

Celebrating the Big 250!

Written by Debbi Covington

Tuesday, 24 March 2015 12:55 - Last Updated Wednesday, 25 March 2015 04:55



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Who needs an excuse to have a party? Those of you who know me, know that I'll make up a reason to celebrate something, even when there's no real occasion. In this case, I think a little party to commemorate a milestone for me – and for *Lowcountry Weekly* – is in perfect order.

This is my 250th Everyday Gourmet column. Back in 2005, when I first started writing, the column was named “Easy Cooking with Debbi.” Eventually it morphed into “Easy Cooking” and finally into “Everyday Gourmet.” I've saved every single column that I've ever written. They're all clipped and glued onto poster board. The first columns were only half of a page.



The stack now fills up an entire shelf in our guest room armoire.

The recipes this week are from our little celebratory soiree. It was an intimate gathering of LCW staff, writers and spouses with a few champagne toasts and lots of laughs. In addition to celebrating 250 deadlines (and the occasional late column), we're actually celebrating our friendships. Somehow, over the years, we've all become integral players in each other's lives.

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We tend to spend holidays and birthdays together. If we attend a local event or festival, it's usually with each other. Isn't it fun when friends become family? As always, the recipes are delicious, easy and fun – excellent party food! **Thank you, Mark Shaffer, for taking the beautiful photos.**

If you'd like to see all of the recipes from all of the columns from past years, please visit and “like” my new Facebook page, “Everyday Gourmet – with Catering by Debbi Covington.” Every column that's archived with *Lowcountry Weekly* is linked there. I've also shared some old photos of the Lowcountry Weekly gang from back in the day. They're good for a laugh or two. We look so young! Thank you for reading Everyday Gourmet, for purchasing my cookbooks and for supporting Catering by Debbi Covington. I truly appreciate your comments and feedback. I'm still creating yummy new recipes and inventing fun party ideas. Please stay tuned. Here's to 250 more columns!



Whipped Feta Crostini with Balsamic Reduction

For the balsamic reduction:

1 cup aged balsamic vinegar

For the crostini:

1 skinny French baguette, cut into thin slices

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

For the whipped feta:

1 cup feta cheese, crumbled

1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened

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1/3 cup heavy whipping cream

1 clove garlic, minced

1 teaspoon dried basil

1 tablespoon dried chives

Garnish:

Grape tomatoes, thinly sliced

Red onion, diced

Italian parsley, chopped

Prepare the balsamic reduction: Pour balsamic vinegar into a small saucepan and place over high heat. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until the vinegar mixture has reduced to 1/3 cup, about 10 minutes. Set the balsamic reduction aside to cool. Prepare the crostini: Brush both sides of bread slices with olive oil and place on a baking sheet. Preheat broiler; broil bread slices until lightly browned on both sides, turning them once. Set aside to cool. Make the whipped feta: Place feta, cream cheese, whipping cream, garlic, basil and chives in a medium bowl. With an electric mixer, whip until smooth and well combined. To assemble: Spread each slice of bread with the cheese mixture. Garnish with tomatoes, onion and parsley. Drizzle with balsamic reduction before serving.

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Skillet Spaghetti with Spicy Tomato-Basil Sauce



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