



TAILORED TASTE TIDBITS

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Recent Travels

As many of you know I was recently in Ireland to attend the wedding of dear friends. Given the distance, we made a true vacation of it traveling the length and breadth (almost) of the island. Arriving in Dublin in pre-dawn drizzle, we headed north the following day for some R&R in the village of Bushmills (yes, home of the distillery!). We spent a full day sightseeing at the Giant's Causeway and Dunluce Castle.

Then it was down to Belfast a few days later where we spent the bulk of the trip – touring the new Titanic Museum, Belfast City Hall, and St. George's Market (DC readers – it's like a large-scale Eastern Market). One fabulous dinner followed the next. We capped one evening at The

Merchant, a rococo former bank/now hotel, where we sipped Irish Whisky in the spectacular lobby.



On the Friday, we headed west about 2 hours to see my grandmother's childhood home. She came from humble beginnings in Dromore, County Tyrone and created a lovely life in America for her and her future family.

But the highlight of the trip was the wedding held in a 'folly' called the Temple of the Winds on the Mountstewart estate overlooking Strangford Lough. It was as beautiful and romantic as it sounds. An intimate ceremony was followed by a champagne and shortbread interlude at the main house while the bridal party had photos taken in the gardens. Then back up to the Temple for an incredible dinner catered by the Belfast firm Yellow Door Deli. The regional food was delicious and beautifully plated. Starter, soup, main, dessert and THEN wedding cake gave us all reason to retire to the lowest level for dancing into the next day.

The joy in the faces of our friends as they married was the icing on this trip.



Corpse Reviver #2

"Four of these taken in swift succession will unrevive the corpse again."

Harry Craddock
The Savoy Cocktail, 1930

I cannot personally attest to the quote, but after one of these fabulously-named cocktails, I can well imagine it is true.

I love the name of this cocktail – wouldn't it be perfect as a signature drink for a Halloween party? But ultimately it's the taste that makes me want to serve/drink it.

Corpse Revivers fall into a sub-category of cocktails called "hairs of the dog" which purport to bring one back to life after an evening of overindulgence. The original Corpse Reviver #1 was made with cognac, sweet vermouth and Calvados or apple brandy. Oof – heavy and sweet! CR#2 is the most popular version with gin as the base, lemon for tartness, Lillet Blanc for a light floral touch and a sweet note of orange from the Cointreau. Use a gin with a clean, non-botanical flavor.

Corpse Reviver #2

- ¾ oz gin (neutral-style)
- ¾ oz Cointreau
- ¾ oz lemon juice (fresh, please!)
- ¾ oz Lillet Blanc
- 1 dash Absinthe (or Pernod)

Place all liquids in a cocktail shaker. Add ice. Shake. Strain into a chilled glass. Garnish with a real Maraschino cherry and/or a twist of orange.

Roasted Parsnip & Pear Soup

Inspired by the soup course served at the wedding at the Temple of the Winds, I created a recipe that just screams Autumn.

Roasting deepens the flavors of the vegetables and caramelizes their natural sugars, resulting in an earthy soup with sweet notes.



3 medium parsnips, peeled & chopped
2 medium carrots, peeled & chopped
1 small onion, chopped
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
1 ripe pear, chopped (no need to peel)
1 tablespoon honey
3 cups vegetable broth
1 small potato, peeled & chopped
1 teaspoon mild curry powder
Optional pinch of red pepper flakes

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with foil and toss the vegetables with the olive oil, salt and pepper. Roast vegetables for 20 minutes. Add pear to the sheet pan, tossing again. Roast 10 minutes. Add honey to vegetables, mix and put back in oven. Turn off oven and leave vegetables in hot oven for 15-20 minutes.

Place vegetables in a medium-sized pot. Add broth, chopped potato and curry powder. Bring to a boil and turn down to a simmer. Cook until potato is soft. Puree in blender until smooth – adding more broth if necessary to create the thickness you prefer. Serve in bowls, cups, or demitasse garnished with hot pepper flakes if you like.

For other recipes and previous Tailored Taste Tidbits, visit

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Books I've Read on a Kindle Fire

Guess what I got last Christmas – yep, a Kindle Fire. I was skeptical about this whole electronic thing because I truly love books – the feel, the smell, the turning of the pages. BUT, I was won over with the convenience of finding books, the free lending library and the back-lit screen (easy night reading). Here are a few books I found on the Kindle, some of which were free!

Charlotte au Chocolate by Charlotte Silver

This lovely memoir is set in the fine dining establishment above the Harvard's Hasty Pudding Club called *Upstairs at the Pudding*. Charlotte's stylish Mom ran the front of the house and, before walking out on the family, her funky Dad ran the kitchen line. The author's memories are intertwined with the restaurant and its seasonal rhythm. She noticed she was growing when she discovered she could no longer fit under the bar to sleep during the dinner service. Funny, nostalgic and well-written.

Emperor's Edge by Lindsey Buroker

This is a Fantasy novel with a touch of SciFi and Mystery thrown in for good measure. The heroine is an enforcer for the government but soon finds herself on the other side of the law (which of course is really that of the 'good guys'). Entertaining characters with an overall fast pace and enough surprises to keep you reading. The ending opens the door to future adventures with the two main characters.

Sweet Delicious Madness & the Many Deaths of Silvio Berlusconi by Julie Sarff

The title was so intriguing I had to bite. Plot summary: a young American woman separated from her philandering Italian husband is now working as a maid at an absentee American movie star's Italian estate to support herself and her twin sons. Parts of this are laugh out loud funny. The ending is a bit predictable but the path to that end is madcap and fun.

Mrs. Tim of the Regiment by D.E. Steveson

Written in the 1930s, this novel arose from the diaries of the author who was a British military wife. The plot is not the point, but rather the richly drawn characters propelling the reader to turn the pages. Mrs. Tim strives to run a seamlessly calm household for her captain husband and two children. Their relocation to Scotland sets them in a village rather than in military housing shifting the balance by introducing new non-military friends during the difficult settling-in.

