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Recipes from Pandora's box

By GLENNA ANDRADE

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I admire women who have organized recipe boxes. My friend Carol, for example, not only types her cards, but has them alphabetized and cross-indexed. One night when I asked about the dessert she was serving, she flipped to "Cookies" and pulled out a card that read "Anisette Angels — see instead: Desserts, Liqueur-Flavored."

Carol is so meticulous she writes out the full words for her measurements and ingredients. She would never abbreviate one cup, shortening tablespoon to Tbl. or teaspoon to Tsp., let alone T and t.

When I gave her a recipe calling for a handful and a pinch, she raised quite a stir. "How can you bake a cheesecake unless you have the exact measurements?"

"You will never find 'gran sug' or 'dble act bak pow' on my recipe cards," she sniffed, "because cooking is a precise art."

She is so precise she even puts the beret on French words like saute and puree and the sombrero on the Spanish like jalepeno and pina collata. And because she strives for such authenticity, I suspect her recipe for teriyaki may be brush-lettered in Japanese on rice paper.

Her recipe cards are not the plain index kind; they are status symbols. You know the kind — foldover cards inscribed "From Carol's Kitchen" in 14 kt. gold old English lettering. (You know, the kind that are meant to be displayed on the refrigerator while the hostess whisks up Chantilly Crepes).

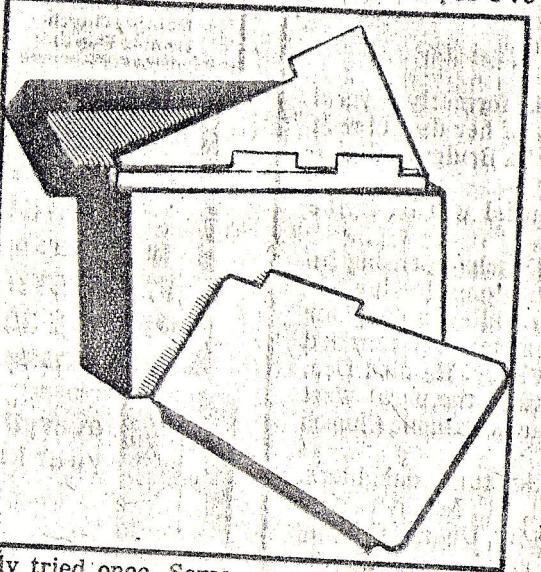
Her cards are enshrined in a calfskin box embossed the "Culinary Creations of Carol Croix."

My own recipe cards are stashed in a fancy tin box marked "Recipes" or are scattered in a drawer. Yet I do have them organized in a precise system: favorites, those tried once and

those never tried.

It's easy to find my favorites because they have orange edges from the rusting box and can stick to the refrigerator without a magnet. Most have a smell sample encrusted on the lower corner. They always have elegant names like "Beer Bread" and "Dump Cake" and "Stay-in-bed Stew."

I have the largest selection of recipes I've



only tried once. Some were successful, but I can't make them again because they call for ingredients no longer in existence, black walnut pudding, Quaker Oats' Bernaise Sauce and frozen mimosa juice.

Others, that were unsuccessful the first time, fall into two categories. The first I call my "mystery" section because I can't find my error even though I'd guess that two onions are more than enough for one meat loaf and that chocolate chip cookies do require some flour.

The second I call my "double bind" section. Most of these failed because I made substitu-

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tions. I once replaced crab with tuna, artichoke hearts with frozen spinach and sour cream with cottage cheese. "Looks like someone already ate it," my young son observed.

The reason this is a double-bind recipe is that while I feel guilty about the substitutions, I feel guiltier about the expense of the original ingredients and I'm afraid to have it fail again.

My largest assortment includes untried recipes that I intend to publish in a cookbook entitled, "3,003 Delicious Recipes I've Never Tried" or "Recipes from Pandora's Box."

I'll include two recipes for terrapin lasagne, three for quail quiche and four for frog leg fondue. I'll also insert the recipes with esoteric directions — Microwave on setting No. 7 (my Sanyo has only high and low) — and Bake at regulo 5 (sent by a European friend) — and Stir-fry in a large castiron wok, tossing lightly. And I'll have a special place for the obnoxious: those recipes pressed upon me for a dish that I told the hostess I loved, but which I hated. Finally, I'll assemble the ones I never tried because my children gagged at the titles, "Chocolate Moose" and "Beef Rag-out." Their interest piqued briefly with "Cog au Vin" until they learned the chicken was basted with wine, not cola.

At the end of my evening with Carol, I asked for one last peek through her recipe box.

"Are you really going to write that cookbook?"

"Certainly. What better way to clean out my recipe box."

"Well," she snickered. "Take a look under the section marked 'game.' You might want to use it in the appendix."

And on a special blue card, filled under "Goose, cooked," I found a list of phone numbers for restaurants that deliver.

Glenna Andrade is an Iowa City free-lance writer.

LETTERS

Hunting is immoral

To the Editor:
This is the time of year at which many of us will be

interests of hunters at heart. The argument often put forth by hunters is that hunters take only surplus animals and thus keep wild populations healthy.

agencies are funded largely from hunting licenses, it is equally true that, because of this situation, these agencies represent almost

biologist and oceanographer Jacques Cousteau stated in testimony before Congress. "If in