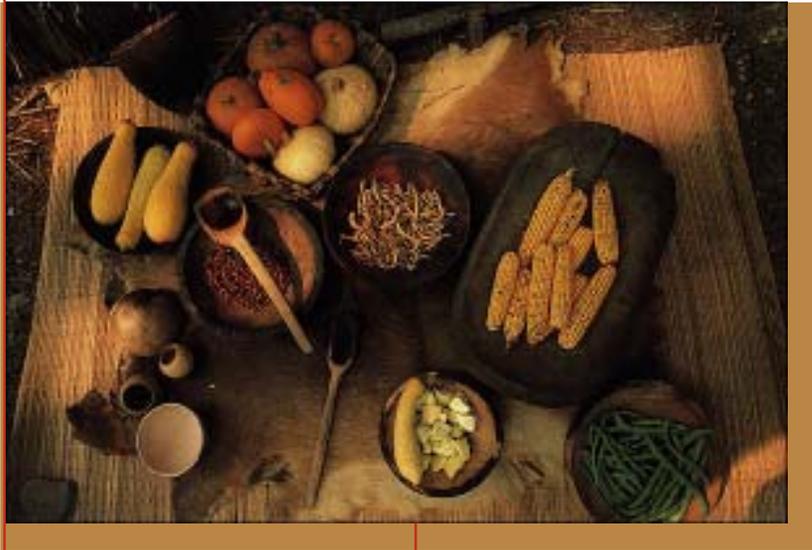


# CHoW Line

Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C.

April 2010

Volume XIV, Number 7



## COOPERATIVE SUPPER

### *Indigenous Pre-contact New World Foods*

**Sunday, April 11, 2010**  
4:00 to 6:00 p.m. (*Note time change*)

**Alexandria House**  
400 Madison Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

### CALENDAR CHoW Meetings

#### April 11

Cooperative Supper (Note:  
time change 4 to 6 p.m.)

Plates, cups, bowls, eating  
utensils, and napkins **will**  
**be provided.**

But please bring anything  
needed for serving your  
contribution, as well as a  
copy of your recipe, the  
name of its source, and any  
interesting information  
related to the recipe you  
have chosen.

#### May 2

Barbara G. Carson,  
"Ambitious Appetites" –  
political aspects on dining  
in D.C. during the Federal  
period. (Note: first Sunday)

CHoW will be holding its annual  
Cooperative Supper on Sunday  
afternoon, April 11. This dinner is an  
informal potluck where you have a  
chance to talk to people, view the skyline  
from high above Alexandria, and eat  
great-tasting historic recipes.

The winning culinary history dining  
theme chosen at the March 14 meeting  
was "Indigenous Pre-contact New World  
Foods. Please see pages 6 and 8 for  
research ideas.

On April 11, everyone brings a prepared  
recipe to share that is somehow related to  
our chosen theme.

For new members or those who were  
unable to attend previous suppers, in the  
*ChoW Line* newsletters below there are  
ideas, photos and descriptions of food  
brought to some of our recent potlucks  
based on various culinary history themes:

2009: "Hail to the Chef! Presidential  
Recipes," CHoW Line, April 2009,  
Volume XII, Number 7.

2008: "Good Food for Bad Times," *CHoW  
Line*, May 2008, Volume XII, Number 8,  
pp. 2-4.

2007: "Foods of Virginia Through Time,"  
*CHoW Line*, February 2007, Volume XI,  
Number 6, pp. 2-3.

Directions to Alexandria House are on page 8.  
To see an extensive list of indigenous foods and  
references, see page 5.

# What Happened at the March 14 Meeting?

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

President **Katherine Livingston** called the meeting to order at about 2:40 p.m. Approximately 45 people were present.

A vote was taken for the theme for the April Cooperative supper. "Indigenous Pre-contact New World Food" won with 18 votes. The dinner will be held on April 11 in Alexandria, Virginia. See page 1 for details.

We have an active CHoW Board nominating committee: **Bryna Freyer**, **Katy Hayes** and **Francine Berkowitz**. The committee will present its slate at the April meeting and will also ask for nominations from the floor. **Felice Caspar** has reached the term limit for Membership Secretary. Send your suggestions for Board nominations to Francine at [fc@si.edu](mailto:fc@si.edu). The election will take place in May.

**Katherine Livingston** and **Shirley Cherkasky** announced a new addition sent to the CHoW Culinary History Collection, housed at the Smithsonian American History Museum. **Gina Jenkins** procured the last 25 of a 56 volume Mexican regional culinary booklet series, *Cocina Indígena y Popular*, published by La Direccion General de Culturas Populares del Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes. A few years ago, Gina brought back from Mexico City about half of the series of booklets based on the culinary research on various communities throughout Mexico, such as Oaxaca, Veracruz, and Chiapas.

**Program:** Vice President **CiCi Williamson** introduced today's speaker, Dr. Frederick Czarra. His talk was based on his book *Spices: A Global History*.

### Refreshments:

**Francine Berkowitz** brought Dates from Iran that she had bought in India the previous week.

**Felice Caspar** brought Spiced Garbanzo Beans.

**Elisabetta Castleman** brought Corn Muffins with Jalapeno peppers and onions.

**Kari Barrett** brought Spiced Pecans.

**Claire Cassidy** brought Spicy Green Pea Salad (blanched frozen peas, celery, cumin, fennel, cayenne, salt, sesame seeds, toasted sesame oil, cider vinegar).

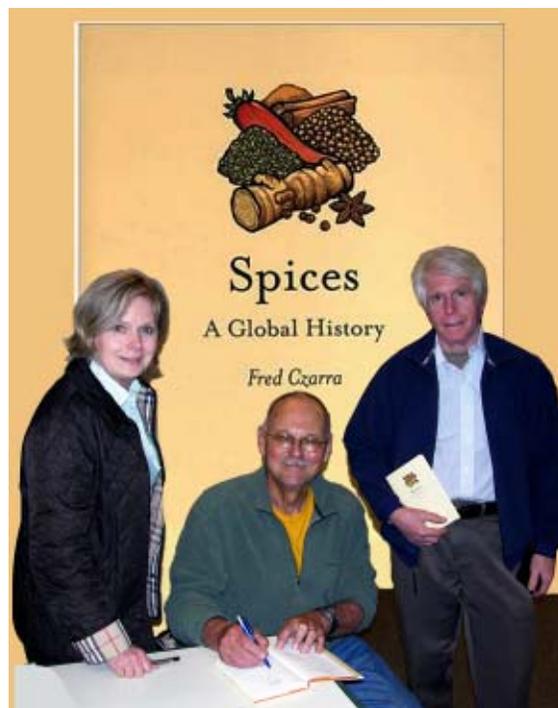
**Zina Pisarko** brought Bird's Milk (Polish Marshmallow Candy), Hummus and Pita chips, and a "Dark & Stormy" highly seasoned Bundt cake from Dupont Farmer's Market.

**Clara Raju** brought *Batata Nu Shaak* (Spiced Potatoes).

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. by President Livingston.

Respectfully submitted by **Clara Raju** for absent **David Bender**, Recording Secretary.

**Keep Those Refreshments Coming!**



Dr. Fred Czarra autographs his books for Catherine Pressler, and Quentin Looney. *Photo by CiCi*

**F**red Czarra, an international education consultant, is an Adjunct Professor of World Geography and World History at St. Mary's College of Maryland. He is the author or co-author of seven books. He based his talk on his most recent book, *Spices: A Global History*. Professor Czarra grew up in Washington, D.C. where his family owned a food market. By the 1970s in Manhattan, he was already interested in spices and how they had changed the world. He decided that food and its culture were a good way to teach children about history, geography, and the world.

His talk, accompanied by beautiful images, covered five eras of the history of spices: in the ancient world, the medieval world, the age of exploration, the age of industrialization, and the twentieth century and beyond. Czarra recounted all sorts of stories such as ones about Roman routes, the East Indian trade, the Crusades, the economic dominance of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and stories about adventurers such as the Moroccan Ibn Battuta (1304-1368/1377) and Admiral Zheng He with his Chinese armada in the early 1400s.

In addition to telling about the several thousand-years-old history of the spice trade, Czarra also devoted part of his presentation to what he refers to as "The Premier Spices," which are the five following ones: cinnamon, clove, chili pepper, nutmeg and mace, and pepper. Each spice, as did others, had a part in bringing cultures together, in ways sometimes peaceful and sometimes not; each stimulated globalization of trade; and each changed the way people ate as the spices moved from one part of the world to another.

--Dianne Hennessy King

# CHoW Members View Rare Cookbooks at Library of Congress

By CiCi Williamson  
CHoW Vice President

Rare Cookbooks from  
Two Collections

Thanks to Shirley Cherkasky's arrangements with Mark Dimunation, Chief of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division since 1998, about two dozen CHoW members were privileged to view more than 30 of the Library of Congress' rare cookbooks, including the first one ever printed.

On Thursday, March 4, we were escorted to the handsome Rosenwald Room located upstairs in the Thomas Jefferson Building, which was modeled after the Beaux Arts Paris Opera House in France.



Left to right: Mark Dimunation, Chief, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, LoC, with Dan DeSimone, Rosenwald Room Curator, and CHoW Treasurer Bruce Reynolds.

Our co-host was Dan De Simone, Curator of the Rosenwald Room. Formerly the Woodrow Wilson Library, the Lessing J. Rosenwald Room is named for this bibliophile, businessman, philanthropist, and former chairman of the board of Sears from 1910 to 1925. The Rosenwald estate gave 28,000 items to the Library of Congress in the early 1980s.

From the side vestibule of the room, we could look over the spectacular Library of Congress Reading Room with its 195-foot high domed ceiling. Across the hall, according to Mr. Dimunation, there is a book vault and "in this building, everywhere there's a lockable door there are books."

The cookbooks on display were mainly from two collections in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. The 4,346-volume gastronomic Biting Collection was amassed by Katherine Golden Biting (1868-1937), a food chemist for the Department of Agriculture and the American Canners Association and author of nearly fifty pamphlets and articles on food preservation and related topics.

The Biting Collection contains numerous English and American publications on food preparation from the 18th and 19th centuries and a sampling of notable French, German, and Italian works. American regional cooking is well-documented. We viewed the treasure of the collection: a mid-15th century Italian manuscript entitled *Libro de arte coquinaria* of Maestro Martino, a source for the earliest printed cookbook, Bartolomeo Platina's *De Honesta Voluptate* (ca. 1475).

Also from the Biting Collection, we saw an original 1747 copy of *Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* by Hannah Glasse; *The Forme of Cury*, 1390, by Samuel Pegge, printed by J. Nicols in 1780; an early Tudor cookbook, Sir Thomas Elyot's *Castel of Health*; a Japanese text on carving, *Ryori Shitsuke-sho (Manner of Cookery)*, 1642(?); *Whole Duty of a Woman* or a



Library of Congress Reading Room as viewed from Rosenwald Room overlook. (Unless otherwise noted, all photos by CiCi Williamson)

*Guide to the Female Sex, from the age of sixteen to sixty*. London (1735); and Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du gout* (1852).

The Elizabeth Robbins Pennell Collection provided four books in the display. Writing extensively on gastronomy, Elizabeth Pennell (1855-1936) amassed a large collection of European cookbooks. *My Cookery Books* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1903) is a personal account of her cooking activities and describes many of the 433 volumes on cookery from the Pennell bequest.



Left to right: Judy Newton, Mary Sebold, Peggy Gartner, Katherine Livingston, Kari Barrett and Connie Hay view rare cookbooks on display in the Rosenwald Room.

The Pennell collection is strongest in French and Italian cookbooks from the 16th through 18th centuries and includes a fully illustrated edition of Bartolomeo Scappi's *Opera* (Venice: 1574). The culinary treatise, which makes the earliest mention of mozzarella, contains more than 1,000 recipes, numerous menus, and – exceptional at this period – woodcuts illustrating the kitchen, cooks at work, utensils and meal service.

Other books we viewed from this collection were *The queen-like closet, or, Rich cabinet* by Hannah Woolley (1672);

Left to right: Dan DeSimone, Rosenwald Room Curator, with CHoW members Bruce Reynolds, Francine Berkowitz, and Don Hay. Don is looking at a framed Dutch broadside, *Luy-Lekkerland* (1790), a children's journey to a gastronomic paradise.



*The Gastronomic Map of France* (1809) by Charles-Louis Cadet de Gassicourt, names the dish for which each place is famed. Photo by Abby Brack, Library of Congress Photographer.

Gassicourt (1809). The latter contains a magnificent, foldout, gastronomic map of France, the first in book form.

Both the Katherine Golden Bitting Collection on Gastronomy and Elizabeth Robins Pennell Collection are primarily concerned with gastronomy and the history of the kitchen and, between them, have amassed several thousand European and American imprints.

More “firsts” on display from the Rare Book and Special Collections Division included the first original Mexican cookbook, *Novisimo arte de cocina o escelente coleccion de las mejores receta* by Manuel N. de la Vega (1845); and the first cookbook of American authorship to be printed in the U.S., *American Cookery* by Amelia Simmons (1796).

Related to our CHoW Cooperative Supper, the author adapts numerous traditional recipes by substituting native American ingredients, such as corn, squash, and pumpkin, printed here for the first time. Simmon's

(Below) *Les Delices* (1662) by Nicolas de Bonnefon.



*The accomplisht cook* by Robert May (1588), which includes a pastry ship with marzipan guns, pastry cattle, and pies filled with frogs and birds; and *Cours gastronomique, ou, Les diners de Manant-ville* by Charles-Louis Cadet de

“Pompkin Pudding,” baked in a crust, is the basis for the classic American pumpkin pie.

The entire bibliography of rare cookbooks viewed during this visit will be reprinted in *CHoWLine*.

**LOCATION**

The Thomas Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress  
10 First Street, S.E.  
Washington, D.C.



Left: Mark Dimunation;  
Right: Pat Reber.

# New World Indigenous Foods Pre-Contact

**Shirley Cherkasky** provided this list from the Smithsonian's American History 1991 conference, "Good As Gold: Foods the Americas Gave the World."

## Fruits:

atemoya  
avocado  
berries  
    blueberries, highbush and lowbush  
    Cape gooseberry  
    cranberry  
    huckleberry  
    Juneberry (serviceberry)  
    raspberries, American red and American black  
    strawberry  
cassabanana  
ceriman  
cherimoya  
cherries  
    chokecherry  
    pin cherry  
    rum cherry  
custard apple  
feijoa (pineapple guava)  
granadillas, giant and sweet  
grapes (American varieties: Concord, scuppernon and others)  
guanabana (soursop)  
guava  
mamey  
mamey sapote  
naranjilla  
papaya  
passion fruit  
pawpaw  
pepino (melon pear)  
persimmon, American  
pineapple  
plums (American, beach)  
sapodilla  
sugar apple (sweetsop)  
tamarillo (tree tomato)  
white sapote

## Grains and Grasses

amaranth  
corn, popcorn  
quinoa  
wild rice

## Legumes

beans: All beans, except fava, soy, mung, garbanzo and broad beans, are American in origin.  
peanuts

## Roots and Tubers

arrowroot  
groundnuts  
Jerusalem artichokes  
jicama  
malanga (yautia)  
oca  
potatoes  
sweet potatoes (North American, boniato)  
yuca (tapioca, cassava, manioc)

## Vegetables

capsicums (bell and other sweet peppers, chili peppers and pimento)  
chayote  
gherkins (Jamaica cucumbers)  
pokeweed  
pumpkins  
ramps  
squashes  
    **winter:** Hubbard, buttercup, winter crookneck, butternut, acorn, kabocha, golden nugget, calabaza  
    **summer:** spaghetti, yellow crookneck, zucchini and patty pan  
tomatillo  
tomato

## Cacti

cactus pear (prickly pear)  
nopales (cactus pads)

## Nuts

black walnut  
Brazil nut  
butternut,  
cashew  
hickory nut  
pecan

## Seeds

pumpkin  
sunflower

## Spices, Flavorings, and Extracts

allspice  
capsicums (chili peppers)  
    cayenne, paprika  
cassareep  
chocolate, cocoa  
maple syrup and sugar  
sarsaparilla extract  
sassafras leaves  
spicebush  
vanilla

## Poultry turkey

**Claire Cassidy**, who is a nutritional anthropologist, sent these references:

Mitsitam restaurant at the American Indian Museum is a source of inspiration, and they may have published a cookbook – I don't know, but if they haven't, they should!

## Books from my shelf:

The recipe books are old, but similar books must be available today, and these might be available used.... You can see by the dates when I stopped collecting and stopped teaching.

(old) *The Art of American Indian Cooking*. Yeffe Kimball and Jean Anderson. This has both recipes and historical discussion. Doubleday, 1964.

(old) *Pueblo and Navajo Cookery*. Marcia Keegan Earth Books, 1977

*Traditional Plant Foods of Canadian Indigenous Peoples, Nutrition, Botany and Use*. Harriet Kuhnlein, and Nancy Turner. Gordon and Breach, 1991. This is a technical book, dense, and fascinating. No recipes, but with food names and uses you can figure one out.

*The Sunflower*, Charles Heiser Jr., University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1976. Same author also wrote on gourds and nightshades.

*Gathering What the Great Nature Provided, Food Traditions of the Gitsan*. By the people of 'Ksan. [Northwest Coast Indian people] Univ. of Wash. Press, Seattle, 1980.

A few of Claire's indigenous options:

**Mammals:** buffalo, deer, elk, raccoon, beaver, squirrel, porcupine, rabbit, woodchuck

**Sea creatures:** turtle, drumfish, buffalofish, other fishes, snails, mussels, clams, abalone, halibut, red snapper, seaweed

**Poultry** goose, duck, swan, crane, heron, passenger pigeon

Your own research might uncover other indigenous foods you would like to prepare for our Cooperative Supper.



# Culinary Humor

By Tom Weiland

It is St. Patrick's day as I write this, so let's look at an Irish writer: Jonathan Swift (1667-1745).

A forerunner in his time, Swift had satirical thoughts on many subjects, not the least of which were food and drink, oft mixed with politics and human vice. Here is a sampling:

'Tis an old maxim in the schools,  
That flattery's the food of fools;  
Yet now and then your men of wit  
Will condescend to take a bit.--"Cadenus and Vanessa" (1713)

Poor Nations are hungry, and rich Nations are proud, and  
Pride and Hunger will ever be at Variance.  
--Gulliver's Travels (1726)

And he gave it for his opinion, that whosoever could make  
two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot  
of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better  
of mankind, and do more essential service to his country,  
than the whole race of politicians put together.  
--Gulliver's Travels (1726)

Finally, one-liners from "Polite Conversation" (ca. 1738)

She watches him, as a cat would watch a mouse.  
He was a bold man that first ate an oyster.  
The best doctors in the world are Doctor Diet, Doctor Quiet,  
and Doctor Merryman.  
Better belly burst than good liquor be lost.  
Promises and pie-crust are made to be broken.  
Fingers were made before forks, and hands before knives.  
Cheers!-TW

Zina Pisarko sends this: Bennett Cerf, in "Out on a Limerick," attributes the following to Edmund Lear's *Book of Nonsense*, London 1846.

There was a young lady of Greenwich,  
Whose garments were border'd with spinach.  
But a large spotty calf  
Bit her shawl quite in half,  
Which alarmed that young lady of Greenwich.

Spinach had quite an important place on Victorian tables, being widely used not only in dishes "a la Florentine," but also in dessert puddings and ices. Spinach juice was a favored coloring agent, which leads me to wonder about the recent decision of Necco Wafers to drop artificial colors from its candies, announcing that while beet juice would be used for pink, green would be dropped because no natural color could be found for it. Perhaps our present-day idea of green as a food color is not the same as that of the 19th century?

## Upcoming Events

### Forty Second Annual Used Book Sale

14 miles of books for readers and collectors  
Stone Bridge School, 9101 Rockville Pike,  
Bethesda, MD 29814

April 16-19, Friday 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.,  
Sunday (Half-Price Day) 12 p.m. – 6 p.m., Monday (\$10  
Bag-of-Books Day) 5 – 8 p.m.

[www.stoneridgebooksale.org](http://www.stoneridgebooksale.org) 301-657-4322, ext. 372

### Workshop: Strawberry Jar Herb Garden

United States National Arboretum  
3501 New York Avenue, NE, Washington, D. C. 20002-1958

May 8, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Meet in arboretum lobby  
[www.usna.usda.gov](http://www.usna.usda.gov) 202-245-4521

Grow fresh herbs for all your favorite recipes right outside the door. Chrissy Moore, curator of the National Herb Garden, will guide you through the process of planting an herb garden in a strawberry jar. Select ten herbs from a mix of annuals and perennials, and create your own perpetual herb garden. Great for a small space, and makes an excellent Mother's Day gift. Fee covers all plants and materials. Fee: \$69 (FONA \$55). Registration required.

## Nominating Committee for 2010-2011 Board Members

Francine Berkowitz, Bryna Freyer, and Katy Hayes have agreed to serve as a nominating committee for next year's officers.

Per the by-laws, the committee will present its slate at the April meeting and will also ask for nominations from the floor. The election is in May.

All the existing board officers are eligible to serve again in their current capacity except for **Felice Caspar** who has pioneered the position of Membership Secretary and has reached the term limit for that office. Please volunteer or send a nomination to Francine

Although the number of Board officers is few, the tasks of the Board are many. We would welcome volunteers who, even if they are not interested in a Board position, would like to occasionally volunteer their time according to their own schedules.

CHoW events can always use a helping hand with organizing field trips, monthly hospitality, publicity, mailings, information gathering for the newsletter and a variety of other assistance.

# Book Review

By Claudia Kousoulas

The allure of spices used to draw explorers and merchants, now it draws authors and cooks.

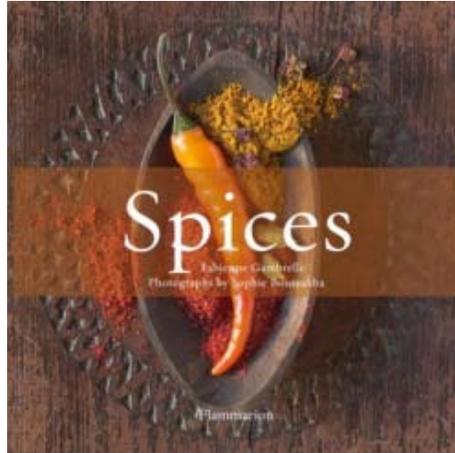
The two volume set of *Spices* by Fabienne Gambrelle (Flammarion, 2008), available in the CHoW collection at the Smithsonian Museum of American History Library, traces the history of the spice trade from a Silk Road luxury to New World plunder.

In the Middle Ages, Europeans believed that spices were a product of paradise and thus had miraculous properties. Spices had an aura of tropical romance, enhanced by the mystery of their sources. But like all luxury products, when the fog of mystery burns off, so does the allure. When pepper was discovered to have come from Africa, its fire dimmed. As travelers, merchants, and explorers mapped the world, they discovered the sources of spices. Peppercorns, curls of fragrant bark, and perfumed seeds changed from miracles to merchandise.

Plants and propagation were observed and recorded from Africa, across India, and into China. Beyond African pepper, came cardamom from India, cinnamon from Ceylon, and nutmeg from Malacca. Even the Americas offered cacao, canella, and pink pepper.

It's hard to imagine, looking at neatly labeled and stacked jars on supermarket shelves, but the spice business was cutthroat. Spices became "the stuff of barter and voyage," and as a commercial product they were the cause of slavery and wars. The Portuguese dominated the spice trade, but nearly every European country—Spain, France, the Netherlands, and England set up colonies in competition.

Stealing plants, altering nautical maps, subduing and enslaving native populations, all for an elusive perfume.



*Spices* by Fabienne Gambrelle

**Hardcover:** 192 pages, \$29.95

**Publisher:** Flammarion; illustrated edition (October 21, 2008)

**ISBN-10:** 2080300652

**Size:** 8.8 x 8.7 x 1.4 inches

In the second volume, Gambrelle explores individual spices, from *Aframomum malagueta* - Malagueta Pepper to *Zinziber officinale* - Ginger, describing their particulars and history. For example, Fenugreek is the seeds of a grass the Romans called Greek hay that was once used for animal feed. Its slightly bitter celery flavor is used in Indian curries but also in Russian soups and North African bread.

In the Herb and Spice Bible (Robert Rose Publishers), author Ian Hemphill takes the same categorizing approach, though in his case, from Ajowan to Zedoary. Hemphill works out of Australia and can offer a bit of romance by offering unusual herbs and spices like lime leaf granules, candle nut, and gula melaka. You can use the contemporary Silk Route and buy them online at: [www.herbies.com](http://www.herbies.com).

While Hemphill naturally includes familiar European and Middle Eastern herbs and spices, he also digs up varieties from South and Central America, Southeast Asia, and some completely unfamiliar Australian spices. But even with all its exotics, the book helps you appreciate the simple pleasure of cinnamon rolls and vanilla ice cream.

A plant's leaves are the herb, while spices come from every other part of the plant. So leafy cilantro is an herb, while its dried seeds are a spice. Hemphill educates with chapters on history, essential oils, growing, drying, buying, and storing spices. He follows up with cooking techniques, including dried vs. fresh, and grinding and roasting to develop flavor.

Most useful to the cook is Hemphill's discussion of herbs and spices in major cuisines, with the combinations that give each cuisine its distinct and authentic flavor.

Most of the book is spice notes, an alphabetical listing beginning with Ajowan (relative to parsley, but with peppery notes, native to India, and for many years used in toothpastes and mouthwashes, now used in curries) and ends with Zedoary (of the ginger family, with musky overtones that thrives in tropical regions, but unfortunately takes two years to harvest after propagation).

After its profile, each herb or spice gets a recipe and they are incredibly creative choices. Mace is featured in Green Ricotta Ravioli with Burnt Sage Butter, horseradish appears in Green Tea Noodles with Wasabi Dressing, and the various hot peppers come to fore in Roasted Almonds with Chili and Sea Salt, Chili Chocolate Black Beans, and Thai Chili Dressing. Nuanced and alluring, these recipes showcase the herbs and spices, but are never the obvious choices.

Even with the passage of time, trade and science, herbs and spices retain their romance. After all, what other ingredient can pack such power into a teaspoon?

Claudia Kousoulas is a freelance food and features writer. Her stories and cookbook reviews appear in *Washington Woman*, *Cookbook Digest*, and online at [AppetiteforBooks.com](http://AppetiteforBooks.com) and at [booksforcooks.com](http://booksforcooks.com). She is a past President and current Director of CHoW.