

July to Dec 2012



SPIRIT HOUSE

Restaurant & Cooking School

Where does ketchup come from?

History and a recipe Page 3

You dropped food – how to know if it's safe to eat.

Plus the dying art of fermentation Page 2

What's new, coming up and going away at Spirit House.

Change is in the air Page 7

HERE NO LONGER BE DRAGONS

This is going to come as great news for some of you. But if you're a water dragon who can read, then this will send a shudder right up your spiky spine.

There's nothing cute about a 2 ft long fire breathing remnant of the dinosaur age. Which makes you wonder why clients feed our dragons? If they were cuddly and fluffy like a puppy, we'd understand.

And we'd all laugh if you got a nip on your finger. But that wasn't the case when recently a client tried feeding a resident water dragon.

Water dragons are not smart, they don't have to be because they are vicious carnivores. So this dragon saw its personal version of Spirit House finger food on offer and took a chomp.

You didn't have to be a genius to predict this outcome. Blame it on the wine or the

client's inability to read the warning signs.

Instead of dessert, our Steve Irwin of the Spirit House, was treated to a good serve of Betadine and a large Band Aid.

Revenge was swiftly delivered the next day. Water dragons are more greedy than smart, so with a few scraps of meat and a large net, we captured and re-located the leaders of the pack to Yandina's equivalent of Siberia - there to contemplate their crimes against humanity.

For those of you who didn't read this article, here's the abridged version!



COOKING CLASS MAKEOVERS

Earlier in the year the chefs sat down and analyzed the recipes in the 20+ cooking classes on offer - nearly 100 recipes in total.

Cooking School chef, Annette Fear, and owner Helen Brierty, then graded the recipes based on your feedback. They were looking at what made certain classes popular and others less so. Obviously classes with Laksa or Beef Rendang were always booked out, but interestingly, other factors made a class appealing, because the recipes involved a new technique, like tea

smoking, or allowed students to improve their knife skills.

Some recipes were popular because they used ingredients that people wouldn't ordinarily use at home, such as Chinese dates.

With all that in mind, Annette went back to the drawing board and created 12 fantastic new classes that deliver all the features you have come to love from our classes. You can find out more on the calendar in the middle of this newsletter or on www.spirithouse.com.au

COOKING SCHOOL

Hands-on cooking classes, a great way to make new friends and learn new skills.

Classes: DAILY
9.30AM TO 2.00PM.
FRI & SAT. EVENINGS
4.30PM TO 9.00PM.

Bookings: SPIRITHOUSE.COM.AU/SCHOOL
PH: (07) 5446 8977 (EXT 1)
E: OFFICE@SPIRITHOUSE.COM.AU

RESTAURANT

A small slice of Asia on the doorstep of the Sunshine Coast.

Lunch: EVERYDAY FROM NOON.

Dinner: WED TO SAT FROM 6PM

Bookings: PH: (07) 5446 8994 (EXT 2)

Gift Vouchers

Spirit House Gift Vouchers make the perfect present. Vouchers can be used in the restaurant, cooking school or shop.

You can buy vouchers online: spirithouse.com.au/vouchers or give our friendly office a call on 07 5446 8977.

Before Refrigeration

ALL IN A PICKLE

Kimchi is the national dish of Korea, an integral part of every Korean meal. But, like many national dishes, no-one outside of Korea can stomach it. The same could probably be said of Australia's national dish - Vegemite anyone?

Definitely an acquired taste, kimchi is fermented – a cooking technique we just don't practice much in the West, and which we'll get to in a few paragraphs. Like sauerkraut, kimchi is made from cabbage. The cabbage is pickled in salt together with radish, garlic, chili paste and ginger. The fermentation process not only preserves the vegetables, but intensifies the flavors. Korean families prepare their own kimchi, with favourite recipes handed down from mother to daughter like family heirlooms.

Taking about 3 months, the fermentation process can cause spectacular explosions if it goes wrong. (Just ask our Cooking School chef, Annette Fear, who once decided to pickle red chillies. The bottles exploded without warning one memorable day, the kitchen walls and ceiling looked like the crime scene from a ritual serial killing.)

Restaurant Head Chef, Ben, enjoys experimenting with a traditional Thai technique of fermenting pork. Raw pork is placed in a jar with salt, garlic, lemongrass – sealed and left on a window ledge for 9 days. The fermentation process enables the growth of lactic acid bacteria and yeasts, mostly lactobacilli, which gives the pork a sour taste. The salt acts as an inhibitor preventing the meat from going rotten. The fermentation process not only extends the time it can be kept without refrigeration, it also tenderizes the pork. After nine days, the jar is opened and there's no smell at all. Ben chargrills the pork thoroughly and the result is tender meat with a hint of sourness.

Fermenting is becoming a new trend in modern restaurants with young chefs putting down their molecular gastronomy kits and looking for the 'next big thing'. Fermenting meat in sterile conditions is fine, but if you get contamination, it can lead to botulism and there's nothing healthy about that. So we're not going to create a Thai fermented pork recipe, nor will we serve it in the restaurant. But you can readily buy it in Thailand, in a sausage form called 'naem' – and you can eat it cooked or raw.

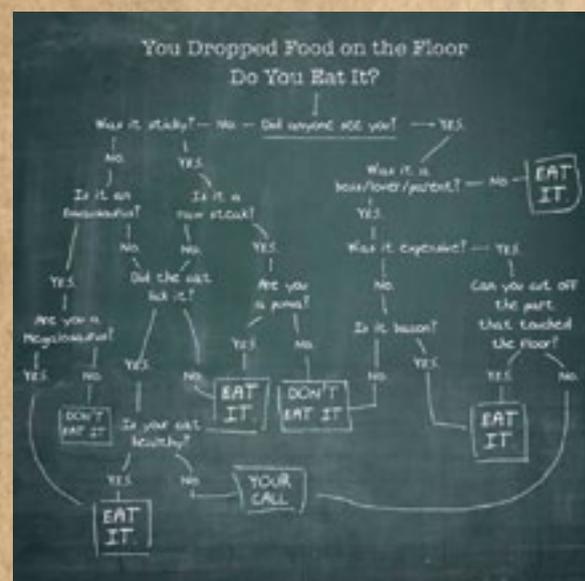
A local Sunshine Coast permaculturalist, Elizabeth Fekonia, is a leading authority on the fermented foods we used to eat in the West. Regularly conducting cheese making classes, it's her fermented butter, kefir, fermented cream and fermented fruits that inspire people to attend her workshops. As we humans learned to cook and process food, our bodies evolved and formed symbiotic relationships with many of the bacteria found in fermented foods. Yoghurt is a great example of this. But we don't eat anywhere near the variety of fermented foods as did our ancestors, and there's a train of thought that this could explain some of our now common health problems.

In fact, latest studies on the gut flora of 3,000 year old Egyptian mummies shows that their gut bacteria is very different to modern people. While chlorinated water and antibiotics undoubtedly save lives, they may also be changing the human microbiome. Scientists are now starting to investigate the effects micro-organisms have on our body when it comes to modern diseases like asthma, obesity etc.

Because of advances in agriculture and refrigeration technology, food preservation techniques such as fermenting, salting and pickling don't now play a big part in our cooking repertoire or diet. Cooking School chef Kelly Lord has a recipe for tomato sauce or ketchup which was hugely popular as far back as the 1700s. The salt in the ketchup gave the sauce a good shelf life which was part of the appeal.

At the recent Noosa Food & Wine Festival, Spirit House chefs served 500 plates of BBQ chicken with a Chinese pickled vegetable salad. The pickled salad was a great hit with the crowd – a modern twist on an old technique. Hard to imagine that your Grandad's love of a pickled onion would make him quite the gourmet hipster today. So, if you want a chance to brush up on some old techniques, we have included the recipes for our chicken and pickled vegetable salad, plus Kelly Lord's ketchup, in this newsletter.

YOU DROPPED FOOD



At our house, we always lived by the 'five second rule' which was more of a guideline than a rule, especially if no-one was looking! Basically, if you dropped food on the floor, then as long as you picked it up and ate it within five seconds, you were fine.

It turns out that two researchers with more grant money than sense, have done the biology and worked out you actually have thirty seconds before something evil turns that tasty dropped morsel into a microbial love hotel. Which is great news for some of us, especially if bacon is involved. I do hate to waste bacon.

As a helpful guide as to whether food is safe to eat after being dropped on the floor, I've included the above 'Decision Tree' which has been doing the rounds on the web and created a lot of interest when we posted it on the Spirit House facebook fan page.

Go to <http://bit.ly/J3vqfT> if you want to read more about the research behind the new 'thirty second rule'. If you find this sort of stuff informative and entertaining, then you should become a fan of our facebook page, or head over to spirithouse.com.au/funstuff which is the home of our blog. There you'll find all sorts of useful and/or useless information.



Some Saucy History

THE SURPRISING ORIGINS OF KETCHUP

THE SAUCE WE USED TO LOVE BEFORE TOMATO SAUCE ...

I always make fun of my Indonesian wife for stealing English words and turning them into Indonesian words. 'Information' becomes 'informasi' for example. Then she pointed out that we steal Indonesian words – kecap (a sauce) is pronounced ketchup, a word Americans use for tomato sauce. Which made me wonder how this word entered our language. After all, Indonesians didn't invent tomato sauce – they prefer sauces made from fermenting fish and shrimp, and as it happens, so did we.

Ketchup first appeared in a *ye olde* English cookbook, 'The Compleat Housewife' (sic) way back in 1727. The primary ingredient being, hold your breath and nose – anchovies. And the English loved it. The salt and vinegar in the sauce gave it a long shelf life in an era without refrigeration. Ketchups could be made with any vegetable ingredient, but in 1876, tomatoes became the big winner when a Mr. Heinz started bottling and selling tomato ketchup. It became an instant hit and was one of the first packaged foods. People loved the convenience of buying ketchup in a bottle - and still do. Throughout the world, Heinz is synonymous with ketchup, and currently sell over 650 million bottles every year.

And that is the short version of how a traditional Asian fish sauce became a favourite sauce for the West. Cooking School chef, Kelly Lord, has a fantastic recipe for hand-made tomato sauce in our BBQ Hot Plate recipe book. It's fun to make and preservative free. So grab the kids, sterilize those jam jars and have a shot at his recipe below.

If you want to learn how to pickle pigeons and cook the way we did in the 1700's, you can read *The Compleat Housewife* online at <http://bit.ly/IZDHFu> via google books – the ketchup recipe is on page 91.



Kelly Lord's Tomato Sauce

Step 1

1½ KILOS OF HEIRLOOM TOMATOES
roughly chopped (ordinary tomatoes can be used too)

1 MEDIUM RED ONION
diced

2 CLOVES GARLIC
crushed

2 TEASPNS BLACK PEPPERCORNS

2 TEASPNS MUSTARD SEEDS

2 WHOLE CLOVES

½ STICK CINNAMON

1 TEASPN SMOKED PAPRIKA

10 RED CHILLIES
deseeded & sliced

Step 2

⅓ CUP BROWN SUGAR

⅓ CUP RICE VINEGAR

1 LIME
juiced

1 TEASPN SEA SALT

STEP 1 METHOD

Place all the Step 1 ingredients into a large stock pot and simmer slowly for about 45 minutes or until a third of the juices have been evaporated. Stir frequently whilst cooking.

Remove from the heat and allow the mixture to cool. Once cooled, place the tomato mixture in a food processor or blender and blend on HIGH for about 1 minute.

Strain the blended mixture through a sieve and into a saucepan, making sure you have extracted as much juice as possible from the pulp.

STEP 2

Place the saucepan with sieved ingredients on a medium heat and add the ingredients from Step 2. Allow to simmer for about 10-15 minutes. *If you prefer a thinner consistency do this step for 5 minutes.*

Once cooked, refrigerate in a sterilised jar for up to three weeks.

To make English Ketchup.

TAKE a wide-mouth'd bottle, put therein a pint of the best white-wine vinegar; then put in ten or twelve cloves of eschalot peeled and just bruised; then take a quarter of a pint of the best Langoon white-wine, boil it a little, and put to it twelve or fourteen anchovies wash'd and shred, and dissolve them in the wine, and when cold put them in the bottle; then take a quarter of a pint more of white-wine, and put in it mace, ginger sliced, a few cloves, a spoonful of whole pepper just bruised, let them boil all a little; when near cold, slice in almost a whole nutmeg, and some lemon-peel, and likewise put in two or three spoonfuls of horse-radish; then stop it close, and for a week shake it once or twice a day; then use it: 'Tis good to put into fish sauce, or any favoury dish of meat; you may add to it the clear liquor that comes from mushrooms.

The recipe as it appeared in the 1727 'The Compleat Housewife'

Noosa Food Festival Hit

Here's a fantastic recipe that was a hit at the 2012 Noosa Food & Wine Festival. Spirit House chefs dished up 500 finger licking serves! Actually, there's two recipes in one here. The Chilli Jam Chicken is easy to make and will taste better the longer it's allowed to marinate.

The Pickled Vegetable Salad is from one of our cooking classes and offers the perfect balance of sweet and sour to complement the chicken.



Chilli Jam Chicken with Pickled Vegetable Salad

Chilli Jam Chicken

3 PIECES CHICKEN THIGH
boneless, skin on

100 GMS CHILLI JAM

1 CUP TAMARIND PULP

3 TABLESPOONS OYSTER SAUCE

SOYA SAUCE TO TASTE

Pickled Vegetable Salad

½ CUP RICE OR COCONUT
VINEGAR

½ CUP WATER

1 CUP WHITE SUGAR

1 TSPN SALT

1 CUP CARROT,
shredded

1 CUP WHITE RADISH,
shredded

1 CUP CUCUMBER,
shredded

1 SMALL RED ONION,
thinly sliced

2 TBLS PNS GINGER,
finely shredded

1 CUP BEAN SPROUTS,
topped & tailed

8 KAFFIR LIME LEAVES,
finely chopped

½ CUP CORIANDER LEAVES

½ CUP MINT LEAVES

1 TBLS PNP TOASTED SESAME SEEDS

Plum & Ginger Dressing

2 TBLS PNS CHINESE PLUM SAUCE

2 TSPNS WHITE SUGAR

PINCH OF SALT

2 TBLS PNS WATER

2 TBLS PNS LIME JUICE

1 TSPN SESAME OIL

FOR THE CHICKEN

Mix together chilli jam, tamarind and oyster sauce in bowl. Adjust seasoning to taste with soya sauce. Trim chicken of excess fat, marinade in sauce for 3 hours (or overnight). Reserve some sauce for basting chicken while on BBQ.

Heat BBQ to high,, seal chicken skin side down first. Turn after 3-4 minutes and baste with sauce.

Turn heat down, cook for 15 minutes or until juices run clear. Rest for 10 minutes. Slice chicken. Serve with Pickled Vegetable Salad.

TO MAKE THE SALAD

Combine the vinegar, water, sugar and teaspoon of salt in a saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring occasionally.

When the sugar has dissolved, remove from heat and cool.

In a bowl, mix together the carrot, radish, cucumber, onion and ginger. Pour over the cooled vinegar syrup and allow to pickle for at least 2 hours. This can be done the day before and refrigerated until needed.

Drain the pickled vegetables from the liquid and transfer to a bowl along with the bean sprouts, kaffir lime leaves, coriander and mint leaves.

Pour over the dressing and mix to combine, transfer to a serving plate and sprinkle with the sesame seeds.

TO MAKE THE DRESSING

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and whisk together.

Snapshots



Tours to Thailand In July 2012 & Feb 2013

With so many requests for more Thai tours, we've added two tours in July 2012. So if you're reading this newsletter before July, and thinking of escaping winter with a holiday in Thailand, we have four days of excitement, food and adventure to whet your appetite.

If you can't make the July tour, we have released dates for February 2013 Tours. Visit spirithouse.com.au/tours for all details and bookings - and view a short video of the tour.



Chefs' Master Class with David Thompson

One of our favourite restaurants in Bangkok is David Thompson's 'Nahm'. So when we heard David was a guest presenter at the 2012 Noosa Food and Wine Festival, we invited him to hold an informal, private master-class with Spirit House chefs.

David, our 14 chefs and some of the wait staff spent an evening cooking together. A great opportunity for our staff to learn from the Master - and share in some fun.



New Website is Ready for Launch

Websites can become like the garage or basement of a business premises. After a while, a site becomes cluttered with files, links, videos, photos - no longer the original, neatly organised system. So we've redesigned our website to work with mobile devices and replaced many static old images with video - far superior for showcasing our people, surrounds, tours and food.

Visit spirithouse.com.au and enjoy the Spirit House site renovation.

WHAT'S NEW, COMING-UP OR GOING AWAY



Spirit House now has a Dog House

A man wrote to a hotel asking if he could stay with his dog. The hotel owner wrote back, "I've never had a dog steal towels, bedclothes, silverware or pictures off the walls. I've never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk and disorderly. Your dog is welcome and if your dog will vouch for you - you can stay too."

We've installed a kennel and water bowl for those of you dining at Spirit House while travelling with your pet pooch. You will need to book the kennel, we only have the one, by calling the office on - 07 5446 8977.



Two Days + Chain Saw Let there be Light

If you know anything about rain-forest, you know tall trees hog all the light, making it tough for anything to grow underneath. That was certainly the case with Spirit House front garden which was planted over 20 years ago.

But a team of tree loppers have changed all that. With dozens of large trees now a pile of wood chips, light is filtering down to the understory. Blake and his team have started the replanting - when complete, the garden promises to be stunning.



The Life Cycle of Spirit House Products

The Spirit House factory, founded 10 years ago to make our curry pastes, has gone off on its own tangent and grown exponentially - to the point where it is so busy making sauces for the supermarket chains that it is no longer economically viable to produce small batches for Spirit House.

So we've decided to retire our products from sale in stores. They've had a good life - but we'll continue to make sauces and curry pastes at the cooking school for sale at the school shop. The good news is our delicious Spice Cream range will still be on sale here, around Brisbane and the Coast.

From the Restaurant

NO MORE, IT'S THE LAW

Remember Sylvester Stallone in the sci-fi movie 'Judge Dredd'? The law enforcement officers of the future had the government-backed combined powers of police, judge, jury and executioner. Stallone's catch-phrase was 'I am the law' - when you heard that, you knew someone was about to die.

Now when it comes to alcohol, the State government has given waiters and bar staff the same Judge Dredd-like powers - minus the execution part. When consuming alcohol at any licensed venue, waiters have to enforce the law. They are empowered to refuse alcohol service if you're over the limit, or if you can't prove your age. And there's no point pleading. Because, like Stallone, 'they are the law'.

A recent survey showed that 60% of diners have no idea what constitutes a standard drink, or how many drinks they can consume each hour and still stay under the .05 limit.

What do the following drinks have in common?

- 100mls white wine
- A can of mid strength beer
- A rum and coke

Each of the above is a standard drink, containing about 10 grams of alcohol. Knowing this can help you stay under .05 if you're planning on enjoying a drink or two. Here's how it works:

The human body can process one standard drink an hour. So to stay under the .05 limit, men can consume two standard drinks in the first hour and one standard drink per hour after that. For women, it's one standard drink in the first hour and one standard drink per hour after that.

If a man was to drink two stubbies of full strength beer in an hour and jump in the car, he could be over the limit. Likewise, if a woman had a glass of wine (150mls) at lunch and the dutiful waiter topped that glass up at some time, she would be over the limit. Most restaurants pour around 150mls + when they give you a glass of wine, which equates to 1.5+ standard drinks.

All waiters and bar staff learn about this when doing their compulsory Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) Certificate. Interestingly, the RSA training has changed the way waiters serve you. In the past, the sign of a good waiter was someone who quietly and efficiently topped up your wine during the night without you having to ask. That is now considered to be irresponsible, so waiters will top up your wine less often, or ask first.

Here are some other things you may not know when it comes to Queensland law and service of alcohol. Not only is it illegal for staff to serve liquor to minors, it's also illegal for parents to pour their under eighteen age kids a glass of wine at any Qld. restaurant - whereas they can in Victoria.

There are steep fines for wait staff when it comes to serving minors alcohol. But the fines are significantly steeper if they serve alcohol to people who are unduly intoxicated or disorderly. If a bus load of drunken party revelers arrive at a restaurant, the staff are bound by law not to serve them alcohol. If someone starts getting argumentative or telling lewd jokes at the top of their lungs, staff can refuse them service, sparing the surrounding tables an uncomfortable evening.

In short, the government says alcohol is a drug and acknowledges that most of us are addicts. Sure, we're becoming a nanny State, but when used properly, these laws are basically designed to keep you safe and give both clients and staff a pleasant dining experience.

Drink	Alcohol Content	Standard Drink Count
Mid Strength Beer	4.0% Alc./Vol.	1
Mid Strength Beer	4.0% Alc./Vol.	1.6
Mid Strength Beer	4.0% Alc./Vol.	0.8
Mid Strength Beer	4.0% Alc./Vol.	1.2
Mid Strength Beer	4.0% Alc./Vol.	0.5
Mid Strength Beer	4.0% Alc./Vol.	0.9
17oz. Hardbody Can	4.0% Alc./Vol.	1.5
17oz. Hardbody Can	4.0% Alc./Vol.	1
17oz. Hardbody Can	4.0% Alc./Vol.	0.8
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	1
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	7
17oz. Hardbody Can	4.0% Alc./Vol.	1.5
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	2
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	1
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	2.33
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	1
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	2.33
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	1
White Wine	12% Alc./Vol.	1

WHAT'S HOT

Here's a quick wrap-up of stuff we find interesting and might intrigue you too:

- Toilets may not be an exciting topic but we finally received approval for an entire new toilet block. The builders have finished so now there are no more queues on busy days and we have a dedicated disabled toilet too.
- A cool, free app for your phone, FoodSwitch, lets you scan barcodes of most food items and will show you nutritional information and - this is cool - healthier alternatives from other brands - <http://bit.ly/AvEfuW>
- Looking for some fun, adventure and exercise? The Sunshine Coast Council has a detailed list and maps of canoeing, biking and walking trails, ranging from the coast to hills. A list of fantastic, family-friendly outings for you to explore - <http://bit.ly/KP6aIJ>

WE WIN A HAT

Sunshine Coast restaurants did very well in the 2012 Australian Good Food Guide Awards, with 16 restaurants picking up 'Hat' awards. The prestigious Brisbane Times Food Guide saw 6 Sunshine Coast restaurants picking up hat awards in the Regional Division.

We are so proud of our restaurant team who have worked so hard over the years to maintain Spirit House as a *hatted* restaurant on both these prestigious awards lists.

If you know the history of Spirit House owners, you'd know Peter and Helen Brierty started the first restaurant in Montville, 'Misty's', back in 1975. Misty's literally put Montville on the map way back then, and it's with this in mind that we feel a special fondness for Long Apron restaurant in Montville which won a prestigious Two Hats in this year's awards - congratulations to their team, because we well know all that's involved to win Two Hats. Helen & Peter are already planning a nostalgic meal there soon.

