

Art from the Kitchen

Painted and Served by Beth Surdut

When I stand in a farmers' market anywhere in the world, the sticky juice of memory runs down my chin. *Art From the Kitchen—Painted and Served by Beth Surdut* is a series of luminous paintings on silk and unusual recipes gleaned from global markets. From Bali to Boston, I'm happy sitting with people who mime an invitation to eat together even if our only shared language is food and smiles.

I can best describe myself as a visual storyteller—a designer, colorist and writer creating a new mythology. My paintings are exhibited in museums and galleries internationally. I write for print and radio media. I've hung from a rope in a volcanic fern forest, piloted a small plane through the hot lava reds of sunset, climbed a mountain to bathe in a holy Hindu spring and kayaked amidst alligators. The tropically-themed work emanating from those experiences is currently displayed at Tampa International Airport.

Now, New Mexico has called to me as raucously as the raven you see in my drawings. I come here willingly, drawn by the immensity

of the sky, the layered palette of color and stories and the scent of roasting chiles at the farmers' market.

When I'm not in the studio painting on silk or drawing the new raven stories, cooking is an artistic and meditative venue. Coming from a line of cooks and artists who equate food with love, I find great pleasure in bringing together friends to share visually appealing meals served on the table linens I design for museums.

I tend to shop often, basing my feasts on what's fresh, using as much local food as possible to create global recipes. What fun to watch someone who has voiced an aversion to beets or squash surreptitiously lick his plate!

My hands being as essential as the food elements, I include them in these new recipe paintings. The actions of squeezing a lemon, grating cheese, or holding out the gift of corn takes my work out of the realm of still life.

Art for the mind and body at www.bethsurdut.com.



All Choked Up or the Heart of the Matter

by Beth Surdut

Artichoke hearts—a dozen or so, quartered

Lemon juice—a hearty squeeze

White wine—a small puddle

Garlic—a clove or two, pressed or minced

Olive oil—enough to glisten the hearts

Black pepper—a few twists of the wrist

Italian style bread crumbs—for topping

Grated Romano cheese—1/3 of the crumbs

Butter or some healthy alternative—dots on the top

In a baking pan—

Combine olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, white wine, pepper.

Add artichokes and gently toss until coated.

A little swim is good—

Be sure pan bottom is coated.

Combine bread crumbs and cheese.

Cover artichokes with mixture.

Dot with butter.

Bake at 350° until lightly browned.

Approximately 15 minutes.