

Fall 2005/Volume 1 Number 1

Welcome to the premier issue of my newsletter. From time to time, I'll tell you about fascinating people, websites, books, new food writers, trends and events related to food writing. If I'm organized, maybe I'll send you one of these three to four times per year.

## Food and Wine Writing on the Web

### Contents

- Coming Events and Classes
- Feature: Web Writers to Watch
- A New Book on the Best Food Writing in Blogs
- *Will Write for Food* Update

Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think might be interested. Also reply to change your email or add a second address. This list is confidential and will not be shared.

Most of all, I'd love to hear from you. Tell me what you're up to, send me a sample piece of writing, or recommend books, sites and blogs you think other food writers and lovers would love to know about, and I'll put them in future issues.

Best,  
Dianne

=====

### Coming Events and Classes

I'm so excited about these new events and I hope you can join me. First, here's one that's **free** that will give you insight on food, travel and wine writing:

Saturday, October 8  
Noon – 2 p.m.

#### **Savoring the Page: A Celebration of Food and Wine Writing**

Book Passage, Ferry Building  
San Francisco

Join me as I moderate a panel of accomplished food, travel and wine writers at the Litquake literary festival in San Francisco. We will read from our work and then discuss the art and craft of writing for the palate:

- Richard Sterling, a food and travel writer for Lonely Planet and author of 16 books, including the award-winning *Travelers' Tales Food: A Taste of the Road*, *The Adventure of Food: True Stories of Eating Everything* and *The Fearless Diner*.
- Thom Elkjer, editor of *Wine Country Living* and author of *Fodor's Escape to the California Wine Country*
- Steve Heimoff, author of *A Wine Journey Along the Russian River* and correspondent for the *Wine Enthusiast*.

I Googled Richard Sterling yesterday to find out more about him and came across an interview. This part cracked me up:

Q: What is your biggest challenge from a business standpoint?

A: Early in my career it was editors, and learning not to hate them. Then I took a few editing gigs and learned to hate writers, so things balanced out.

To read the entire interview, see

<http://www.rolfpotts.com/writers/sterling.html>

For more on Litquake, see

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

Tuesday, October 10

**Interview by food and travel writer Jamie Maw**

Barbara-Jo's Cooks to Books

6:30 p.m.

Vancouver, B.C.

<http://www.bookstocooks.xplorex.com/page193.htm>

I left my native Vancouver for Los Angeles a long time ago, and now I'm returning with a published book. It doesn't get any better.

Saturday, October 29 and Sunday, October 30

**UCLA Extension, a 1.5 day class on food writing**

Guest speakers include Kristine Kidd of *Bon Appetit*, and Jonathan Gold, former restaurant reviewer of *Gourmet*.

[http://www.uclaextension.edu/index.cfm?req=R5423%20&href=/courseListings/course\\_display/courseDetails.cfm&inweb=1](http://www.uclaextension.edu/index.cfm?req=R5423%20&href=/courseListings/course_display/courseDetails.cfm&inweb=1)

November 2, 2005

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

**Dinner with the Author (me!)**

Bistro Liaison restaurant

1849 Shattuck Ave.

Berkeley, CA 94709

(510) 849-2155

Listen to my talk on food writing, then dine on exquisite French food. Liaison is a pretty restaurant near UC Berkeley, with a gleaming wood bar and sage, burgundy and yellow walls. The walls are lettered in script with French sayings. Come try your French and figure out what they say. Says CitySearch: "Classic dishes benefit from quality ingredients and minimal handling. With waiters in long aprons and the tempting aroma of shallots sizzling in butter, diners might just as well be in Paris."

The cost includes dinner, a glass of wine and a signed copy of *Will Write for Food*. For details please contact A Great Good Place for Books, (510) 339-8210.

November 5-December 3

**Four-week class: Food Writing for Food Lovers**

The Writing Salon

San Francisco

<http://www.writingsalons.com/classes/>

...and scroll down to the bottom of the page

Do you keep meaning to do more food writing, but the time gets away from you? Or have you started a piece or two, but then you get stuck and don't go forward?

Join me on four Saturday mornings in November at the Writing Salon in Berkeley, CA, where you'll develop a longer feature story or essay and learn new tools to strengthen your writing. Get advice that applies to you and see an immediate improvement in your writing and confidence level.

Here's what one student said about the last class I taught at the Writing Salon: "Dianne Jacob was an extraordinary instructor - interesting to hear but, more importantly, interested in all of her students. She truly wanted to make the experience as meaningful as possible for the students and frequently solicited input so that she could make the classes as productive as possible. Based upon my experience in Dianne's food writing class at the Writing Salon, I would readily sign up for another of her classes." -- Sue Steinhauer, Oakland, CA

=====

### **Web Writers to Watch**

I'm one of those print people who had to be dragged kicking and screaming into acknowledging the value of writing on the web. When you've made your career as a print editor it's hard to admit that many writers can get along fine without, well, people like me. Today organizations such as the International Association of Culinary Professionals, the James Beard Foundation and the Association of Food Journalists have awards categories for Internet writing.

Dozens of new food writers have found self-expression and recognition by writing blogs, articles for their websites, and newsletters. The web is the easiest way to get published when you're a food writer, as barriers to entry are non-existent, and there aren't a hundred people competing for your job.

If I ever do a revision of *Will Write for Food*, I'll add a whole chapter on web writing. Here are two writers to watch:

**Natalie Maclean**, a Canadian wine writer, has won an astonishing number of awards, as you will see at the bottom of her web page at

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

I had lunch with Natalie recently in San Francisco, while she was in town to collect awards from the Association of Food Journalists annual conference. We walked a few blocks from the Saint Francis Hotel to M-16, a Spanish restaurant in San Francisco's European alleyway called Belden Place. We dined al fresco on brightly-flavored paella, sampled Spanish cheeses with membrillo and dried figs, and (*gasp!*) did not drink wine. A girl's got to take a break some time.

An MBA with a genius for marketing, Natalie studied to become a sommelier and began writing about wine after her son was born. Thousands of wine lovers in 36 countries now read Natalie's free weekly e-newsletter.

Over the years, many of my students have wanted to break into wine writing. If you are one of them, scour Natalie's site for inspiration and sign up for her newsletter to see how one of the best in the business does it.

If you haven't been there yet, please visit Leite's Culinaria, a favorite site I've been reading for years, by **David Leite**. The World Food Media Awards recently nominated his site for a 2005 award, and last year he was nominated by the International Association for Culinary Professionals' Bert Green award:

<http://www.leitesculinaria.com/writings/index.html>

I've quoted David several times in my book. Here's an excellent interview on how he got started:

[http://www.aeb.org/teacher/fellowship/2003/davids\\_career.htm](http://www.aeb.org/teacher/fellowship/2003/davids_career.htm)

=====

She made my summer: A student who took my 1-day class at the Smithsonian launched her blog soon after, and she's done a terrific job:

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

=====

### **A New Book on the Best Food Writing in Blogs**

Earlier this year, Tomatilla blogger Owen Linderholm self-published *Digital Dish*, "the freshest, most original food writing from food blogs."

"It is an honest and alternative look at the world of food and cooking from 24 contributors around the world," he writes. "Digital Dish's authors have been written up in publications like *Gourmet* magazine, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Le Monde*, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*." He hopes to publish other books under Press for Change, his new publishing company.

<http://www.tomatilla.com/2005/05/digital-dish-is-here.html>

Download the introduction to the book in PDF form. Bonus: On the right-hand side of his home page, you'll see links to several food blogs Owen recommends.

=====

### **Will Write for Food Update**

It has just won the International 2005 Cordon D'Or Culinary Arts Award for Best Reference Book. Winners will be named by October 15 and are not on the website yet, but if you're curious:

[http://www.cordondorcuisine.com/2006\\_awards\\_page2.htm](http://www.cordondorcuisine.com/2006_awards_page2.htm)

In Avalon's latest catalog, Marlowe & Co. named my book as one of the Top 25 Backlist Titles. "Backlist" refers to books that are no longer new but keep selling. The publisher's best seller, *Writing About Your Life*, by one of my idols, William Zinsser, has sold more than 1 million copies. I've got a long way to go.



Here's me (left) at a book signing at A Great Good Place for Books, in Oakland, CA. I signed books in the middle of a farmer's market. (Photo by Faith Kramer, a former student.)

If you'd like to read about my book or buy a copy, please go to [ww.diannej.com](http://ww.diannej.com). I make a whole \$.40 if you click through to Amazon from there.

Got some news about your success as a food writer? Drop me a line.

Thanks for reading. 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  
fax: (510) 652-1061  
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)