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The Writing Life: Is Blogging Worth It?
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I've been blogging for 1.5 years now. It's been a wild ride, and it still feels like I'm a novice. If you're wondering whether to start a blog, I've got some pros and cons on whether to invest the time. If you've already begun, you might relate to my experiences.

Reasons why I love blogging:

- | I now write regularly. Before, I was only writing when I had a project.
- | Readers enrich the discussion enormously. Recently I hit my biggest post so far, with more than 80 thoughtful, intelligent comments. It's: ["Is Food Blogging Too Much Work?"](#)
- | I feel like I'm still relevant, part of how writers are expressing themselves today
- | I spoke at 4 blogging conferences this year
- | It's been a great way to promote my book, [Will Write for Food](#)
- | I've made a tiny bit of money from advertising and through Amazon links. Tiny.

Reasons why I get exasperated:

- | I still haven't figured out how to line up posts in advance. At least I don't create recipes, cook the food and photograph it, and then post about the experience. I shouldn't complain.
- | Photos are my weakest point. I feel for bloggers who photograph their food. There's a steep learning curve.
- | The technical stuff has been a learning curve too. I'm grateful to my 24/7 tech support person, AKA my husband
- | I've made a tiny bit of money from advertising and through Amazon links. Tiny.

As for whether starting a blog has been worth it: yes. Primarily, it's been a way to continue the content of [Will Write for Food](#), keep conferences interested in me as a speaker, and sell my book. Next I need to figure out how to create a purchasable product, such as an e-book or even an app.

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Keep in Touch
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Why wait for this quarterly newsletter to get tips on food writing? My [blog](#), Will Write for Food, gives you a more immediate way to read about recipe writing, freelance writing, book proposals, and food blogging. Join my group of thoughtful and intelligent readers, who often make the comments section the best part of the post. If you've been a lurker, please let me know by becoming part of the conversation.

Let my blog come to you, by email or in an RSS feed, so you don't have to remember to visit. Go to the [blog's](#) right-hand side column to sign up. It only comes out twice a week, so it won't clutter up your inbox.

We're an instant gratification kind of society now, so you don't have to wait to receive many of the useful links you'll find further down. [Follow me](#) on Twitter and/or friend me on my Facebook fan page, [Will Write for Food](#), to find the same kind of links as they emerge.

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Upcoming Classes and Events
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I've had a busy fall promoting the second edition of [Will Write For Food](#). I learned recently that it won a Gourmand World Cookbook award for ...”Best Blog Cookbook in the USA.” No idea why. It will now compete for Best in the World in this category, with the winner announced on March 3.

January 29-30, 2011

Panelist

[Edible Institute 2011](#)

Hotel Mar Monte

Santa Barbara, CA

\$50/\$99

It's year two of this weekend of talks, presentations, workshops, and local food and wine tastings. I'll be part of a panel on the future of food writing, recipes, and

cookbooks on Saturday.

February 12-19, 2011

Do You Have a Book Inside You?

Rancho La Puerta

Tecate, Mexico

If you've never been to RLP, one of the world's best spas, you'll be enchanted by your week of beautiful grounds, sculptures and buildings, not to mention the innovative vegetarian and pescatarian cuisine. I'll be doing a talk and classes on writing and books. Bonus: Acclaimed cookbook author and freelance writer [Joan Nathan](#) will be a speaker that week too. Join us!

March 5-6, 2011

Cookbook Writing Workshop

[Living Light Culinary Arts Institute](#)

Fort Bragg, CA (about 3 hours north of San Francisco)

\$495

I'm teaching a class from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Sunday on soup-to-nuts cookbook writing, from coming up with a concept to what to expect in production, whether self-published or working with a traditional publisher. Joining me will be Cherie Soria, founder and director of the Living Light Culinary Arts Institute.

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News from Alumni

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-- **Anna Mindess** started a blog, [East Bay Ethnic Eats](#).

-- Fox News published [this long profile of Carrie Vitt](#) and her new book, [Delicious Living](#).

-- **Erin Coopey** is the new Food Expert for [SheSpeaks.com](#), writing [weekly food and wine columns and producing video blogs](#).

-- [The Los Angeles Times](#) published [Kirstin Jackson](#)'s story on artisan cheese making.

-- **Nancy Singleton Hachisu** has a book deal for [Japanese Farm Food](#). Andrews McMeel will publish her book in September 2012.

-- [A recipe for corn bread](#), from **Nani Steele**'s book, [My Nepenthe](#), appeared in *Saveur* this month.

-- [Oprah magazine](#) profiled pie-maker **Patricia Kline**. Kline had sent a query letter to the magazine about her new career, charmed an editor with her story, and this was the result.

-- **Sarah Henry** scored [an interview with Alice Waters](#) and [wrote a piece on John Scharffenberger for California magazine](#).

-- Michael Ruhlman featured [a blog post](#) by **Stephanie Stiavetti**.

-- **Trish Lobenfild** started a blog, [The Craft of Cooking](#).

-- **Virginia Taylor** started a blog, [Taylor Made Menus](#).

Do you have news about an article you've sold, a blog you've begun, or a book deal? If you are a former student or client, please drop me a line at dj@diannej.com. I'd love to include your bragging rights in my next newsletter.

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What's New in Food Writing
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-- How a mention by Gwyneth Paltrow led to [huge sales for a cookbook from a small press](#).

-- Here's a new food magazine called [Where Women Cook](#), from Stampington & Company.

-- A new bimonthly food magazine has debuted for the state of Virginia, called [Flavor](#).

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Just for Fun
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-- [Denise Vivaldo fesses up](#) that she developed the recipes for Sandra Lee's Chanukah and Kwanzaa cakes.

-- Anthony Bourdain's [Top 5 Five Food Memoirs](#).

-- Want a [sneak peek](#) at Pioneer Woman's upcoming memoir, Black Heels to Tractor Wheels?

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Resources
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-- Here's a [cookbook reviewer's guide to the 10 things that bug her most about cookbooks](#).

-- Borders bookstore has a new blog about cooking, featuring cookbooks, called [Kitchen](#).

-- Wordpress has launched an aggregate site for food blogs powered by Wordpress, called [Foodpress](#). Editor is [Jane Maynard](#).

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Other Events You Might Enjoy
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-- January 6-16, 2011, Session II only
Key West Literary Seminar:
[The Hungry Muse: An Exploration of Food Literature](#)
\$450

-- January 22, 2011
[Food Blog South](#)
Birmingham, AL
\$135

-- February 18-19, 2011
[IACP Regional Conference](#)
New York
\$99/\$149

-- April 29-May 1, 2011
[Third annual Camp Blogaway](#)
Angeles Oaks, CA
\$325

-- May 20-21, 2011
[BlogHerFood](#)
Atlanta, GA
\$306.44

-- [August 26-28, 2011 in New Orleans; November 11-13, 2011, in Santa Monica](#)
International Food Blogger Conference

\$350

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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 Holidays,

Dianne