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Here's where to surf for good recipes

Web sites are the new cookbooks when home chefs seek inspiration

Karen Miltner
Staff writer

(May 2, 2006) — The Internet has changed a lot of things about modern life, including how we cook. In some kitchens, the laptop is taking the place of the cookbook collection.

Here are some sites we think are worth cooking with. Many of them have video demos, personal recipe boxes to store your favorite recipes, newsletters and other cyber-specific features.

Epicurious. This is the cyber home base for *Gourmet* and *Bon Appetit* magazines, and it has one of the most detailed advanced search options on the Web. Most recipes have reviews by users. I personally like the Search Spy, which lets you find out the latest words typed by other users into the recipe search box. www.epicurious.com.

Allrecipes.com. A community cookbook for home cooks all over the world, this site has 30,000 recipes that are well organized and easy to search. The site lets you scale recipes to the number of people you will be serving. And it lets you search for recipes that would complement the meal. Users can also submit original recipes. www.allrecipes.com.

Food Network. A generation ago, you had to watch cooking shows with pen and paper in hand. Not anymore. This site lets you download recipes from celebrity chefs, from Rachel Ray and Emeril Lagasse to Bobby Flay and Paula Dean. Some recipes are posted on the site for a limited time only, so be sure to get them while you can. www.foodtv.com.

Global Gourmet. The anchor of this site is the monthly theme article (with recipes) by executive editor Kate Heyhoe, who covers a variety of topics, from umami ("the fifth sibling to the basic taste categories of sweet, sour, salty, and bitter") to small appliances and spring foods. The Global Destination department offers quick tutorials of different world cuisines, with recipes. www.globalgourmet.com.

The Splendid Table. This is the companion site to Lynne Rossetto Kasper's popular American Public Media radio cooking show of the same name. The Boiling Water 101 section offers basic and more complicated answers to questions on equipment, ingredients and techniques. Unfortunately, the show does not air on any local stations, but the site lets you download archived episodes. <http://splendidtable.publicradio.org>.

Joy of Baking. Here is one site, founded by Stephanie Jaworski, that you really wish had a scratch and sniff component. Luckily, each recipe does include a color photo. In addition to great recipes, there is a lot of information on baking terms, ingredients, substitutions and conversions. www.joyofbaking.com.

Saveur. This is one of the most beautiful food magazines of our times, and the Web site offers equal visual lushness. As the magazine's mission states, "Saveur is about real food, real places, real people, with a story behind every dish." Consequently, recipes come with links to related articles, so you can read the context in which it comes. Step-by-step photo tutorials include sausage making, cleaning whole fish and handling chiles. www.saveur.com.

In Mama's Kitchen. Diana Farrell Serbe created this site to honor mothers all over the world, with their stories, photos and, as she insists, their "heirloom" recipes. A great source for Mother's Day recipes and tales. www.inmamaskitchen.com.

Other resources

The Cook's Thesaurus. An expansive food encyclopedia with terrific pictures, so you can see the difference between a gyoza wrapper and an eggroll skin. www.foodsubs.com.

Saute Wednesday. A smart compilation of recent food-related articles in the media. With links to other food publications, newspaper food sections and food blogs. www.sautewednesday.com.

Chowhound. A tip-sharing bonanza with a hyperactive message board for adventurous home cooks and diners. www.chowhound.com.

Cooking with Amy. Restaurant reviews, recipes, gadget and equipment profiles abound on this blog from San Francisco. www.cookingwithamy.blogspot.com.

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