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FOOD & WINE

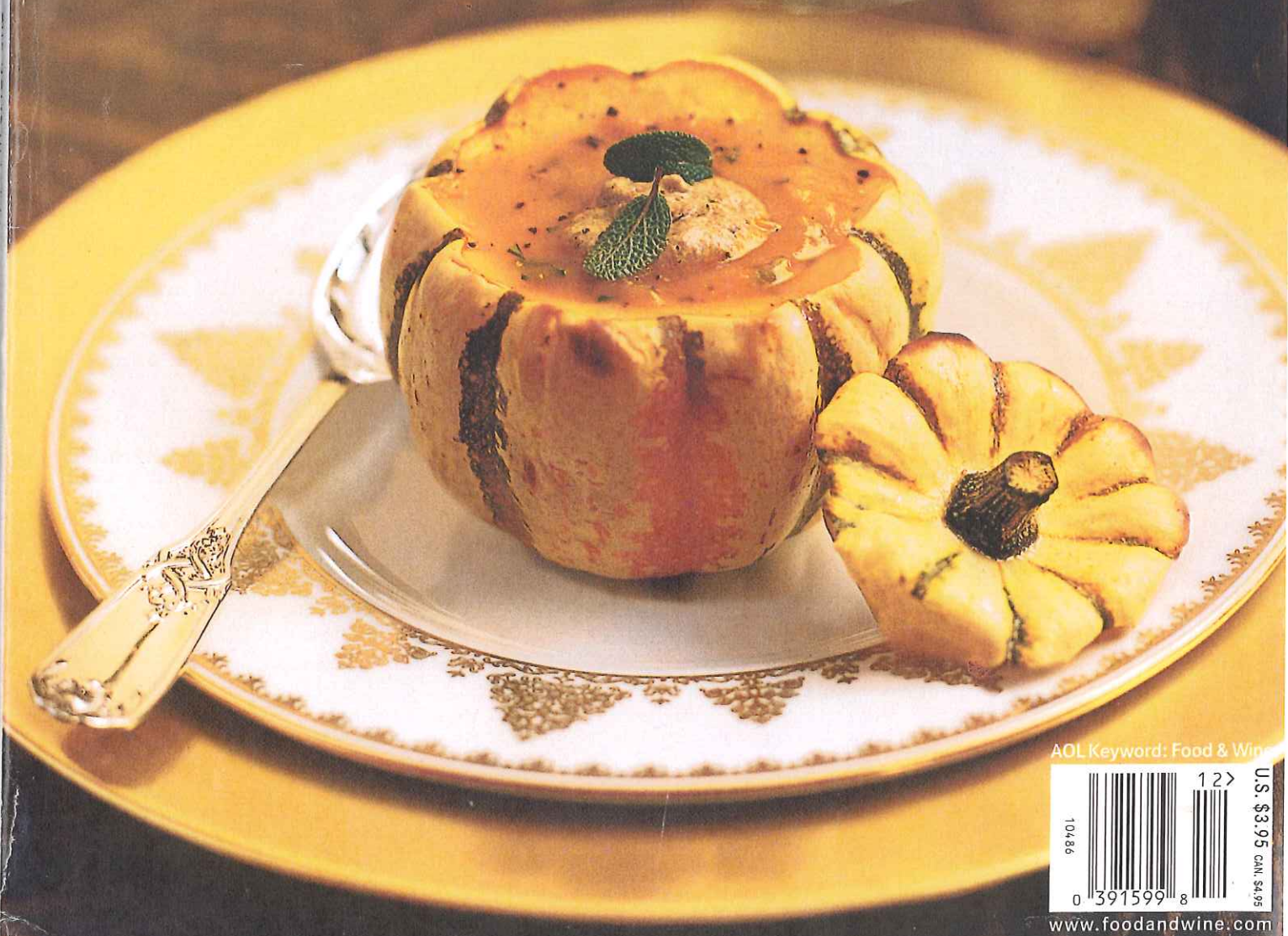
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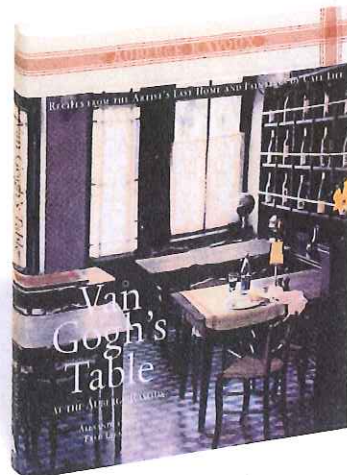
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win a trip to france!

To celebrate the publication of *Van Gogh's Table at the Auberge Ravoux*, a cookbook and art book from the inn where the artist lived his last days and ate his last meals, we will send one lucky reader and a companion on a trip to France, including round-trip airfare, one night in Paris, one night in Auvers-sur-Oise, dinner at the Auberge Ravoux and, of course, a copy of *Van Gogh's Table at the Auberge Ravoux*, by Alexandra Leaf and Fred Leeman. (One runner-up will also receive a copy of the book.) Read Alberto Manguel's "Van Gogh's Legacy" (page 176), then return to this quiz. We'll draw one winning entry at random from among all correct entries postmarked by January 31, 2002.



Pop Quiz

1. What was Vincent Van Gogh's brother's name?

- A. Jean
- B. Michel
- C. Theo
- D. Pierre

2. What was the name of the Auberge Ravoux in Van Gogh's time?

- A. Café de la Mairie
- B. Prairie
- C. Café de la Gare
- D. Sorbonne

3. Dr. Gachet tended Van Gogh. What role did he play in village life?

- A. apothecary and gardener
- B. homeopathic physician and amateur painter
- C. dentist and politician
- D. lawyer and chef

4. Which artist did *not* spend time in Auvers-sur-Oise in Van Gogh's lifetime?

- A. Cézanne
- B. Corot
- C. Pissarro
- D. Pollock

5. What year did Van Gogh die?

- A. 1790
- B. 1918
- C. 1890
- D. 1977

TO ENTER Write your answer to each of the five questions above on a postcard. **Include** your name, phone number(s), and e-mail and postal addresses. **Mail** your entry to: J. Blatt, FOOD & WINE, 1120 Avenue of the Americas, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10036. **All entries** must be postmarked by January 31, 2002.

PRIZE DETAILS AND RULES FOR SWEEPSTAKES

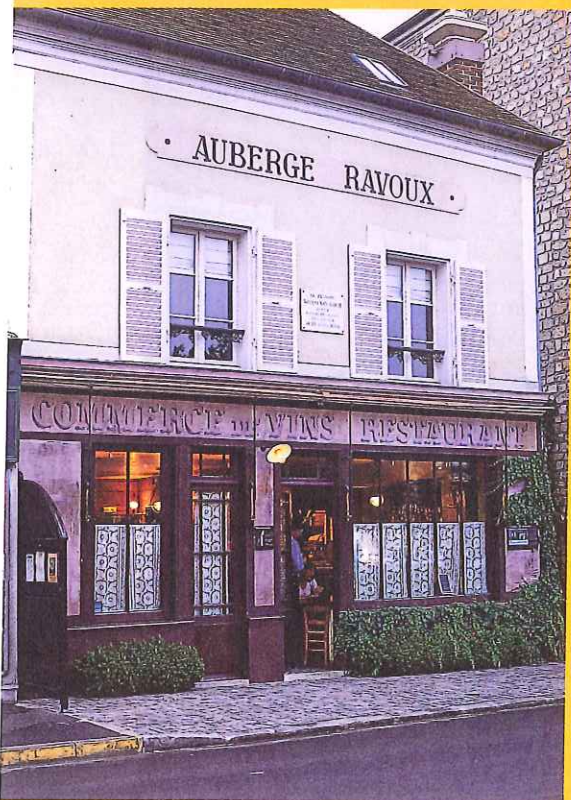
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1. How to Enter: To enter the VAN GOGH SWEEPSTAKES ("the Sweepstakes"), read the accompanying article from FOOD & WINE ("F&W") entitled "Van Gogh's Legacy" found on page 176 of the December issue of F&W or on the Web at www.foodandwine.com/vangogh ("the Article"), correctly answer the five questions based on the Article, and mail your entry to: J. Blatt, FOOD & WINE Magazine, 1120 Avenue of the Americas, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10036. Off-line copies of the Article can be obtained by calling 212-382-5625. Entries must be postmarked by January 31, 2002. Limit one (1) entry per person. All entries become the property of Sponsors and will not be acknowledged. **2. Eligibility:** The Sweepstakes is open to persons who are legal residents of the United States (except residents of Puerto Rico and U.S. territories and possessions) and are at least 18 years of age or older, excluding the employees of Sponsors, their families and other persons living in the same household as such employees, and Sponsors' corporate parents, affiliates, subsidiaries, and advertising agencies. The Sweepstakes is void wherever prohibited or restricted and is subject to all applicable federal, state, and local laws. **3. Selection of Winners:** One grand-prize winner and one second-prize winner will be chosen in a random drawing conducted on or about February 8, 2002, from all eligible entries received that correctly answer all five questions. Winners will be notified by phone, mail or e-mail by February 8, 2002. If any winner cannot be reached or does not acknowledge notification within five (5) days from the first notification attempt, the prize will be forfeited, and alternate winners will be selected at random from the remaining eligible entries. Winners will be required to sign an Affidavit of Eligibility and Liability/Publicity Release within ten (10) days after the notification date, or alternate winners will be selected at random from the remaining eligible entries received. Winner's traveling companion will be required to sign a liability release before ticketing. **ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED.** **4. Prizes:** One grand-prize winner will receive a travel package for two consisting of round-trip coach airfare from the major airport nearest the winner's home to Paris and one (1) night standard double-occupancy hotel accommodation in Paris, round-trip ground transportation for two between Paris and Auvers-sur-Oise, and one (1) night standard double-occupancy accommodation at either an inn or hotel located in Auvers-sur-Oise, dinner for two at the Auberge Ravoux and a copy of *Van Gogh's Table at the Auberge Ravoux*. Blackout dates and other restrictions apply. All taxes and other expenses not expressly set forth above, including without limitation ground transportation, food and beverage, telephone and any sundry services are the sole responsibility of the winner. Travel must be completed between April 1, 2002, and May 31, 2002, or between October 1, 2002, and December 31, 2002. If the winner's companion is a minor, winner must be minor's parent or legal guardian. Prizes are not transferable and may not be substituted or redeemed for cash by winners. Sponsors reserve the right to substitute prize for one of equal or greater value (approximate retail value: \$3,500). One second-prize winner will receive a copy of the book entitled *Van Gogh's Table at the Auberge Ravoux* (approximate retail value: \$35). **5. Disclaimer/Publication:** Winners assume all liability for any damages caused or claimed to be caused by participation in the Sweepstakes and/or the acceptance, awarding, receipt, use and/or misuse of the prizes, and winners release Sponsors, their parent companies, subsidiaries, and affiliated companies, their respective officers, directors, and employees, and Sponsors' marketing and promotional agencies from any such liability with respect to, or arising out of, this Sweepstakes. 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VAN GOGH'S LEGACY

A new book, *Van Gogh's Table at the Auberge Ravoux*, pays homage to the inn where the painter ate his last meals—a shrine not just to the artist but to great bistro cooking. Writer Alberto Manguel goes for dinner. PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK MOLLOY



Auvers-sur-Oise is a town of ghosts. Among the summer tourists and art-loving pilgrims who visit Auvers from all over the world drift long-dead artists with folding easels and boxes of paints, who a century ago would disembark every week at the small railway station. Some are admirably remembered: Cézanne, Corot, Pissarro. Others, such as Charles-François Daubigny, in his day the most celebrated artist of all, are now little more than a footnote in the history of art and a bronze bust in the town center. ■ Down the winding streets or on the river bank, by the towering church or in the sober graveyard, visitors can sense these anxious ghosts in oil-smearing smocks trying to draw their attention to a field, a tree, a house that once captured the painterly eye and, in spite of two World Wars and countless real-estate developers, still stands seemingly immutable. Above all, however, the presence most strongly felt is that of an anguished and impoverished visionary who came to Auvers in the spring of 1890 and died 10 weeks later from a self-inflicted gun wound: Vincent van Gogh. ■ Van Gogh arrived in Auvers looking for a place to work and to free himself from the nightmares of the asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence to which, suffering from hallucinatory fits, he had chosen to commit himself a year earlier. Theo, his beloved brother, had suggested Auvers not only because it was a well-known artists' colony but because (as Pissarro had told him) here lodged the art-loving Dr. Paul Ferdinand Gachet, an amateur painter and homeopathic physician, who could look

A PLATE OF LEMONS AND A CARAFE, 1887 OIL ON CANVAS, 18 1/2" X 15", VAN GOGH MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM



Van Gogh's Table at the Auberge Ravoux, by Alexandra Leaf and Fred Leeman, celebrates the artist's café paintings, including A Plate of Lemons and a Carafe, and the inn where he was staying at the time of his death, OPPOSITE

after him and follow his convalescence. Van Gogh found cheap lodgings at the Café de la Mairie (today renamed Auberge Ravoux after its then owner), where for three francs fifty a day he had a small room under the rafters and three meals a day. The only cure for his hallucinations, the doctor assured him, was to paint.

On Sunday, July 27, Van Gogh left the café after lunch carrying his paint box and easel. He returned late and went straight to his room. When the charitable *patron*, Arthur Gustave Ravoux, came up to see him, he found the painter in bed, covered in blood. Van Gogh told him that he had shot himself, so that “the misery won’t carry on forever.” Theo arrived the next day and for many long hours sat by his brother’s side. For a while, the painter seemed to have recovered; he talked lucidly and smoked his pipe. Then, barely two days later, on July 29 at 1:30 in the morning, he died.

Van Gogh’s room is today a dignified memorial. Hidden above the restaurant, up rickety wooden stairs, there is little except bare walls. Many visitors expect to see the bed and chair rendered famous in his paintings, but these belonged to other rooms, one in Arles being the most well-known. Visitors are thus forced to furnish the room in their imagination, to seek (as in the Auvers landscape) the correspondence between what’s tangible and the shapes and colors conjured up in Van Gogh’s work.

The auberge, bought a few years ago by Dominique-Charles Janssens, has become a first-class restaurant and an obligatory stopping place for admirers of Van Gogh. Restored to look as it did in Van Gogh’s day, the auberge serves superb French home cooking in a friendly, unpretentious atmosphere. This is due to Janssens’ attention to detail, from the welcoming tea-towel table coverings to the

cast-iron marmites in which the main courses are served.

Janssens, who has dedicated his life to preserving Van Gogh’s final lodgings, arrived in Auvers literally by accident: In 1985, as he was driving to Paris, a drunk driver hit him from behind, landing Janssens in the hospital for over a month. After reading in the police report that the accident had taken place in Auvers-sur-Oise, 20 miles north of Paris, Janssens learned of the village’s connection to Van Gogh. The curiosity became an obsession: Janssens bought the auberge and, after years of bureaucratic haggling with the French government, managed to transform the Auberge Ravoux into one of the most successful places of its kind in the world. He also is raising millions to purchase an original Van Gogh, which he plans to hang in the memorial room. A recently published illustrated book, *Van Gogh’s Table at the Auberge Ravoux*, by Alexandra Leaf and Fred Leeman, pays homage to Janssens’ endeavors

make sure that customers did not sneak women up to their rooms. And the restaurant itself is a warm, congenial place, with no-nonsense tables and chairs, bottles of wine and carafes of water straight out of an Impressionist canvas.

The young chef, Christophe Bony, born in the region and not spoiled by having worked at the three-Michelin-starred Arpège in Paris, has gone back to the headwaters of French peasant cooking and returned with the real thing: roast chicken, fish stew, garlic potatoes. The “seven-hour” lamb, the auberge’s signature dish, is marinated for a day in herbs and wine, browned, then braised in the oven for three hours (reduced from the original seven). The final result is so tender it can be eaten (as the French say) *à la cuillère*—with a spoon. When legendary chef Paul Bocuse, a forefather of nouvelle cuisine, dined here for the first time, in 1996, he lifted the lid of his marmite and, inhaling the scented cloud that

When legendary chef Paul Bocuse dined at the auberge, he exclaimed, “This is what cooking is all about!”

and to the old-fashioned gastronomy of the auberge.

Set in the heart of Auvers-sur-Oise on the road to the train station, the auberge now welcomes the traveler with the same unaffected, reassuring façade it showed a century ago. The small vestibule has had countless layers of paint peeled off to reveal the lime green original, which (according to the village elders) was a color used in the old days to keep the flies away. The landing of the staircase displays a tiny window opening through which the *patron*, busy at the counter, could

emerged from the lamb, exclaimed: “This is what cooking is all about!”

Janssens put equal care into the restoration of the building itself. He found a Turkish artisan capable of creating fixtures that could combine the soft light of oil lamps with the requirements of the French Electrical Board. He hired the company that had worked on preserving the prehistoric cave paintings of Lascaux to eliminate the mold in the walls of the auberge. After the costly restorations were completed, in 1993, an elderly visitor inquired when Janssens was going to

The auberge's period details are so perfect its carafes and glasses are the same style as those in Van Gogh's time.



"start the renovation." The question, he felt, was proof that he had succeeded in his memorial.

Auvers is full of memorials. Not only the small museums, the painters' lodgings, the names scattered here and there on street signs, parks and cafés, but also the landscape itself, a Van Gogh canvas come alive. Fittingly, it is around the village cemetery that this landscape is best preserved: The trees bend with the vibrant curves of his brush strokes, the clouds mirror the clouds in his electric skies, the grain fields seem to have remained untilled since the afternoon when he last painted them, menaced by crows and an advancing storm. Any visitor to Auvers who has looked carefully at a Van Gogh cannot doubt Oscar Wilde's dictum that life imitates art.

Surrounded by a stone wall, the centuries-old cemetery is now visited mainly by Van Gogh's admirers, who place flowers, letters, poems and many other offerings on his discreet

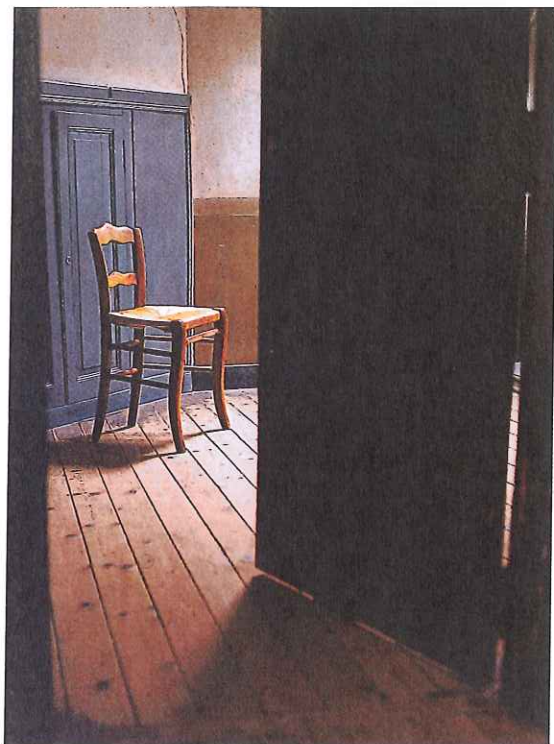
tomb and on that of his brother Theo, who died six months after he did. It was here that, on July 30, a small group of friends surrounded Theo as the body of his brother was lowered into the grave. Earlier that day, the body had been laid out at the auberge. Dr. Gachet, as a final homage to the artist, surrounded the coffin with sunflowers and with his patient's canvases. There were many, since Van Gogh, kept from starvation by his brother's small allowance, had difficulty selling his paintings during his life and gave many of them away. Almost a century later, Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" would be sold for close to \$40 million at Christie's in London.

A short distance from the cemetery, overlooking the village, is the church of Auvers. Because Van Gogh had committed suicide, the clergy would not allow his funeral to take place inside the building he had so lovingly painted. As we view the church today, Van Gogh's vision superimposes itself on the straight lines and ochre hues of the stone, lending it colors and a movement that we might not perceive without his aid. Describing his famous painting of the church (now in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris), Van Gogh wrote to his sister that he thought its color was "more expressive, more sumptuous" than in his earlier sketches of other buildings. It is that sumptuous expressiveness that now overwhelms the viewer standing in front of what would otherwise appear as a quite ordinary French country church.

Cemetery, church, the town itself, with its winding streets, shaded lanes and lush riverbanks, offer a pleasant confusion between past and present. With the exception perhaps of its seventeenth-century castle (an imposing confection that tries to attract tourists with a Disneyfied multimedia

presentation, *Journey to the Age of the Impressionists*), Auvers is something of a time machine, transporting the visitor to a moment in which a group of painters seems suddenly to have rediscovered the meaning of color. Here is the knot of houses behind a now-vanished thatched cottage that Van Gogh painted shortly after arriving. Here is the house of the good Dr. Gachet, whose steps bore the tread of most visiting artists. Here is Daubigny's studio with its impressive murals by Corot and Daubigny himself. And the village itself remains peaceful (in spite of traffic), uncluttered (in spite of tourists), full of the particular light Van Gogh sought to reflect in his luminous canvases.

It seems unnecessary (or worse, futile) to add a comment to the countless articles, biographies, essays, novels and even songs and films that have been produced in an attempt to explain the work of Van Gogh. What prevented his contemporaries from seeing what we now see, the genius that became so astonishingly clear immediately after his death? What is it that so moves viewers from East and West, of all ages and backgrounds, who look upon his fields and skies and gnarled houses and faces burning with color? In one of his letters to Theo, trying to come to terms with the pain of his mental state, Van Gogh wrote: "Madness might be a healthy thing in that one becomes, perhaps, less exclusive." He could have gone further. He could have said that madness (which the Greeks believed was the terrible gift the gods bestowed on their chosen ones) had granted him—albeit through horrible suffering—the power to see everything, to exclude nothing, but rather, through his art, to include us all, fellow humans, in his agonizing vision.



Visitors to the Auberge Ravoux pay their respects in Van Gogh's room, then stay for the famous "seven-hour" lamb, OPPOSITE.

recipes from the auberge

Auberge Ravoux's Braised Leg of Lamb Potatoes with Smoky Bacon
Mushrooms with Toasted Hazelnuts Poached Chicken with Grainy Mustard Sauce
Monkfish and Mussel Waterzooi French Apple Cake

Auberge Ravoux's Braised Leg of Lamb

4 SERVINGS

This is the auberge's version of the classic "seven-hour" leg of lamb. Chef Christophe Bony marinates the meat overnight in wine with aromatics before braising it in the oven for three hours.

One 3-pound boneless leg of lamb
roast from the hip end, tied

1 carrot, coarsely chopped

1 onion, coarsely chopped

1 celery rib, coarsely chopped

1 head of garlic, cut in
half crosswise

3 thyme sprigs

3 bay leaves

1 tablespoon crushed black
peppercorns

1 bottle (750 ml) dry white wine

2 tablespoons peanut oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper

2 pounds meaty lamb bones

Water

Chopped chives, for garnish

1. Put the leg of lamb in a bowl just large enough to hold it. Add the carrot, onion, celery, garlic, thyme sprigs, bay leaves and crushed peppercorns. Pour the wine over the lamb. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

2. Remove the lamb from the marinade and pat dry. Strain the marinade in a colander set over a bowl; reserve the liquid and vegetables separately.

3. Preheat the oven to 300°. In a large skillet, heat the oil until shimmering. Season the lamb with salt and pepper and brown on all sides over moderately high heat. Transfer the lamb to a medium enameled cast-iron casserole.

4. Add the lamb bones to the skillet and cook over moderate heat until browned all over. Transfer the bones to the casserole. Pour off all but ½ tablespoon of

the fat from the skillet. Add the reserved vegetables and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until browned, about 5 minutes. Add the vegetables to the casserole. Pour the reserved marinade into the skillet and boil, scraping up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Pour the marinade into the casserole. Add just enough water to cover the meat and bring to a boil. Cover and braise in the oven for 2½ to 3 hours or until the lamb is very tender.

5. Transfer the lamb to a carving board and cover loosely with foil. Strain the braising liquid and skim the fat from the surface. Pour the liquid back into the casserole and boil over high heat until reduced to 2 cups, about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

6. Carve the lamb into thick slices and transfer to a deep platter. Pour some of the braising liquid over the meat and garnish with chives; pass the remainder at the table in a sauceboat.

MAKE AHEAD The recipe can be prepared 2 days ahead through Step 4. Reheat gently before proceeding.

SERVE WITH Potatoes with Smoky Bacon.

WINE A rich Syrah-based red with smoky overtones and plenty of fruit will contrast with the succulent lamb and echo the smoky bacon in the potatoes. Look for a medium-bodied St-Joseph from the Rhône Valley, such as the 1999 Jean-Luc Colombo or the 1999 Domaine Courbis.

Potatoes with Smoky Bacon

4 SERVINGS

1½ pounds all-purpose potatoes

6 ounces double-smoked slab
bacon, cut into ½-inch dice

1 tablespoon minced chives

Coarse sea salt

1. In a medium saucepan, steam the potatoes until just tender, about 25 minutes; drain. Peel and halve the potatoes, then slice them ⅓ inch thick.

2. Preheat the oven to 450°. In a medium skillet, cook the bacon over low heat until most of the fat has been rendered, about 8 minutes. Scrape the bacon and the fat onto a large, rimmed baking sheet. Add the potatoes and toss gently to coat. Spread the potatoes in a single layer and bake for about 15 minutes, or until browned on the bottom and crisp. Transfer the potatoes to a bowl. Sprinkle with the chives, season with salt and serve.

Mushrooms with Toasted Hazelnuts

4 SERVINGS

3 tablespoons hazelnuts

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 pounds mixed mushrooms, such
as chanterelle, oyster and
hen-of-the-woods, cut into
bite-size pieces

Salt and freshly ground pepper

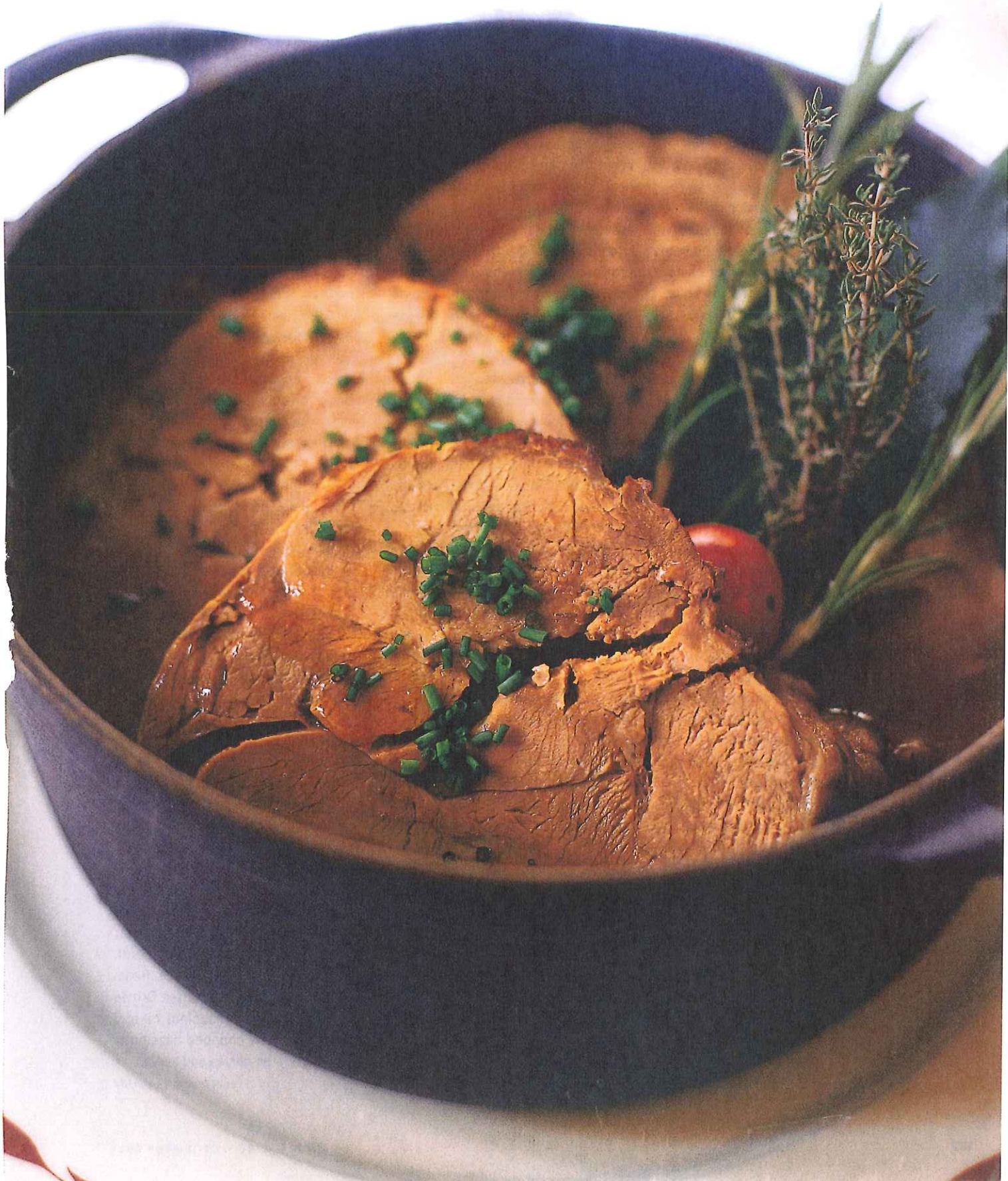
Hazelnut oil

1½ tablespoons minced chives

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Toast the hazelnuts in a pie plate in the oven for 10 minutes, or until browned. Transfer to a kitchen towel and rub the nuts together to rub off the skins, then finely chop.

2. In a large skillet, melt the butter over moderately high heat. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper and cook, tossing, until their liquid evaporates, 5 to 8 minutes. Reduce the heat to moderate and cook, stirring, until lightly browned, about 4 minutes. Transfer the mushrooms to a platter. Drizzle with 1 teaspoon of hazelnut oil and sprinkle with the chopped hazelnuts. Garnish with the chives and serve.

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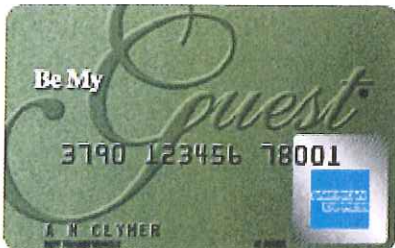
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VAN GOGH'S LEGACY *from p. 182*

Poached Chicken with Grainy Mustard Sauce

4 SERVINGS

This is essentially a pot-au-feu with chicken instead of beef. You can cook the chicken with additional vegetables, such as cabbage, turnips, parsnips and rutabagas; simply add them to the pot halfway through and cook until tender. Strain and save the leftover broth for enjoying on its own, with chopped fresh herbs, or for making soups or stews.

CHICKEN

- One 4-pound organic chicken
- 2 medium onions, quartered
- 4 carrots, cut into thirds
- 2 large leeks, white and tender green parts—halved, rinsed and cut into thirds
- 4 celery ribs, cut into thirds

Two 1-pound celery roots, peeled and quartered

- 8 thyme sprigs
- 1 teaspoon peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon coarse salt

About 3½ quarts water

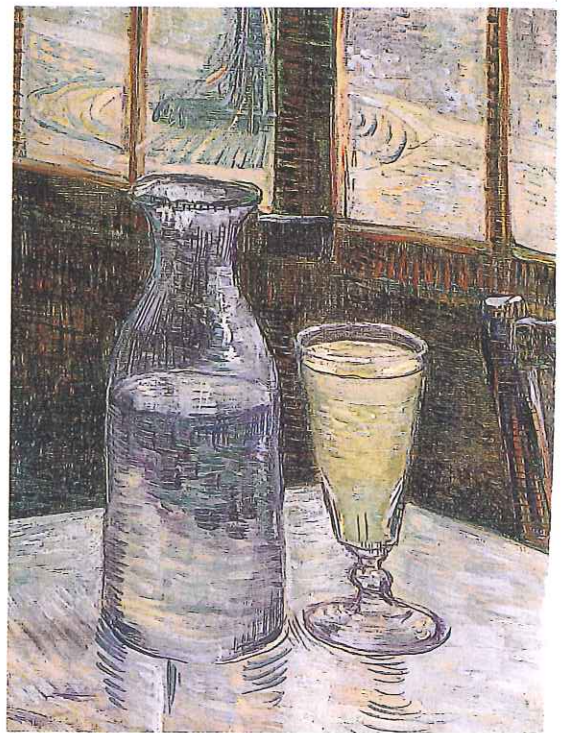
MUSTARD SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1½ tablespoons grainy mustard
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

1. PREPARE THE CHICKEN: Put all of the ingredients in a large saucepan. Add enough water to just cover the chicken and bring to a boil. Gently simmer the chicken, turning it once, until cooked through, about 1 hour. Transfer the chicken to a platter and let cool slightly.

2. MAKE THE MUSTARD SAUCE: In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over moderate heat. Whisk in the flour until blended. Gradually whisk in 1 cup of the chicken poaching liquid until smooth and bring to a simmer, whisking. Stir in the cream and mustard and season with salt and pepper; keep warm.

3. Carve the chicken and surround it with the vegetables. Spoon a little of the poaching liquid over the chicken and vegetables to moisten them and serve with the mustard sauce.



Van Gogh's *A Table in Front of a Window with a Glass of Absinthe*, painted in 1887.

MAKE AHEAD The recipe can be prepared up to 2 days ahead.

SERVE WITH Rice pilaf.

WINE Try a fruity, zesty light red Burgundy or a fresh and intense Alsace Pinot Blanc here. Either will point up the mustard sauce without overwhelming the chicken. Look for the 1999 Maison Leroy Bourgogne Rouge or the 1999 Bergheim Marcel Deiss Pinot Blanc.

Creamy Monkfish and Mussel Stew

4 SERVINGS

This classic Flemish seafood stew, called waterzooi, is served at Auberge Ravoux to celebrate Van Gogh's heritage. Thinly slicing the vegetables on a mandoline makes easy work of cutting them into thin matchsticks.

- 1 stick (4 ounces) unsalted butter
- 1 pound non-oily fish bones
- 4 shallots, thinly sliced
- 1 celery rib, chopped

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The auberge is famous for simple French country dishes, which it serves in individual cast-iron marmites.

MONKFISH STEW, continued

- 1 carrot, coarsely chopped, plus
2 carrots, halved crosswise and
cut into matchsticks
 - 6 thyme sprigs
 - 2 teaspoons coarse salt
 - 1 teaspoon peppercorns
 - 4 cups cold water
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dry white wine
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ pound celery root, peeled and cut
into matchsticks
 - 2 leeks, white and tender green, cut
into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch long matchsticks
 - Salt and freshly ground pepper
 - 1 cup heavy cream
 - 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons
cornstarch dissolved in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
cold water
 - $2\frac{1}{2}$ pounds monkfish fillet, cut into
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces
 - 1 pound mussels, scrubbed
and debearded
1. In a large saucepan, melt 4 table-
spoons of the butter over moderate
heat. Add the fish bones, shallots, cel-
ery, chopped carrot, thyme, salt and
peppercorns and cook over low heat for
10 minutes. Add the water and wine and
simmer for 30 minutes.
 2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, melt the
remaining 4 tablespoons of butter over
moderate heat. Add the celery root,
leeks and carrot matchsticks, cover and
cook, stirring often, until softened, about
5 minutes. Season with salt and pep-
per and set aside.
 3. Strain the fish stock into a large
saucepan. Whisk in the heavy cream
and the dissolved cornstarch and bring
to a simmer, whisking until thickened.
Season with salt and pepper. Add the
monkfish and the reserved vegetables
and set the mussels on top. Cover and
cook until the mussels open, 8 to 10
minutes. Serve in soup plates or bowls.
- MAKE AHEAD** The recipe can be pre-
pared through Step 2 up to 2 days
ahead. Strain the fish stock into a glass
or ceramic bowl before refrigerating.
- WINE** The lean and meaty monkfish
and mussels and the rich broth suggest
a round and creamy Chardonnay. Opt
for a lighter French Burgundy that isn't

too powerful or oaky, such as the 1999
Antonin Rodet Château de Rully Blanc or
the 1999 Domaine de La Folie Rully
Blanc Clos St-Jacques.

Grandmother's Apple Cake

MAKES ONE 9-INCH CAKE

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 large baking apples, such as
Golden Delicious or Rome—
peeled, cored and coarsely
chopped
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons Calvados
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cups sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup plain yogurt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
- 3 large eggs at room temperature,
lightly beaten
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Generously
grease a 9-inch round pan.
2. In a medium skillet, melt the butter
over moderate heat. Add the apples and
cook, tossing occasionally, until lightly

browned all over, about 5 minutes. Stir
in the Calvados, cinnamon and 1 table-
spoon of the sugar and remove the skil-
let from the heat.

3. In a large bowl, mix the yogurt with
the remaining sugar until completely
smooth. Mix in the oil and eggs, then
mix in the flour and baking soda. Stir in
the apples. Scrape the batter into the
prepared pan, spreading it evenly. Bake
for 50 minutes, or until the cake is set
and a toothpick inserted in the center
comes out clean. Transfer the pan to a
rack and let the cake cool completely
before unmolding.

MAKE AHEAD The cake can be cov-
ered and kept overnight.

SERVE WITH Whipped cream. ■

*These recipes have been adapted from the
just released Van Gogh's Table at the
Auberge Ravoux by Alexandra Leaf and
Fred Leeman (Artisan).*

*Alberto Manguel is the author of 20 books,
most recently Reading Pictures.*

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