



February 2007

Life of Plenty

Abbondanza's monthly e-newsletter for abundant health and wellness

For such a short month, February has lots of days to celebrate with food! It's the month to line up a special romantic dinner with your Valentine, dish up some Cajun for Mardi Gras and don't forget Chinese to start the Year of the Pig. And then there's cherry pie for Washington's birthday/President's Day.

It is also American Heart Month. The media is doing a great job in keeping us informed everywhere you look. Did you see the Heart commercial during the Super Bowl? Adding and keeping heart-friendly foods and practices are easy to integrate into our lifestyles. And it's important to keep them going, not just for February. We'll talk about heart-healthy fats and omega-3 fatty acids in Cindy's Cooking Corner. And I'll share a cool tool I found to help create heart healthy grocery lists.

For many of us, its very easy to love others, but it can be a challenge to show ourselves the love. But if you don't treat yourself with love, who will? Linda McDonald of Reach Resources, our Spotlight feature, has shared a fantastic article about how to give permission to self-love.

Start now giving yourself some love and read on!

PS Abbondanza and Chef Cindy were recently featured in 2 area publications - Business West and Western Mass Business Woman. links below

Chef Cindy

Cindy's Cooking Corner



Heart-Healthy Fats - what are they and what do you want to avoid? Definitely avoid food items that contain trans-fats. Regulations are in place that food products must be labeled stating they contain trans- fats. Practically every food manufacturer has taken the initiative to be extremely obvious when their products do **not** include trans-fats. But if there is a question, check the ingredient list for "partially hydrogenated fat". The hydrogenation process is what creates a trans-fat. These have been linked to heart disease and frankly, we're all much better off without these fats.

Switch your cooking oils to plant-based, heart-healthy monounsaturated fats like canola, olive oil or peanut oil. These all have high heat tolerances. Be careful cooking with extra virgin olive oil, as the heat tolerance is lower and once it starts smoking, consider it burned. Polyunsaturated fats (also plant-based) are good also like sunflower or safflower oils. Many polyunsaturated fats like sesame and nut oils do not have a high heat tolerance and are great to use in salad dressings or drizzling over dishes after the cooking is done.

Some saturated fats (these are the animal-based fats) are fine for our diets in moderation. The AHA recommends cutting down saturated fats to be less than 7% of our total calorie intake. The best way to do this is to switch to low-fat and non-fat products.

Omega 3 fatty acids have been proven to play a big part in preventing heart disease. Omega 3 fatty acids are found in fish like salmon and trout. It's recommended that we eat fish at least twice a week. But be careful in the type of fish you select and how often you eat it for your omega 3 source. Fish high in this essential nutrition component are also known to contain high doses of toxins. I've linked a website below that has been invaluable to me in figuring out safe fish selections. And there's a handy pocket list you can print out to bring shopping.

Another great source for omega 3 fatty acids, especially for those following a vegetarian diet, are flaxseeds. Check the provided link for more information and recipes. Quick, important note: **Do Not cook with flaxseed oil**. It has no heat tolerance and quickly breaks down.

I just have to share this neat grocery list tool (link below) from the American Heart Association. They have different foods that meet their heart-healthy criteria categorized into different sections. I must admit that I found the fresh fruits and vegetables selection somewhat lacking, but there's a place to add your own items. It is a good starting point to organize your grocery shopping. Your printed list includes healthy tips and spaces to write in more items.

- [Heart-Healthy Grocery List](#)
- [Oceans Alive Tool](#)
- [AmeriFlax.com](#)

Recipe

Baked White Fish in Parchment with Capers

Source: *Italian Food Forever*

Serves 4

- 4 T Extra Virgin Olive Oil, divided
 - Salt and Pepper, to taste
 - 2 cloves Garlic, minced
 - 3 T Capers, drained and rinsed
 - 1/4 cup Lemon Juice
 - 4 each Cod Fillets or other thick white fish
 - 1/4 cup Fresh Parsley, chopped
 - Parchment Paper or Foil
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
 2. In a small skillet, heat the olive oil, and add the garlic and capers. Cook for 1 minute and remove from the heat. Add the lemon juice, and season the sauce with salt and pepper to taste.
 3. Cut four equal, large sized pieces of parchment paper or foil. Lay a fillet on each, and carefully pour some of the caper sauce over each, making sure it does not run out. Sprinkle on top, some of the fresh, chopped parsley, and then close the packages, bringing together first the long edges and folding them over and over to seal, and then doing the same with the short edges. Transfer the packages to a baking dish that will hold them with space between each.
 4. Bake the fish packages about 15 to 20 minutes, or until the fish is opaque throughout. You may need to unwrap one of the packages to check for doneness. Serve each package on individual plates, and let your guests open them themselves

Variation: Add slices of your favorite vegetables on top of the fish in the packets.

Spotlight

Linda McDonald, REACH Resources

REACHRESOURCES

learning with the heart in mind

I feel fortunate to know Linda McDonald - we belong to some of the same business networking groups. She is very generous with her wonderful wisdom and has a great talent in guiding people to see things from a different perspective. My Valentine's Day gift to you all is Linda's inspiring article about loving yourself. I hope it helps you as

much as it helps me.

It is always a good time to love and in the month of February we give ourselves permission to LOVE OUT LOUD.

It can be assumed that this month of love- celebration is only about couples; however, I would like to propose we celebrate all types of love. And, there is one type of love in particular I want to pay attention to this month (and all months).

SELF-LOVE! You may have heard it said that we can't really love another person fully until we love ourselves unconditionally and with total acceptance. Without this type of self-love it is difficult to be open and vulnerable. We need to be open and vulnerable, at times, so that we can truly connect with others.

Og Mandino, author of The Greatest Secret in the World shares the 10 scrolls or principles of living. Scroll number IV states "I am nature's greatest miracle" which includes this passage, "I am rare, and there is value in all rarity; therefore, I am valuable. I am the end product of thousands of years of evolution, therefore, I am better equipped in both mind and body than all the emperors and wise men and women who preceded me. I am not on this earth by chance. I am here for a purpose and that purpose is to grow into a mountain, not to shrink to a grain of sand."

Let's be like a mountain and stand tall, be expansive. Let's be bold and shout it out. I AM GREAT. It is within my power AND it is my responsibility to take care of me, to pamper me, to do what is good for me, to treat myself like the unique creature I am and to LOVE ME.

How will I do this? I will tell myself everyday that I am wonderful in everyway. I will set a goal for each day to learn something new and fabulous. I will say no to those things that do not feel right for me. I will ask for what I truly want in life. I will do something special for myself today, tomorrow and everyday after that. I will love me and know that when I love myself all others will be attracted to me. All others will want to support this love. And, all others will see the value in loving themselves too.

In being my own Love-Permissionary I support others in being their own as well. In being my own Love- Permissionary I fulfill my life purpose.

Loving me and you, Linda McDonald Life Coach

- [REACH Resources](#)

Upcoming Events

mark your calendars!



- **February 14** - Happy Valentine's Day

- **February 18** - Chinese New Year ~Year of the Pig
- **February 19** - President's Day
- **February 24** - National Tortilla Chip Day ~ celebrate with Sharon's Texas Tortilla Soup!
 - [Order Sharon's Texas Tortilla Soup](#)

Abbondanza in the News!

Abbondanza and Chef Cindy were recently featured in 2 area publications - Business West and Western Mass Business Woman.

- [Business West](#)
- [Western Mass Business Woman - page 20](#)

Focus Menu

- Focus on Healthy Eating
- Focus on Good Nutrition
- Focus on Wellness
- Focus on Weight Loss
- Focus on Feeling Good

The new menu line from Abbondanza is almost here!

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