

IN THE KITCHEN

Sydney women
love Mondays

BY ADAM CAILLER

THE Monday Morning Cooking Club's latest book, *It's Always About The Food* (Harper Collins, £25), is about contemporising traditional recipes and traditionalising contemporary recipes, according to club member Lisa Goldberg.

The Australian said: "The book is the result of a worldwide search for the most-loved dishes that have been delighting family and friends for years."

"We set our sights on finding the best recipes from the best Jewish cooks around the world."

"The recipes came from communities as far afield as Cardiff, Nova Scotia and New York and we had to test and curate every single one of them."

The MMCC is comprised of five passionate Jewish cooks, who meet in Sydney every Monday. They share recipes in order to preserve and honour the stories of their community — and cook their favourite foods.

The group received more than 500 recipes for this latest book . . . including several cheesecakes.

Melbourne-born Lisa explained: "We probably got 30 cheesecakes from across the world."

"It was fascinating to see that people in Nova Scotia are making the same cheesecake as someone in Perth, Australia."

"We would work out what we needed and what we didn't have."

"We wanted things we hadn't seen before, such as mufaleta."

"I had heard whisperings about it as Sephardim eat it at the end of Pesach, but I didn't have anyone to give me that recipe . . . until someone from New York sent us this recipe and we tried it



MONDAY COOKS: Lynn Niselow, Natanya Eskin, Lisa Goldberg, Merelyn Chalmers and Jacqui Israel

in the kitchen once.

"It was the most amazing, deliciously crumpety pancake/sweetbread that you fry in butter."

Lisa continued: "Sometimes we would make a recipe and realise that it didn't work, but we would go back to that person or their family and try it again."

"We would try certain recipes five or six times until we got it right."

"There are a lot of recipes from the older generation that are scribbled down on a piece of paper with measurements which do not make sense — such as a teacup of flour or a ladle of sugar."

"Someone sent us a recipe for a curry which did not work, but we knew this lady was a great cook so we knew something was wrong."

"We invited her into the kitchen and videoed her making it — it was absolutely delicious."

"When we compared the recipe she had given us to the one she made, it was completely different!"

"People think they know what

they put into these family recipes, but when they actually make them, it's very different."

Australian food is going through a bit of a renaissance period, mainly due to shows such as *Masterchef Australia* gaining popularity worldwide.

And the MMCC is looking to take full advantage of this.

Lisa explained: "In Australia we have excellent produce, beautiful food and a huge cultural diversity."

"Whether it's Jewish, Middle Eastern or any other ethnic food, it fits in so well in this country."

"We would love to start a radio show or a podcast — that's the dream."

"When we do go on the radio, we love hearing people talk about their family recipes."

"Inspiring people to go to their older generations and write down their recipes is such a fantastic thing — that really is the main aim of our group, to preserve recipes and create a legacy for the past generations."



Mandarin Cake with Marmalade Syrup

THE marmalade syrup with Kathy Miller's cake is like a gift with purchase. You get a superb, flourless citrus cake topped with shiny, sticky peel and a jar of the best mandarin marmalade to go with it. Don't forget to use the leftovers on hot buttered toast.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 thin-skinned mandarins (about 480g)
- 1 lemon
- 6 eggs
- 300g caster superfine sugar
- 300g ground almonds
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- Whipped cream, to serve

Marmalade syrup:

- 3 mandarins
- 2 limes
- 1.5 litres water
- 690g caster sugar
- 1 tablespoon brandy

METHOD

Line a 22cm spring-form cake tin. Wash all the fruit very well; do not peel.

To make the fruit purée for the cake, put the 4 mandarins and 1 lemon into a saucepan and cover with water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer over low-medium heat for 1 hour or until the fruit is soft. Drain and allow to cool.

Cut the fruit in half and remove all the seeds. In a food processor or blender, purée the fruit (with the skin) and set aside.

While the fruit is cooking, make the marmalade syrup. Thinly slice the mandarins and limes, remove and discard any seeds and place in a heavy based medium saucepan.

Add the water and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, for 1 hour or until the fruit is soft. Add the sugar and simmer for at least 1 hour or until a rich syrup forms.

The syrup should reduce to 2 cups.

Strain off ½ cup of the syrup into a heatproof jug, add the brandy to the strained syrup and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. In an electric mixer, whisk the eggs until creamy and light. Add the sugar and continue to whisk for a few minutes.

Add the ground almonds and baking powder and whisk for a minute or two to combine. Fold in the fruit purée and pour into the prepared tin. Bake for 1 hour 10 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean.

Remove the cake from the oven and prick the top all over with a wooden skewer. Pour the strained syrup over the top of the cake. Decorate the cake with the peel from the marmalade syrup.

Allow to cool in the tin. Serve warm or at room temperature with extra marmalade syrup on the side and whipped cream. Serves 10-12.

Standing Rib with Horseradish Crust

WE were really keen to put Michele Wise's recipe into the book, as we were missing a big roast that can feed the whole family. Michele has adapted and made her own version of Tyler Florence's prime rib of beef with horseradish crust.

The salty crust works perfectly with the juicy meat, and the vegetables are spectacular.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 kg standing beef rib roast (prime rib of beef)
- 4 carrots, peeled and cut into chunks
- 16 French shallots, peeled
- 4 potatoes or parsnips, cut into chunks
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Sea salt and ground black pepper

Horseradish crust:

- 60 ml olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 45g horseradish, grated fresh or prepared
- 8 sprigs thyme, leaves only
- 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Place a large roasting pan in the oven to heat up.

To make the horseradish crust, in a bowl, combine the olive oil, garlic, horseradish, thyme, salt and pepper and spread over the beef.

In a separate bowl, toss the carrots, shallots and potatoes or parsnips with the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Remove the hot roasting pan from the oven and carefully place the beef in the pan, bone-side down.

Scatter the vegetables around the beef. Roast for 15 minutes, then reduce the oven

temperature to 180°C and continue to roast for about 1 hour (total cooking time) for rare, 1¼ hours for medium-rare and 1½ hours for medium.

The cooking time depends on the size of the roast, but a good guide is 16 minutes per 500g for rare, 20 minutes for medium and 24 minutes for well done.

Remove the roasting pan from the oven, cover loosely with foil and allow the beef to rest for 20 minutes before carving.

Serve the beef with the roasted vegetables. Serves six.

