

# Cedar-Wrapped Treasures

By Susie Iventosch



Cedar wrap salmon and swordfish

Photo Susie Iventosch

In the late 1990s I became aware of the micro-finance movement and developed quite an interest in this system of giving microloans to individual entrepreneurs in developing economies. In fact, I enrolled in a week-long Microenterprise and Development seminar at Southern New Hampshire University, where I had the good fortune of attending lectures with central bankers, community development professionals and professors from all over the world—Nigeria, Uganda, Mexico, Ghana, Switzerland and the Ivory Coast, to name a few.

Microfinance is a tool for fighting poverty by providing very small, unsecured micro-loans to poor people, usually women and usually in developing nations, so they may start or expand a sustainable business.

When I learned from Ying Compestine that her recipes and cookbook were to be featured at the March 30 Lafayette Whole Foods event at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, "Local Goes Global: Party for Good", I was delighted to hear that the proceeds will go to benefit micro-lending projects in poor communities around the world.

"It's a good cause," Compestine said. "I know first-hand that help like this can change a person's life. It is empowering and fosters independ-

ence." At the upcoming event, Compestine will share her journey as a writer and as a passionate advocate for healthy living through her presentation "Asian Secrets to Ageless Living: A Writer's Journey from Two Worlds."

The dinner will feature a sampling of Compestine's recipes, carefully selected for their versatility and ability to accommodate different dietary preferences, and prepared by Whole Foods Executive Chef Marc Rubenstein. (For more information, visit : <http://www.wholeplanetfoundation.org/get-involved/campaign/asian-secrets-to-ageless-living-a-writers-journey-from-2-worlds-/>, or call Whole Foods at 925-284-5315.)

This is the nature of globalization. We can collect both friends and recipes from all over the world, while touching the lives of so many people through projects like microlending. I still communicate with a professor of economics from Uganda Martyrs University in Kampala, Uganda and a Swiss businessman turned microlender now living in the Philippines, as well as a central banker from Mexico City, all of whom I met at the 2008 seminar. Unfortunately, I have not yet garnered their favorite recipes! Oh well, there's still plenty of time!

Since I do not want to spoil the excitement around Compestine's featured dishes at the upcoming event, I decided to share a wonderful fish recipe I discovered at Whole Foods! It calls for fish fillets and an assortment of vegetables all wrapped in cedar papers and then grilled on the barbecue. The "Fire & Flavor" Cedar Wraps can be found near the meat department and cost \$7.99 for a package of eight.

This recipe was inspired by one of the recipes on the Fire & Flavor package, but you can also use any kind of veggies, or even add cheese if you like.

## Mediterranean Cedar-Wrapped Salmon or Swordfish

(Serves 4)

### INGREDIENTS

- Four 6-ounce fish fillets, any skin removed and cut into pieces about 1½ inches wide and thick by 6-7 inches long (Swordfish, Halibut, Salmon, Sea Bass)
- ½ cup pitted and coarsely chopped Kalamata olives
- ½ cup chopped sundried tomatoes, drained or reconstituted
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup kale leaves, torn into bite-sized pieces, or 8 large strips of kale leaves
- Mushrooms (I used ½ package of "Brown Clamshell" organic mushrooms by Mycopia from Whole Foods)
- 16 pieces of carrot (3-inch julienned strips)
- 4 cedar paper wraps
- 8 pieces of kitchen string, each about 10-12 inches long
- (\*Note I covered the string with long pieces of chives just for the pre-cooking photo!)



Photo Susie Iventosch

### DIRECTIONS

Soak cedar wraps in warm water for about 8-10 minutes to soften. Pat dry with a paper towel and lay cedar wraps out on a flat surface. Spray with cooking spray to keep contents from sticking. In the center of each cedar wrap, place kale leaves. In a bowl, mix olives and sundried tomatoes with garlic and olive oil. Then, spread mixture evenly over kale. Place mushrooms and carrots on top of olive mixture and then lay fish fillet over all. Now, call anyone you can to come over to help you roll and tie the cedar wraps! Starting at one end, roll the papers snugly around the contents (you will be able to tell which way to roll them ... there is only one way) and tightly tie the wraps in two places about halfway between center and the ends. Cook on a preheated grill for about 12-14 minutes, turning every three or four minutes. Remove from grill and cut strings. Serve the whole wrap on the plate along with wild, black or red rice, braised baby carrots, salad and toasted seeded bread. \*Note- you can use whatever veggies you like and can make this dish in any style you like. The package offers an Asian version of the same dish.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and [www.taxbites.net](http://www.taxbites.net). Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). **These recipe is available on our web site** [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977.



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