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A Challenging Year for Freelancers

It's been a difficult year for print freelancers. Magazines have folded, page counts are lower, and budgets have been cut. Editors are writing more features to save money and keep their small band of known writers close.

When people want me to help them break into print food writing, I advise them, instead, to start a blog. Two of the blogs I've helped launch this year include [Pizza Goon](#) and [The Boreka Diary](#).

The face of food magazines is changing, too. The five most popular epicurean titles on the newsstand, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations, are:

1. *Every Day With Rachael Ray*
2. *Cooking With Paula Deen*
3. *Cooking Light*
4. *Taste of Home*
5. *Everyday Food* (from Martha Stewart).

Notice, in this list, how *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appetit* and the deceased *Gourmet* are eclipsed by the TV show-based stars and a magazine that takes only reader-submitted recipes (*Taste of Home*)?

The only magazine that's been a regular on the best-seller list is *Cooking Light*. Even so, Senior Food Editor Ann Taylor Pittman complained at the Greenbrier this year of fewer pages to fill. Her tip: long narratives are out. Smaller, cut-up pieces are in. Think in sidebars and boxes.

Meanwhile, the vibrant food blogging world continues to inspire me, and [blog-to-book deals](#) rage on. I started a [blog](#) six months ago, called Will Write for Food, to understand the form and to add to my [book](#) of the same name. Since this newsletter only comes out four times per year, the [blog](#) is a much better way to keep in touch. So if you haven't

already: Let my blog come to you, by email or in an RSS feed. Go to the [blog's](#) right-hand side to sign up. [Follow me](#) on Twitter, or become a fan of my [Will Write for Food](#) page on Facebook.

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Upcoming Classes and Events
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January 9-16, 2010

Food Blogger Camp
[Club Med Ixtapa Pacific](#)

Ixtapa, Mexico

It's sold out for 2010, but maybe it will become an annual tradition. Why not plan to go in 2011?

March 3-31, 2010

Food Writing for Food Lovers

The Writing Salon

Berkeley, CA

Five Wednesdays, 7-9:30 p.m.

\$185 members/\$215 non-members

Learn the fundamentals of food writing, whether you've a food-obsessed person who's never written before, already have a food blog, or you're a writer who wants to try something new. You'll learn the exact steps to becoming a better writer, whether writing features for publication, posts for blogs, or developing technically-proficient recipes for a cookbook. Weekly writing exercises help you get words down on paper, with helpful and supportive feedback from the class and instructor. Students who have taken this class have launched websites, packaged books and written book proposals, started blogs, and written feature articles.

May 1-8, 2010

Do You Have a Book Inside You?

[Rancho La Puerta](#) Tecate, Mexico

One week (stay can be variable)

\$2715 to \$4105 per week per person, in US dollars

I feel like the luckiest person in the world with two classes this year at top Mexican resorts. Rancho La Puerta is one of the best spas in the world and a bargain compared to many. Join me on your exploration of writing a book as I lead four one-hour workshops over the course of a week. Take a cooking class while you're there too, at an exquisite school nestled in the middle of a vast organic garden.

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News from Alumni
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- [Pailin Chongchitnant](#) became a guest contributor to [Foodists](#), a Canadian website of food worshippers.
- **Tracey Cuervels-O’Grady** sold a travel story to the Boston Globe about eating in Chinatown, New York.
- Les Dames D’Escoffier awarded a scholarship to **Erin Lavery**.
- *The Washington Post* chose **Jackie Mallorca’s** *Gluten-Free Italian* as [one of the best cookbooks to give in 2009](#).
- The *San Francisco Chronicle* published [a big feature](#) by **Katie Sullivan Morford** on making holiday treats
- *San Diego Jewish World* published **Linda Sendowski’s** piece on [Turkish Beignets](#).
- [Epicurious.com](#) named **Romney Steele’s** *My Nepenthe* one of the best cookbooks of 2009.
- **Barbara Sharon** has an agent for her proposed book, *The Little Cookie Bookie*.

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What’s New in Food Writing

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- The Association of Food Journalists announced award-winners at its annual conference in October. Some of the first place winners were:
 - Best newspaper food coverage: *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
 - Best food features: [My Week on an All-Georgia Diet](#), *Creative Loafing Atlanta*, by Beshia Rodell; [Incredible Edibles](#), *Toronto Star*, by Kim Honey
 - Best magazine feature: [BLT](#), *Food Arts*, by Jeffrey Schwartz
 - Best Food Coverage on the Internet: [Kate’s Perfect Pie Crust](#), by Rebekah Denn, Seattle P-I
 - Best blog: [Between Meals](#), by Michael Bauer, *San Francisco Chronicle*
- Foodista and publisher Andrews-McMeel Publishing have teamed up to create a [Best of the Food Blogs Cookbook](#). Submit from now until February 28, 2008.

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Resources

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- A [discussion](#) of the classic dilemma for recipe writers who bake: scales or cups?

- Advanced Marketing Institute (aminstitute.com/headline) has a free Emotional Marketing Value Headline Analyzer for analyzing the emotional marketing value of a headline. Type in your headline, and it will give you an “emotional rating” for the title based on your word choice.
- Read my interview about food writing on [Seattle Tall Poppy](#).
- Entries for the [2010 Cordon Bleu World Food Media Awards](#) close February 5, 2010. Categories include book, magazine and newspaper article, website or radio piece.
- Applications close March 1, 2010 for two \$5000 [independent study scholarships](#) from the Culinary Trust, if you’re interested in studying in France or Italy.
- Find inexpensive magazine subscriptions to food magazines on [Amazon](#) and [MagHound](#).

Tips on how to get your specialty down: [What I Learned from the Food Channel About Developing a Niche](#), By Anita Campbell

- [Seven Bad Writing Habits You Learned in School](#), from Copyblogger.

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Just for Fun

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- See the [London skyline in veggies](#).

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Events You Might Enjoy

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- January 16 and 17, Master Food Styling Class at the International Culinary School, Art Institute of California, San Francisco, [Culinary Entrepreneurship Program](#)
- January 22, 23, and 24: Food Styling Workshop, [Culinary Entrepreneurship Program](#)
- January 28, 2010, The Edible Institute’s first conference, [Celebrating Sustainable Ideas](#), takes place in Santa Fe, New Mexico
- February 12-14, [The Roger Smith Food Writers’ Conference](#), New York

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Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think might be interested. All previous issues are now archived on [my website](#). There’s a place to sign up for this newsletter as well.

To change your email address or unsubscribe, please email me: dj@diannej.com

I will not rent, trade or sell your email address to anyone for any reason.

Happy New Year,

Dianne