

# Culinary resources

## Cookery and culinary history Web sites

by Susan Summerfield

Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote, "The discovery of a new dish confers more happiness on humanity, than the discovery of a new star."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the same happy sentiment is expressed when a culinary site with free and reliable information is discovered among the vast and varied culinary content on the Web.

Online culinary resources can provide a wealth of easily accessible information. Unlike print sources, databases can be searched by multiple variables, such as ingredient or cooking method.

The Web resources selected for this article provide current information, including recipes from published, reliable sources; cooking techniques; and information on beverages and wine. The historical culinary Web resources include information on culinary history, online exhibitions on the history of cooking, or full-text databases of cookbooks, menus, and museum objects. Only Web sites that provide free access to information without a subscription were chosen. Some Web sites do require establishing a log-in, but do not charge for access.

### Meta sites: Where to start

- **GourmetSpot.** This site is sponsored and compiled by StartSpot Network and pro-

vides links to dozens of Web resources, including sites for recipes, which are organized under several subjects: general recipes, ethnic, healthy, kosher, vegetarian, and recipes from restaurants. Links to beverage Web sites and restaurant guides can also be searched. A guide to television programs on cooking on every network is very useful, as is a list of culinary magazine Web sites and weekly food columns in national newspapers. *Access:* <http://www.gourmetspot.com/>.

- **The Librarians' Index to the Internet.** The "Food & Cooking" page on this site provides excellent access to culinary Web resources organized by subject. There is a general food category with links to 26 major culinary Web sites and 27 more specific subjects, such as gastronomy, raw foods, recipes, and food history. Each topic provides multiple links. The "Recipes" link provides access to general recipe Web sites and resources listed under special subjects, such as ethnic cookery or holiday cooking. *Access:* <http://lii.org/search/file/food>.

- **The Food Timeline.** The Food Timeline, created and maintained by the Morris County Public Library in New Jersey, is an excellent source for culinary history Web resources. The site is divided into a Food Timeline and a Culinary History

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### About the author

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Timeline. The Food Timeline is organized by date, recipe, or agricultural advancement. It begins with prehistoric culinary information and includes links for most major time periods, type of foods, and dishes up to the present day. The Culinary History Timeline is organized by date and by location and also includes dozens of links to recipes, online exhibits, articles, and general Web resources. *Access:* <http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html>.

## The food timeline

### General cooking resources

- **Cooking.com.** This commercial site provides access to articles and recipes compiled from published sources and written by chefs. Each recipe in the recipe database has a cited source and nutritional information, and many include a picture of the dish. The recipes are searchable by ingredient, meal, cooking method, and ethnicity. Suggestions for menus are organized by holiday and meal. There is a very good conversion table and directions on how to measure liquid and solid measurements accurately. *Access:* <http://www.cooking.com>.

- **Epicurious: The World's Greatest Recipe Collection.** Epicurious is a good place to start for recipes and general culinary information. The site includes over 15,000 recipes compiled from *Gourmet* and *Bon Appétit* magazines from the 1990s to the present. The site offers advanced searching capabilities for the recipes, which can be limited by ingredient, ethnicity, course, method of preparation, and journal title. Under the link for "Drink," there are drink recipes and wine reviews that can be limited by price, wine type, and region. Under the tab "Learn," there is a 4,000-word food dictionary and 3,500-word wine dictionary, as well as an etiquette guide for dining. The site also includes travel information, restaurant reviews, and access to discussion and news groups. *Access:* <http://eat.epicurious.com/>.

- **Food Network.com.** This link provides information on the 50 cooking shows that air on the food network. The site provides advanced searching for 25,000 recipes drawn from all of the cooking shows. Under the link "Cooking," cooking demos provide

beginning, intermediate and advanced cooking instructions, and tips are shown via still photographs and video clips. There is also a culinary Q&A to ask the chefs culinary questions, an encyclopedia of food, a fat/calorie counter, and an ingredient substitution list. The site also provides basic information on wine and pairing wine with food. *Access:* <http://www.foodtv.com/>.

- **Star Chefs.** This site is comprised of the contributions of 100 famous chefs, including pastry chefs, with links to their recipes, biographies, and their restaurant Web sites. The site also provides access to an international list of culinary schools, hotel and restaurant jobs, and extensive information on wine and wine pairing. The link "Community" provides several links to other culinary Web sites, news groups, and culinary associations. The "Features" link lists articles on a variety of topics, including recipes, holiday cooking, cookbook reviews, travel information, and trends. The link "Ask the Experts" allows e-mail questions to be posted to chefs with their responses. *Access:* <http://starchefs.com/>.

### Government resources

- **Nutrition.gov.** This site provides access to a variety of government-sponsored resources and information on nutrition, food safety, and figures for American food consumption. The site also provides links to related government Web sites on fitness and disease prevention. *Access:* <http://www.nutrition.gov>.

- **Food & Nutrition Service.** This government site on food and nutrition service provides information on national programs, such as the Food Stamp Program, the National School Lunch Program, food distribution, and other federally funded hunger prevention programs. *Access:* <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>.

### Culinary history: Full-text sites and three-dimensional object databases

- **Feeding America: The Historic American Cookbook Project.** This database is part of the Michigan State University Library's digitized collections. The scanned images of 75 American cookbooks published between 1798 and 1922 are searchable by subject, title, and author. This

site also provides a glossary to the unfamiliar terms in the cookbooks and three-dimensional images of culinary museum objects. *Access:* <http://digital.lib.msu.edu/cookbooks/>.



- **History of Eating Utensils.** This database, compiled by the Anthropology Department at the California Academy of Science, includes scanned images and information on the history of eating utensils from several cultures. *Access:* <http://www.calacademy.org/research/anthropology/utensil/index.html>.

- **The Menu Collection Index and Images.** The Los Angeles Public Library provides access to scanned images of the library's large collection of 20th-century menus. The menus are from restaurants in Los Angeles and other cities, cruise lines, and airlines. The database is not complete, and menus continue to be added. *Access:* [http://www.lapl.org/elec\\_neigh/](http://www.lapl.org/elec_neigh/).

- **Nicole Di Bona Peterson Collection of Advertising Cookbooks.** This site is part of Duke University Library's Digital Scriptorium. This database provides scanned full-text images from 82 advertising cookbooks. It is searchable by subject, product name, date, title, and company. *Access:* <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/ea/browse.html>.

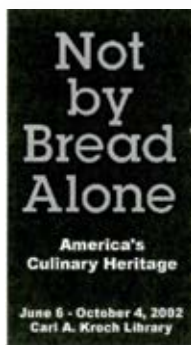
### Culinary history: Online exhibits

- **Bon Appétit! Julia Child's Kitchen at the Smithsonian.** This site is sponsored by the Smithsonian and is the online component of an exhibit at the National Museum of American History. Child donated her entire kitchen and its contents from her Cambridge, Massachusetts, home to the Smithsonian. A three-dimensional view is provided of her kitchen. Scanned images of Child's culinary tools are searchable and some tools include personal stories. *Access:* <http://www.americanhistory.si.edu/juliachild/>.

- **Key Ingredients: America by Food.** This site is also sponsored by the Smithsonian. It is the Web version of a trav-

eling exhibit that examines the influences of region and ethnic cuisine on American dishes. The site provides historical information on American foods from the year 1500 to the present, which can be examined by time period and region. A growing section of the Web site, "The American Cookbook Project," allows the public to share a recipe and provide the family story or history behind each dish. *Access:* <http://www.keyingredients.org>.

- **Not by Bread Alone: America's Culinary Heritage.** This online exhibit surveys the development of American cuisine



and the history of American culinary culture. This site provides scanned images from the culinary collections of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Division at Cornell University Library. The exhibit examines the period when American cuisine became distinct from European cookery and follows the nation's history

and its effect on cuisine. *Access:* <http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/food/default.htm>.

### Journals

- **Better Homes and Gardens.** This popular journal provides recipes searchable by categories, such as cooking with kids, diets for special needs, and quick and easy meals that can be prepared in 30 minutes or less. The site also provides access to articles, cooking instructions, chat and discussion groups, and calorie charts. *Access:* <http://bhg.com/bhg/food/index.jhtml>.

- **Fine Cooking.** This journal provides access to recipes, articles, and cooking instructions that include video clips of the process for some of the instructions. *Access:* <http://www.taunton.com/finecooking/>.

- **Food History News.** This is a journal dedicated to culinary history. The Web site provides examples of historic recipes, a



calendar of events from around the country, links to international museums with collections relating to food and beverage history, and a list of resources on culinary history. *Access:* <http://foodhistorynews.com/>.

• **Vegetarian Times.** The *Vegetarian Times* articles are available online from December 2000 through the current issue. This site is free but requires a log-in. The vegetarian recipes are searchable by ingredient. It also provides useful suggestions for substitutions and a glossary of food items. *Access:* <http://www.vegetariantimes.com/>.

• **Wine Spectator.** This journal has thorough articles on wine recommendations. The site has good wine reference information, such as vintage charts, introductory wine basics, information on wine tasting, and recommendations for wine and food pairing. *Access:* <http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Home>.

## Reference

• **All You Want to Know Conversion Table.** This page, from the online journal *Worldwide Gourmet*, provides conversion comparisons for American and European liquid and solid measurements, as well as temperature conversion. *Access:* <http://www.theworldwidegourmet.com/general/conversion.htm>.

• **The Cook's Thesaurus.** This site has won several awards for best culinary Web site. The *Cook's Thesaurus* is an encyclopedia of foods with thousands of entries that include detailed information, pictures, cooking and measurement information, and suggestions for substitutions for recipes. *Access:* <http://www.foodsubs.com/>.

• **Edible Flowers.** Edible Flowers is a page from the *What's Cooking America* Web site, compiled and maintained by Linda Stradley, cookbook author and television culinary personality. The information on edible flowers is compiled from a variety of online resources and provides images, information, and some recipes for edible flowers. *Access:* <http://whatscookingamerica.net/EdibleFlowers/EdibleFlowersMain.htm>.

• **Newspaper Food Columns Online.** This list of food columns from national papers is on the *Recipe Link* Web site. *Access:* <http://www.allbaking.net/newspapers.htm>.

• **Spices Exotic Flavors & Medicines.** This database is sponsored by UCLA's Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library. It provides scanned images of spices and includes the chemical makeup, medicinal properties, flavor, and history of the spice. *Access:* <http://unitproj.library.ucla.edu/biomed/spice/index.cfm?displayID=2>.

## Electronic lists, newsgroups, discussion groups

Most of the commercial and journal Web sites offer access to chat groups and discussion groups. The *Epicurious* Web site offers several options organized by subject.

• **Food-Related Newsgroups and Mailing Lists.** This comprehensive list is found at *RecipeLink.com*. It is a list of newsgroups, discussion groups, and electronic lists on cooking and culinary topics. *Access:* <http://www.allbaking.net/newsgrp.html>.



• **AllRecipesOnly.** This e-mail group only allows recipes to be posted without chat of any kind. To get a complete description of the site view: <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Meadows/1218/kitchen.html>. To join the group, send an e-mail to: [AllRecipesOnly-subscribe@yahoogroups.co](mailto:AllRecipesOnly-subscribe@yahoogroups.co). To post a message, visit: [AllRecipesOnly@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AllRecipesOnly@yahoogroups.com). To unsubscribe, e-mail: [AllRecipesOnly-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AllRecipesOnly-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com).

• **The Food Manuscript Project.** This discussion group provides information on historical culinary texts. To subscribe, send an e-mail to [foodmanuscriptproject-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:foodmanuscriptproject-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) and to post a message, e-mail: [foodmanuscriptproject@yahoogroups.com](mailto:foodmanuscriptproject@yahoogroups.com).

## Note

1. Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Project Gutenberg Ebook of The Physiology of Taste*, April 2004. Available online at [www.ibiblio.org/gutenberg/etext04/thphy10.txt](http://www.ibiblio.org/gutenberg/etext04/thphy10.txt). ■

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