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ALL THINGS SMÁRI

February 7th, 2014

WE LOVE CHEF CARRI WILKINSON



There is something about a woman (or man, for that matter) who knows her way around a campfire, enjoys a good hunt, and knows how to call turkeys. There's something trustworthy about that kind of person, and Carri Wilkinson is just that.

Carri grew up in northern Idaho, "in the woods," hunting with her father. She loves that she was the little boy that her father never had. "When I was seven, my father taught me how to **box call**. When I was twelve, I killed a moose." The two went shooting every weekend, and they were a mighty hunting pair. Carri would do the box call, the turkeys would come, and her dad would shoot. When she grew up and left home, her father told her, "It's not the same without you

calling the turkeys in." Carri and her father are still very close.

"When I was seven, my father taught me how to box call."

Food Comes from...Somewhere

Life makes the most sense in hindsight. "When it comes to food work, it was very natural for me to work with butchered animals," Carrie says. She has a deep relationship with the connection between life and food. "There is a real disconnect in our culture — we don't have relationships with where our food comes from," Carri says. "If you're going to consume it, think about where the meat came from — find out how it landed on your plate."

"...think about where the meat came from — find out how it landed on your plate."

Her Recipes for Smári Organics

When Erin reached out to Carri to ask if she would develop original recipes for Smári Organics, we were excited that she said yes. We're sharing her recipes as she develops them, and we shared Carri's first three recipes using our yogurt last week: [Blue Cheese Dip](#), [Spicy Southwest Smári Dip](#), and [Icelandic Guacamole](#) — you can read about them in this post, "[Do Divas Dip Naked?](#)" What's next? Well, it's rumored that she's working on a recipe for chocolate next, just in time for Valentine's Day!

Fire Cooking

What is Carri most excited about right now? "Cooking with fire!" Fire cooking, grilling, and spit roasting. She loves grilling meat. "All the parts," she says. "Loin, chop, and shoulder — marrow, bones." She described a recent meal she shared with food grower Andy Griffin of [Mariquita Farm](#), which specializes in growing heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables. "We braised goat shoulder in a wood oven," she said. "He killed the goat, and we cooked the whole thing in a pit fire! He made a soup with the bones." Grilling veg is also a favorite of hers — grilled rutabaga, greens, chicory, anything if it's the best possible product. "I love product. I want to find the best product and showcase it, not manipulate it — like the best, freshest vegetable, oil,

NEWS

OUR 24 OZ CONTAINERS ARE HERE!

Northern Californians, we've got big containers and we're starting our rollout in your backyard: you can now buy our yogurt in big, strong sizes in stores in NorCal. At 24 ounces and oh-so-thick, well, these new containers of yogurt would surely please any Viking! The first two flavors available in the new hearty size are Pure and vanilla. Journey to your local market to discover our new, strong containers. And why not use our handy [\[MORE\]](#)

WE'RE IN THE FRESH MARKET!

We have some very fine, very fresh, and very fabulous news! Our yogurt is now carried by [The Fresh Market](#). We are fiercely pleased about this news, and excited to be bringing our yogurt to new towns and cities and the strong-spirited people who live in them. [The Fresh Market](#) has the look and feel...

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NATURAL HEALTH DUBS US A STANDOUT!

Health and wellness magazine [Natural Health](#) says we are a standout product, packed with protein. To readers they recommend swapping out the old standby foods for healthier supermarket standouts. And, guess who is one of those standouts? Icelandic yogurt! "Creamy and supremely tart, the Scandinavian dairy staple serves up a whopping 17 to 20 grams of protein per six-ounce nonfat serving." Thank you, [Natural Health](#). Read all about it [\[MORE\]](#)

CHECKED OUT BY RACHAEL RAY!

Our yogurt got a cheery mention in this month's issue of [Every Day with Rachael Ray](#). The magazine told readers to shake up their grocery lists

or fruit.”

“I love product. I want to find the best product and showcase it, not manipulate it.”

She then described a meal she cooked with a friend that included watermelon, radishes, and olio nuevo, and flyer de del — “unfettered” she called it. “And I was like, “This oil! This oil is amazing! This radish! The radish was amazing — I could taste everything!” (olio nuevo is the first batch of olive oil to be harvested. It’s not to be cooked with, just eaten as-is. “They harvest it in December — those first batches are green, grassy, and delicious.”

The Path to Cooking

You’d think Carri’s trajectory would have taken her straight from the woods into a restaurant’s kitchen, but who’s life is like that? One of her first experiences after college was with people with disabilities, as a volunteer in social services with the British government. “I worked as a caregiver for a quadruplegic for a few months and then a year with children with disabilities.” Returning to the States, she attended Cook Street School of Culinary Arts in Denver, “they were highly wine-focused and a really great program,” then headed to Berkeley, California to intern at the famous and respected restaurant opened by Alice Waters in 1971, **Chez Panisse**. “When I started there, I wasn’t doing any cooking, I was learning for a couple years — dealing with farmers and produce.”

She went from there to **Camnio** (Oakland, Ca) for three years while also picking up some work at Chez Panisse. And then she headed to New Zealand to manage the restaurant at Hapuku Lodge. Her focus was sourcing local ingredients, like lobster, lamb and venison (you can check out the restaurant’s ingredients list [here](#).) “They were interested in improving the standards of the food, matching it up with what the tree houses were,” Carri said. “I worked with the cooks to equip the kitchen, looking at how we could use *all* of the food from the garden — preserving and canning vegetables, all of that.” The restaurant served guests three meals a day, and included the local lobster and lamb as well as local milk and cheese products. “We built a greenhouse and had a deer farm — had an olive grove and vineyard.”

When she moved back to the Bay Area, she worked at San Francisco’s **Zuni Cafe**. Then she joined a former Chez Panisse colleague on Cape Ann, Massachusetts for a season of cooking on the coast. Three years ago Carri headed back to California to work at Chez Panisse.

Recently she decided to leave to focus on her independent work — catering, outreach, and recipe development. “My big thing is, ideally, I don’t want to work 90 hours a week!” She plans to stay connected to the restaurant; Chez Panisse will always be her second family. “I’m leaving CP now,” she says, “but they are like, ‘Anytime you want to come back, it’s cool.’ Which says a lot about the chef culture at Chez Panisse, but also Carri’s value. The lady’s got chops.

* * *

Keep your eyes peeled for the recipes Carri develops for us, which we’ll post here on our blogg and [Facebook](#) page.

- Amy
#beaviking

by checking out some new buys...like us! They recommended our yogurt for being fat-free, packed with protein, as well as thick and tangy. Read more [here](#).

CHOSEN BY COMMUNICATION ARTS FOR THEIR DESIGN ANNUAL

We’ve had the incredible pleasure of being picked by **Communication Arts** magazine as best in trademark design this year for our viking spoon. We are featured in their Design Annual 54. Being selected for the Annual issue is an honor. Design is incredibly important to us. Read all about it [here](#).

PREVENTION MAGAZINE SAYS WE’RE GOOD FOR YOU!

‘Move over, Greece,’ says **Prevention** magazine, which just featured our yogurt in its November 2013 issue. We sure appreciate the mention, because we know that **Prevention** is a well-loved health and wellness magazine with a very enthusiastic and health-conscious readership. We hope their readers get even stronger by partaking in some of our organic, fat-f...

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