fell in love with French cookware and changed the culinary landscape.

In 1971, his loyal customer, Jacqueline Mallorca, hand illustrated and wrote the copy for his first catalog, mailed to 5000 homes. They frequently crossed paths with Bay Area author and baking doyenne, Flo Braker, who says she would not be where she is today if not for her friend Chuck Williams.

In honor of the 50th anniversary of Williams-Sonoma, the store that changed the way we cook, serve and eat, Chuck, Jackie, and Flo share pithy observations on past and present. I will moderate the panel.

http://www.sfpfs.com/calendar/current_events.htm

November 13 – December 11, 2006

Kickstart Your Book – Write the Darn Book Proposal!

Six Mondays, 7 - 9:30 p.m. \$195 members/\$235 non-members

The Writing Salon, Berkeley

Got an exciting idea for a non-fiction book but haven't sketched it out yet? Take this class to expand, organize and focus your ideas. Then you'll be ready to dive into a book proposal, the document you send to agents and editors.

This proposal is a serious undertaking and can be as long as 60 pages double-spaced. Sadly, about 95 percent aren't read much further than the first page because people don't bother to find out what agents and editors want. Break out of the rejection heap by taking this class and crafting an irresistible proposal. I'll cover the publishing marketplace and how it works, what to include and why, how to find agents and send them proposals, and how to grab their attention immediately.

Because marketing is part of a book proposal, you'll discover what it takes to get a platform and how you'll promote your forthcoming book.

Agent Ted Weinstein of Ted Weinstein Literary Management, <http://www.twliterary.com/>, will be a guest one night, and if you choose to, you can pitch him your book idea.

<http://www.writingsalons.com/classes/?cat=11>http://www.sfpfs.com/calendar/current_events.htm

January 11 – February 15, 2007

The Art of Cookbook Writing

Six Weeks, \$240

Book Passage Bookstore

<http://www.bookpassage.com>

Corte Madera, CA

Have you always wanted to write a cookbook but haven't known how or where to begin? Learn how to shape and strengthen your idea in this unique class. We'll cover the do's and don'ts of recipe writing and how to get a cookbook published and marketed. In-class writing exercises, short assignments and lots of support will move you forward.

The registration page is not online yet. Call (415) 927-0960 to sign up.

February 3, 2007

Restaurant Critic for a Day

\$150

UC Santa Cruz Extension, Cupertino

What could be better than going from one restaurant to another, eating exquisite food with friends, writing about your experience, and then getting paid? Being a

restaurant reviewer has to be one of the best jobs of the world.

If you love to dine out and have always wanted to write about it, here's a chance to combine your observational skills and passion for food and get paid as a bonus. Learn how the best critics in America do their job and how you can get started and get published.

Join a like-minded group of food enthusiasts and an established food writer for this fun one-day class. In the morning you'll learn how to prepare for the review, what to consider once you're at the restaurant, how to write the review, and how to get it published. Topics will include

- How to describe food
- How many times to visit
- Whether to take notes
- Which is most important: food, service or ambience
- Whether to dine anonymously
- Whether to accept free meals.

For lunch, you'll dine at a nearby restaurant (\$25 lunch fee included in tuition). Back in the classroom, you'll write your review, share it with the group and compare notes and techniques. **Award-winning restaurant critic Aleta Watson from the San Jose Mercury News will tell us how she does it.** Eat, enjoy, and learn a new skill.

<http://www.ucsc>

extension.edu/ucsc/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=2878911

April 12, 2007

Pizza, the Heart and Soul of Chicago

International Association of Culinary Professionals Annual Conference
Chicago, IL

Now that I'm writing a pizza cookbook, I'll be moderating this fun panel. When you think of the ultimate Chicago food, you think of pizza. Many rhapsodize about the deep-dish pizza pie started by Gino's and Pizzeria Uno in the 1940s and baked in thick, cast-iron pans. But with more than 2000 pizza parlors in the Windy City, Chicagoans are very opinionated about their pizzas. Arguments rage about which is best: thin crust, thick crust or stuffed. A guy who loves deep dish even has a name: a "knife and fork man." And don't ever call deep dish a "casserole."

This panel explores pizza in all its glory, including its history in America, and answers questions about the difference between Chicago and American pizza, particularly between Chicago pizza and New York pizza. We will also look at what's new in America's tomato pies, from Chez Panisse's all-organic pizza with nettles to grilled pizza with its crispy, smoky crust, and even dessert pizzas.

Join us as chef Craig Priebe demonstrates how to make grilled pizza and hands out samples to the audience. Speakers are Penny Pollack, co-author of *Everybody Loves Pizza: The Deep Dish on America's Favorite Food*. Craig Priebe is a Chicago private chef. I am collaborating on a book on grilled pizza with me.

April 14, 2007

Eco-Gastronomy, the Next Frontier

International Association of Culinary Professionals
Chicago, IL

Ethical eating has become a touch phrase for many chefs and food writers. Today we want to know where our food comes from and what sacrifices have been made to the environment and natural resources as a result. More consumers are demanding humanely raised, sustainable, non-endangered food. Businesses struggle to be sustainable by balancing their economic interests with the need to be socially and environmentally responsible.

What are the trends in eco-gastronomy, and what changes are realistic for individuals and companies to make? What is the meaning of "vote with your fork?" Speakers are Marion Nestle, author of *What to Eat* and *Food Politics*; and Abby Mandel, the founder and president of Chicago's Green City Market, the city's only sustainable/certified organic green market. I will moderate.

<http://www.iacp.com/>

=====
OTHER CLASSES

January 26-February 3, 2006

Word of Mouth: Food Writing with Betty Fussell

<http://www.cocinarmexicano.com/wordofmouth.html>

Yes I know. If you're going to leave the country for a class, you should come to France with me. But I can't help telling you about this opportunity.

February 20-23, 2007

Symposium for Professional Wine Writers at Meadowood, Napa Valley

<http://www.winewriterssymposium.org/>

May 20-24, 2006

Symposium for Professional Food Writers at The Greenbrier

www.greenbrier.com/foodwriters

Thanks for reading. Please forward this newsletter on to anyone you think might be interested. Please let me know what you're up to as well. dj@diannej.com

This email list is private and used by one person: me. To subscribe or unsubscribe, reply to this email and put either SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

Until next time,
Dianne

Dianne Jacob
office: (510) 923-1770
Website: <http://www.diannej.com>

Author of *Will Write for Food: The Complete Guide to Writing Cookbooks, Restaurant Reviews, Articles, Memoir, Fiction, and More* (Marlowe & Co./Avalon)