

Cooking in the Time of Covid

By Juliana Dancanet

Since mid-March, I have been living with my family at our Connecticut beach house. While I have been enjoying the fresh air and nature, **I miss the plethora of dining opportunities in New York City.** Whether I am eating at a fancy restaurant, grabbing take-out from a neighborhood joint, or attending charity events and galas, I can readily indulge my taste buds in a gastronomic feast. So, when lockdown first started, I secretly longed for those sophisticated menus as I searched for the inspiration to cook yet another banal dinner for my family.



However, what I soon discovered is that despite the shortage of certain foods and fewer trips to the supermarket, I can prepare a scrumptious meal by improvising with whatever I find in my pantry.

A great place to begin is the world of condiments: spicy, salty, acidic, sweet and savory alike.

The combinations and permutations are limitless!

For example, you can make a dip simply by combining any spice or sauce with some mayonnaise or crème cheese and a squeeze of lemon. Add your dip to a veggie sandwich, a breast of chicken, or even a steak, and you have a fabulous new dish! Give yourself license to get creative and to fail as well. You're bound to produce delectable results.



Preparing more meals at home has also generated renewed **appreciation for cooking appliances that can help.** For me, one such device is the **Thermomix®**, an European kitchen appliance which Forbes magazine recently named it one of the best nutrition innovations. Besides my condiments, I have come to rely on it for most of the meals I prepare, and it has without a doubt made it easier to concoct tasty dishes from around the world. In fact, I am such a fan that I became a brand consultant here in the U.S.

The quarantine has been a challenging time for everyone. **A renewed focus on family, health, and eating well is a potential positive outcome.** As a Certified WildFit® Coach, I understand how vital food is for our well-being and cooking is not only a way to nurture one's self, but also a way to stimulate the imagination, stay active, and relieve stress. **I look forward to a return to normality in our wonderful city, and I hope to carry with me some of these valuable new lessons.**

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