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Restaurants and Food - Friday, August 5, 2011

All in Good Taste: Comfortably yum!

Still salad days for longstanding San Anselmo favorite...

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by Pat Fusco

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JUST AS GOOD AS EVER Would you eat a 25-year-old salad? Probably not. But a salad with a 25-year-old history is a proud staple: Chinese chicken salad based on a family recipe. It has been on the menu at **Comforts** in San Anselmo since the day it opened. **Glenn** and **Laura Miwa** are celebrating the anniversary of their restaurant, a casual cafe famous for dishes described as comfort food with city style. Hours are 6:30am-7pm weekdays, 7:30am-7pm Saturday, 8:30am-3pm Sunday. 335 San Anselmo Ave., 415/454-9840 or www.comfortscafe.com .

SAVE ROOM FOR DESSERT I'll have what **Marisa Churchill** is having. A svelte pastry chef with an enviable resume—**Slanted Door, Ame**, Rubicon in San Francisco and appearances on the **Food Network**—she wrote **Sweet & Skinny**, published in June. It covers recipes using real ingredients (as opposed to questionable substitutes) to create light results in desserts like chocolate fudge cake, sticky buns, even rich tres leches cake. Churchill visits Marin Aug. 9 with **Sweet Tips**, a class/tasting at **Fresh Starts Cooking School** in Novato, 7-9pm. Cost: $39 per person; register at www.hbofm.org .

TIME'S RUNNING OUT Not all of us can afford big-bucks tickets for main events during **SF Chefs 2011** running through Aug. 7 in the white tents on Union Square, but we can take advantage of **SF Chefs Week**. Some of the town's most appealing restaurants offer hot specials with $20 lunches and $35 dinners. Check details at www.sfchefs2011.com .

MOUTH-WATERING SUBJECT MATTER Around here, close connections spring up in the food world that keep our local scene livelier and more accessible than in other places. Take a look at this phenomenon Aug. 13 (10am) when **Marin Organic**'s **Food for Thought Series** brings baking guru **Chad Robertson** to **Toby's Feed Barn** in Point Reyes Station to explore breadmaking with two friends. His book, **Tartine Bread**, is the new how-to bible, based on his experience at the eponymous bakery. He'll discuss his methods with surfing buddy **Dan Muller**, co-owner of San Francisco's **Outerlands** (who learned to create his cafe's breads with Robertson's help), and baker **Celine Underwood**, who bought Robertson's original West Marin business and turned it into **Brick Maiden**. Information: www.marinorganic.org .

THEY'VE GOT GRAPES, WE'VE GOT GRAPES Winemaking in Marin continues to attract attention and a new release from a major Russian River vintner will undoubtedly boost our reputation. **DeLoach Vineyards** has released its first vintage of wines grown in Marin. All are vintage 2009, from organic **Stubbs Vineyard** close to Tomales Bay, **Chileno Valley Vineyard, Azaya Vineyard** in Hicks Valley and **Skyview Vineyard**. Look for those names on labels of DeLoach pinot noir and chardonnay, along with a pinot noir

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blend from all four vineyards. (Case production is limited.) www.deloachvineyards.com .

EAT ABROAD, EVEN ON STAYCATION Local restaurants provide cuisines genuine enough for imaginary trips across the seas. Owners of Mill Valley's **Dipsea Cafe** extended its hours to dinner service (Wed.-Sun.) and they added a welcome touch of Greece with menu items like grilled octopus, saganaki and moussaka; www.dipseacafe.com ... Bright Cuban fare reigns at **Mikey's**, 783 Andersen Dr. in San Rafael. Mofongo, tostones, ropa vieja and masitas are waiting to be discovered. Puerto Rican specialties are available, too, from the kitchen of **Freddy Caamal**, ex-chef at Mambo's Cafe. Open daily; 415/454-6453... Breezes on the deck are not really tropical, but happy hour at **Guaymas** in Tiburon with margaritas and appetizers is still a great way to escape; www.guaymasrestaurant.com ... A sampling of foods from Mexico and Latin America is the draw at **Marinitas** in San Anselmo, **Heidi Krahling**'s atmospheric restaurant. Try flaky empanadas, grilled steaks, fresh fish; www.marinitas.net .

A TASTE OF SUCCESS Have an idea for a great food product? **Good Food Awards** competition is open for entries of artisan foods (categories: beer, charcuterie, cheese, chocolate, coffee, pickles, preserves, spirits). Deadline is Sept. 1. An October tasting by luminaries like **Alice Waters** and **Ruth Reichl** will determine winners and in January those will be featured at **Good Food Awards Marketplace** at the **Ferry Plaza Farmers Market**; www.goodfoodawards.org .

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