

# Susan Spicer

Susan Spicer began her cooking career in New Orleans as an apprentice to Chef Daniel Bonnot at the Louis XVI Restaurant in 1979. After a 4-month “stage” with Chef Roland Durand at the Hotel Sofitel in Paris in 1982, she returned to New Orleans to open the 60-seat bistro “Savoir Faire” in the St. Charles Hotel as Chef de Cuisine. In 1985, she traveled extensively in California and Europe for 6 months, returning to work in the kitchen at the New Orleans Meridien Hotel’s “Henri”.

In 1986 she left to open the tiny “Bistro at Maison de Ville” in the Hotel Maison deVille. After nearly four years as chef, she formed a partnership with Regina Keever and in the spring of 1990 opened Bayona in a beautiful, 200-year-old cottage in the French Quarter. With solid support from local diners and critics, Bayona soon earned national attention and has been featured in numerous publications from *Food and Wine*, *Saveur*, and *Food Arts*, to *Travel & Leisure*, *Bon Appetit*, *The New York Times* and more.

From 1997 through 1999, Susan owned and operated Spice, Inc., a specialty food market with take-out food, cooking classes and artisan bakery. This developed into Wild Flour Breads, which she currently co-owns with partner Sandy Whann.

In October of 2000, Susan and three partners opened Herbsaint, a casual award winning contemporary bistro-style restaurant in the Warehouse District of New Orleans. In 2008, she sold her partnership to Donald Link, but continues to be a regular patron at the bar.

Susan has been the guest chef at The James Beard House, The Oriental Hotel in Bangkok, the Lanesborough in London, Cunard and Crystal Cruise Lines, as well as appearing on local and national television, including an appearance on the finale of the popular Bravo series *Top Chef* in 2009. She regularly contributes her talents to numerous charity events, such as co-chairing the New Orleans chapter of Share Our Strength’s annual “Taste of the Nation” for more than 15 years and has represented New Orleans at the Superbowl hunger-relief fundraiser “Taste of the NFL” since it’s inaugural year. In May 1993 she was the recipient of the James Beard Award for Best Chef, Southeast Region and, in 1995 was chosen for the Mondavi Culinary Excellence Award. Bayona was featured as one of *Restaurants and Institutions* 1996 Ivy Award Winners, as well as being named to *Nation’s Restaurant News* Fine Dining Hall of Fame in 1998. One of the 1989 recipients of *Food and Wine’s* Best New Chefs award, Chef Spicer was inducted in the summer of 2008 into the magazine’s Best New Chef Hall of Fame. In March 2009, the John Folse Culinary Institute honored Chef Spicer with the Lafcadio Hearn Award given to



“...culinary professionals who have had a long term positive influence on the cuisine and culture of Louisiana and the nation...” In addition Bayona received “5 Beans,” the highest rating from the New Orleans *Times- Picayune*. Since 1995, Bayona has been listed in the Zagat Guide for New Orleans as one of the top 5 restaurants in the city, receiving a rating of 28 points out of 30, and has repeatedly received 4 stars from Mobile Star Awards, one of two restaurants to receive this rating in New Orleans. In May 2010, Susan was inducted into the James Beard Foundation’s Who’s Who of Food and Beverage in America.

Susan’s first book, entitled Crescent City Cooking: Unforgettable Recipes from Susan Spicer’s New Orleans, was released nationwide by Knopf in late October 2007. In the spring of 2008 Crescent City Cooking was recognized by the International Association of Culinary Professionals with a nomination for Best American Cookbook, and was awarded Best New Cookbook by *New Orleans Magazine*. Chef Spicer’s book was also included in *Food & Wine’s* 2008 Best of the Best, a collection of recipes selected from their top 25 cookbooks of the year.

In May of 2010 Susan was inducted into the James Beard Who’s Who of Food and Beverage in America. Her latest project is the opening of MONDO, a casual, family style restaurant which opened in June of 2010 in Chef Spicer’s neighborhood of Lakeview, where she has lived for 20 years.

## **Braised Lamb Shoulder with Spinach Mushroom Stuffing (á la Julia)**

### **Spinach Mushroom Stuffing Ingredients:**

- 4 tablespoons pure olive oil
- ½ pound diced mushrooms, such as portobellos or button
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1½ cups cooked spinach, squeezed dry and chopped
- salt, pepper
- 2 teaspoons minced anchovy filets (about 3)
- ½ cup breadcrumbs softened in 4 tablespoons broth or milk
- ½ cup finely chopped bacon (about 6 strips)
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves or 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary

### **Spinach Mushroom Stuffing Method:**

Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in an All-Clad sauté or roasting pan and sauté mushrooms, stirring, until just starting to brown. Add onions and garlic and cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes. Add chopped spinach, salt, pepper, and anchovy and cook an additional 3 minutes. Scrape into a bowl, then add the remaining ingredients and mix well.

### **Braised Lamb Shoulder Ingredients:**

- 1 4-5 lb boneless lamb (or pork) shoulder
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 stalk celery, cut in four
- 2 cups chicken or beef broth
- 2 cups red wine
- 1 bay leaf, 3 sprigs thyme, 4 cloves garlic

### **Braised Lamb Shoulder Method:**

Spread lamb (or pork) out on a work surface, skin side down. Tuck stuffing into any pockets left by the bones and pile the rest down the center. Roll the meat around the stuffing and tie with butchers twine at 1 inch intervals. Pat the meat dry and season with salt and pepper. Brown either in a hot (450 degree) oven for about 10 minutes, or sear in a large All-Clad sauté or roasting pan on all sides. While meat is browning (or after, if sautéing) add cut vegetables to the sauté pan and cook over moderately high heat until lightly browned.

Place the browned lamb shoulder in the All-Clad Slow Cooker and place the vegetables around the lamb. Pour in the broth and wine, then add the bay leaf, thyme and garlic. Set temperature to high for 2 hours, then low for 2 hours.

Turn the lamb over after the first two hours, then turn it back after one hour. Lamb should be very tender to the touch.

Remove lamb to a platter and let stand at least 15 minutes before slicing. Pour liquid through a sieve into a tall pot or container. Let stand for about 10 minutes, then ladle the fat off the top and discard.

Bring liquid to a boil in a pot, then lower heat and simmer until broth is reduced to about 1 – 1 ½ cups and is slightly thickened. Enrich by whisking in 2 tablespoons of butter and keep warm while you slice lamb.

Serve with roasted or mashed potatoes and sauce on the side.